

WORMS

What are worms?



Worms are parasites that can live inside your pet, often without you knowing. There are 5 main types of worms in the UK; roundworm, tapeworm, whipworm, hookworm and lungworm. There are two other types of worms that your pet are at risk from if you take them abroad; heartworm and eyeworm.

Why worry about worms?

There are different species of worms that our pets can be infected with, each posing different risks. If left untreated they can seriously harm your pet, some even resulting in the death of the pet.

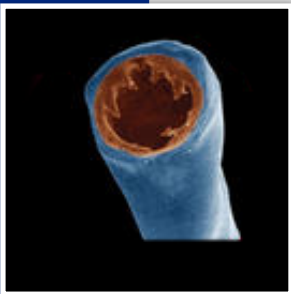
Some worms can pass from pets to people through grooming, stroking or the environment. Children, the elderly and those with reduced immune systems are most at risk. Whilst most human infections cause only minor symptoms, rare cases can lead to serious conditions such as blindness and epilepsy. Most puppies and kittens are born with roundworms (*Toxocara*), where they live the pet's intestines and cause problems for these vulnerable young animals. Although rare, roundworm infestations in people are associated with the most serious conditions. Tapeworm (*Dipylidium*) is the most common worm in the UK can also transmit to people and cause cysts on the liver or lungs. As the name suggests, heartworm infests the heart of the animal and in the advanced stages can be fatal. Thankfully the UK is currently free from heartworm, but travelling pets are at risk as it is present on the continent, USA and Australia.



It is hard to spot if your pet has worms, they often look healthy on the outside even if they have worms on the inside. You may not associate the symptoms with a worm infestation until the infection is severe.

How does my pet get worms?

The different types of worms transmit from animal to animal in different ways. It can be through the contaminated environment or ingestion of infested slugs, snails or fleas.



How do I protect my family and my pet?

It is worth noting that there is no tablet or injection that can completely prevent worm infestation in your pets, the best you can do is kill any present worms and stop the lifecycle regularly. We recommend you worm your pet with an broad-spectrum effective product at least every 3 months (the length of worm's lifecycle). We do advise you take the animal's lifestyle into consideration. Young animals, hunting or scavenging animals and those who live in a multi-pet household are more at risk, therefore we recommend they are wormed monthly.

There are many different forms of worming product available. To ensure you get the right product for your pet and learn how often to worm them, come and speak to our nurses in our free clinics at any of our surgeries.

To keep yourself and your family safe, ensure you clear up any animal faeces promptly, wash hands regularly especially when children have been playing outside and don't allow children to put soil or sand in their mouths. Some worms and their eggs can survive in sandpits and children's play areas, make sure you cover these when not in use.



If you're worried about how to prevent worms or have any questions, come along to us for a FREE nurse consultation at any of our surgeries (an appointment may be necessary).

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