



TREMAIN VETERINARY GROUP

Treating your pet like one of the family

Advice Note 3.0

Additional Worm, Flea and Tick information

Worms (nematodes)

Tapeworms

There are often no symptoms of this worm and they can grow to incredible lengths in the gut of your pet. Effective flea control helps control tapeworm as this is the main way they are spread.

We recommend treating your cat or dog every 6 months for this parasite, more often for hunting cats.

Roundworms

There are many types and some are potentially dangerous to humans, especially children. Most owners are unaware that puppies are usually born with roundworms; both kittens and puppies can be infected via their mothers milk. Older pets can be infected by swallowing eggs from the environment or through hunting

Symptoms of roundworm infection include:

- a pot belly
- poor coat quality
- diarrhoea
- poor growth

BUT sometimes there are no external signs.

Lungworm

This worm can cause a range of problems from bleeding disorders to breathing difficulties in dogs. This parasite lives in the heart and lungs and can be rapidly fatal. Infection is via ingestion of infected slugs and snails, including their slime.

Symptoms can vary significantly, and can be very subtle, but they could include:

- Coughing
- Weight loss
- Exercise intolerance
- Bleeding from small wounds, or internally
(much like rat bait poisoning)

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Hookworm

Dogs can become infected with this worm by accidental ingestion of fox faeces but it can also invade via the feet. The parasite lives in the gut and feeds on your dog's blood.

Symptoms can include:

- diarrhoea
- anaemia
- weakness and poor appetite.

Fleas

A shocking 95% of the flea population lives in the environment with only 5% on your pet. Flea larvae, eggs and pupae also become established in large numbers in the home and allow reinfestation of your pet. These fleas will also bite humans. So to prevent re-infestation it is vital that fleas and their life-stages are killed in the home as well as on the pet.

Flea bites can cause dogs and cats to develop a sensitivity reaction to flea saliva which can lead to itching, hair loss and sore skin known as flea allergic dermatitis.

Ticks

Ticks will climb on and attach to dogs and cats as they walk through the long grass where they usually live. They will then attach to the host's skin and suck their blood for three days before dropping off.

Tick bites can cause a localised reaction, which can be painful. They can also carry serious blood-borne infections such as Lyme's disease.

Ticks from overseas carry Ehrlichiosis and Babesia, and therefore it is highly recommended that effective control of ticks is instigated in all traveling pets.

Ticks can be prevented and killed using a variety of products. The products effective against ticks are only available on prescription from your vet.

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Ticks should be carefully removed using a tick remover. These are cheap, effective little devices which are readily available at our practices and they will give you the best chance of removing a tick completely without leaving it's mouth parts in your pet. Tick mouthparts can cause local reactions known as tick granulomas.

We would be happy to give you a demonstration of how to use these devices.