



Treating your pet for worms

There are a number of different products to treat worms including "spot ons", tablets, liquids or powder.

For most adult dogs and cats worming every three months is sufficient, although sometimes more frequent worming may be advised. Puppies and kittens require more frequent worming.

Picking up faeces promptly will reduce the contamination of the environment and reduce the risk of infection to humans and animals.

To discuss the worming of your pet please speak to your veterinary surgeon who will be able to advise you on the most appropriate treatment for your pet.

Regular worming is recommended for all dogs and cats your vet can best advise you on the suitable treatments for your pet.

Not all wormers kill all types of worms so it is important to make sure you are using the correct wormer for your pet's age and lifestyle.



XLVets Small Animal member veterinary practices work together to share experience, knowledge and ideas to ensure the highest levels of quality and care for their client's pets. XLVet member practices provide a compassionate and caring service for all pets and at the same time offer comprehensive and up-to-date treatment in all fields of veterinary medicine and surgery.



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WORMING YOUR PET



What are worms?

There are a variety of different worms that can affect pets. The main worms that affect dogs and cats are roundworms and tapeworms which live in the intestine of your pet. Lung worm is also becoming increasingly common and occasionally we see infection with other types of worm such as hookworms and whipworms.

Your pet can be infected by a number of different worms.

Roundworms :

The roundworm is white to brown in colour, "string like" in appearance and may grow up to 15cm in length. Infection is acquired when a roundworm egg is eaten by your cat or dog, these eggs develop into adult worms in the intestine of your pet.

Adult worms lay thousands of eggs which are then passed in the faeces into the environment, and the whole cycle begins again when these eggs are eaten. Round worm eggs are extremely tough and can survive for years outside of the pet. Young puppies and kittens are particularly susceptible to roundworms and often acquire these infections directly from their mother. Roundworms can occasionally affect people especially children and in extreme cases can cause blindness.



Did you know?

Roundworm eggs are extremely common in the environment. If you lie on the grass in Hyde park in London you are lying on at least 4 roundworm eggs!

Not all worm treatments kill all types of worm. Please speak to your vet about the most effective treatment for your pet.

Tapeworms:

Tapeworms are ribbon like in appearance and made up of many different segments. Tapeworm must first develop as a cyst in an "intermediate host" such as a mouse, bird, sheep or even flea. The "host" is then eaten by the dog or cat and the cyst in the host develops in the intestine of your pet into the tapeworm. Ingesting fleas whilst grooming is a common source of tapeworm infection in dogs and cats.

Tapeworms can grow up to 60 cm in length.



Tapeworm in dog faeces can infect livestock such as sheep, causing cysts to form in their brain and muscles.

Lungworm:

Lungworm is seen increasingly across the country and is picked up by pets eating infected slugs or snails. The worms themselves develop in the heart and major blood vessels.



How do I know if my pet has worms?

Roundworms:

Adult roundworms may sometimes be seen in the faeces or may be coughed or vomited up by heavily infected puppies or kittens. Even if you don't see worms it doesn't mean your pet is not infected and nearly all kittens and puppies have a roundworm burden passed onto them from their mothers. They rarely cause signs of illness but in young puppies and kittens they may cause poor and stunted growth and occasionally form complete blockage of the intestines.

Tapeworms:

Tapeworm infections are usually seen when tapeworm segments are passed in the faeces, they may be seen crawling around the bottom of our pet. Segments may stick to the fur and dry out, with the appearance of a flattened grain of rice.

Lungworm:

You will not see lungworms directly but lungworm can cause a number of signs including coughing, breathlessness, bleeding problems and, in some cases, even death.

