

The Good Companions VETERINARY CLINIC

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PREVENTATIVE HEALTHCARE: WORMS

Unfortunately parasites are a fact of life as a cat or dog owner. Fleas are prevalent in the environment, hopefully just outside of the house, but on occasion the home environment may become a reservoir for fleas.

Worms infest new hosts either by eggs passed out with faeces and then ingested by a cat or dog, or by transmission via an intermediate host, usually a rodent or flea that has been infected by a worm egg and now carries a larvae that is ingested when the intermediate host is eaten during hunting or grooming (in the case of fleas and *Dipylidium* tapeworms).



Luckily parasite control is easy, with a range of products available the hardest part is choosing which one suits your pet's lifestyle best! Contact the practice to discuss your worming and flea control needs with a nurse.

Worming puppies and kittens.



Roundworms are transmitted from the mother to the puppies and kittens through the placenta when they are in her womb and also in the milk as they suckle. Ideally the mother would have been wormed whilst pregnant, but not all breeders will do this. Even if the mother has been wormed diligently it is prudent to continue with an intense worming program until your puppy or kitten is six months old.

Roundworms live in the intestines and can cause diarrhoea, poor coat, poor growth, and general ill health in your puppy or kitten. In severe cases worms may predispose to an emergency condition called intussusception in which the intestine folds on itself, this requires surgical correction. Additionally, roundworms can on occasion be transmitted to children, in rare cases this can cause problems with sight.

Through worming of puppies and kittens with a drug called Panacur also reduces the risk of disease caused by tapeworms, a protozoa called giardia, and lungworms.

Protocol

We would recommend worming puppies and kittens with '**Panacur Paste**' for 3 consecutive days at their first vaccination and then 4 weeks later. We would then recommend that you worm them monthly with **Panacur** or **Drontal** as a single dose until they are 6 months old, usually just one more time if the first vaccination is at 10 weeks old.

Worming adult dogs and cats

The eggs of worms that affect pets are widespread in the environment and pets are exposed to them every day. They may come from the faeces of other dogs and cats that have worms. Many healthy adult pets carry a small number of worms but regular worm treatment keeps these numbers low to prevent disease. Adult dogs and cats rarely show any clinical signs associated with worm infestation, however it is still important to routinely worm your pet to prevent debilitating severe infections. Regular worming is also important as a responsible pet owner to reduce the risk of infection to children.



Protocol

Current guidelines recommend that pets are wormed monthly as this seems to be the best way to reduce the risk of transmission of *Toxocara* to humans. **Stronghold** treats both Fleas and Roundworms as an easy spot on treatment, and so is the ideal preparation for regular parasite control. Stronghold does not treat tapeworms so if you have a cat that regularly hunts it is worth administering a **Panacur** or **Drontal** tablet every 6-12 months.