



Parasites

Fleas – The most common external parasite found on pets is fleas, with a female flea being able to lay up to 50 eggs per day. An infestation of fleas is not only an unpleasant experience for both pet and owner, but can also cause potential illness amongst pets too. A flea's life cycle can range from a few weeks to a month, although given the right conditions this time period can be much longer. The pet spreads the flea eggs wherever it goes, which can result in an infestation within the home environment.

Ticks – Ticks are often found in long grass, meadows, woodland, and even sometimes within the home. They attach themselves to our pets and feed on their blood. Ticks not only can be uncomfortable for your pet but can transmit potentially serious diseases, which can also harm us too.

Lungworm – Lungworm in dogs is unfortunately becoming more common within the UK and pets can be at risk by coming into contact with snails and slugs, or drinking from infected puddles. Symptoms can include moderate, dry coughing with a slightly increased respiratory rate, to severe coughing and respiratory distress or failure. Using preventative treatment for all of the above help keep your pets healthy, so if you would like more information on any of the above, please do call us at the surgery to speak with one of our team.

Generic worms- Roundworm, Tapeworm, and Hookworm

Dogs and cats are both at risk from getting worms, most commonly roundworm, tapeworm and hookworm.

How to Pets Get These Worms?

As a puppy or kitten, worms can be passed on via their mother's milk- roundworm being the most common.

As they get older, worms can be contracted through pet's daily activities such as grooming- if roundworm eggs are attached to their fur they will then be ingested and cause a worm infection.

Tapeworm larvae can be carried by fleas that if ingested during grooming, can lead to adult tapeworms developing within your cat's intestine. Fleas can also be a worm risk for house-cats. Another common cause is scavenging and hunting, which can lead to a worm burden through eating or interacting with other infected animals, such as birds or rodents. If pets ingest faeces, this can sometimes contain worm eggs or can be brought into your home on footwear, which poses a risk to indoor cats!

Some worm larvae, like hookworm, can survive in soil, posing a threat to dogs and cats that dig!

An early and consistent worming routine is vital to help combat worms and keep them at bay from infestation, this will also keep your family safe from secondary health risks of your pet bringing worms into the home.

Treatment

It is imperative to begin an early parasite treatment routine to maintain your pet's general health and prevent any parasite induced illnesses. Treatment for the above parasites can be administered in both spot-on and tablet form. Worming treatment is recommended to be given at 2 weeks, 5 weeks and 8 weeks- often this final treatment will tie in with a health check and so we can then begin them on their future regime- this typically entails a flea and wormer treatment given monthly whilst a tape wormer given at 6 monthly intervals to keep the critters at bay! If your pet is a particular hunter/scavenger this can be given more frequently but it is recommended to contact us before any changes are made for us to confirm a safe dosage.