



## How to prevent worms in dogs and cats



Worms can affect dogs and cats of any age or breed. Not all animals will show signs therefore regular preventative treatment is vital to make sure your pet is worm-free. This is particularly important because many worms also infect people, perhaps the most notable example being *Toxocara*, a roundworm which has a very small, but potentially serious risk of causing blindness in children.

Numerous worming treatments are available from both shops and Veterinary Surgeries. Not all products treat all worms, therefore deciding which to choose can be difficult. The aim of this leaflet is to provide you with information about the more common worms we see, to enable you to choose a suitable worming product and regime for your pet.

We encounter a range of worms including **Roundworms, Hookworms, Whipworms and Tapeworms**. Most infect the intestines, causing vomiting, diarrhoea and weight loss, but some emerging ones can now attack the heart and lungs. Worms have complicated life cycles, with immature forms that may not be susceptible to all treatments, therefore it is important to use a comprehensive product that treats the different types of worms and their stages.

**The most common type of worm seen in cats and dogs is a Tapeworm called *Dipylidium* which is carried by fleas** -therefore any pet with fleas should also be treated for possible worm infection.

*Taenia*, a second species of tapeworm, is found in uncooked meat and may be particularly prevalent on livestock farms. Hunting cats can also be infected so will require more frequent treatment.

A particularly worrying tapeworm called *Echinococcus* can affect dogs and may cause serious disease in humans when infected with the immature stage, which causes formation of cysts in the liver, lungs and brain. This is known as Hydatid Disease. *Echinococcus* is resistant to most worming formulations available in shops so please read the small print carefully!

**Puppies are particularly at risk of roundworm infection**, which can be spread from the mother during pregnancy and lactation. It is therefore important to treat pregnant bitches from day 40 of pregnancy through to two days after whelping using Panacur – this is available in paste, liquid and powder forms to suit all pets.

An emerging worm known as **Lungworm** (*Angiostrongylus vasorum*) can cause serious disease in dogs. This has been present on the European Continent for many years but has now become endemic in the UK following pets travelling abroad. Lungworm is spread via ingestion of infected slugs and snails.

## Worming Treatments Available

### Kittens and Puppies

We recommend monthly use of **Panacur**. This treats against the roundworms they are particularly susceptible to, as well as a parasite called Giardia which can cause diarrhoea in both pets and people.

### Cats

We suggest treatment with worming tablets such as **Drontal** or **Milbemax**. Should you struggle to administer these, your cat can either be booked in for a nurse to give the tablet, or alternatively we can provide you with a comprehensive spot-on preparation called **Profender**. Cats usually require worming every 3-4 months. Cats receiving **Advocate** (a flea-preventative product that also treats most worms) will only require worming every 6 months.

### Dogs

We routinely use **Drontal Plus** or **Milbemax** tablets for dogs. Other tablets, pastes and granules are available on request however these two products give the most comprehensive cover.

We recommend treatment every 3 months, although each case is considered individually, with pets living in houses with young children treated more frequently. As with cats, dogs receiving monthly **Advocate** treatment should be given a tablet every 6 months. Advocate is the product of choice to prevent lungworm.

### Pregnant Bitches

As above, pregnant bitches can be a source of roundworms to their puppies. It is important to worm with **Panacur** from day 40 of pregnancy, through to 2 days after whelping (giving birth) to allow the pups every chance to thrive.

### And finally...

We appreciate that determining when to worm your pet, and what product to use can be confusing. Please do not hesitate to contact your local branch for further information. Also, you may find it helpful to join the Drove Pet Club to receive quarterly reminders and 10% off worming treatment.

