



Parasites: Risk and Prevention

Here is a brief listing of some of the parasites and diseases that can affect you and your family, and how they can be prevented

❖ Intestinal Parasites:

- ❖ Dogs and cats are frequently exposed to intestinal parasite eggs and must be on either a monthly preventative or a routine deworming schedule
 - ❖ Going outside
 - ❖ Sniffing/eating dirt
 - ❖ Licking paws
- ❖ Intestinal parasites cause
 - ❖ Diarrhea
 - ❖ Vomiting
 - ❖ Dull coat and skin
 - ❖ Failure to thrive
- ❖ This category of parasites includes
 - ❖ Hookworms
 - ❖ Roundworms
 - ❖ Whipworms
 - ❖ Coccidia
 - ❖ Giardia
- ❖ Roundworms and hookworms are a public health concern, because they can cause serious diseases in children, including permanent blindness
- ❖ Decreasing the population of roundworms and hookworms in our pets will also decrease the parasite population in the environment



❖ Heartworm Disease:

- ❖ Heartworms are tiny worm-like parasites that are transmitted by mosquitoes, travel through the bloodstream, and lodge themselves in the heart and lungs
- ❖ They cause clinical signs in dogs that include coughing, lethargy, breathing problems, and heart failure
- ❖ Symptoms in the cat can be very vague and may include vomiting, coughing or even sudden death
- ❖ Surprisingly, about 25% of the cats that are diagnosed with heartworm are indoor only!
- ❖ There are two ways of preventing heartworm disease in dogs and cats.
- ❖ One is to give them a monthly heartworm preventative by mouth.
- ❖ The other is to apply a topical liquid to their skin once a month.

❖ Fleas:

- ❖ Fleas are often found on dogs and cats, even if they are indoors the majority of the day
- ❖ Fleas are brought in by a friend's dog, a person's shoes or even left on the doormat by a stray cat in the neighborhood
- ❖ Once in your house, fleas must be effectively treated on **all** of your pets **and** in the environment, prevention is often easier and more economical than treatment
- ❖ One effective preventative measure is to use a routine flea-control treatment
- ❖ *** **Never** use a dog flea preventative on a cat. Toxicity occurs very quickly, and can cause seizures and death. We strongly recommend discussing any other flea prevention options with us before use ***

❖ Ticks:

- ❖ Ticks are a common problem here in New England.
- ❖ They are known to carry and transmit lyme disease, anaplasma, ehrlichia and other diseases.
- ❖ Annual blood tests can detect exposure to some of these parasites, but prevention of tick bites is key.
- ❖ Ticks pose a potential health risk to you, if they are being carried into your house by your dog or cat.
- ❖ One effective preventative measure is to use a routine tick-control treatment