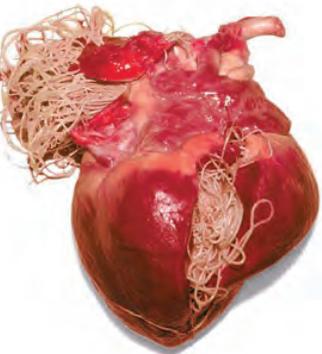




Intestinal worms in dogs

HALL VETERINARY SURGERY BEHAVIOUR ADVICE



THERE ARE FIVE TYPES OF INTERNAL WORMS THAT GENERALLY AFFECT DOGS: Heartworms, Roundworms, Hookworms, Tapeworms, and Whipworms. Certain types of worms are easier to spot than others. For example, if your dog picks up a tapeworm, it's common to see what resembles grains of rice in its stool.

HOW TO TELL IF YOUR DOG HAS INTESTINAL WORMS?

Worm infestations may cause any or all of these symptoms:

Diarrhoea, perhaps with blood, Weight loss, Dry hair, General poor appearance, Vomiting, perhaps with worms in the vomit. However, some infestations cause few or no symptoms so a regular life-long worming schedule is recommended.

HOW DOES A DOG GET INTESTINAL WORMS?

There are many routes to infection including:-

- ▶ Drinking contaminated water
- ▶ Contact with other infected animals
- ▶ Contact with other infected animal faeces
- ▶ From an infected nursing mother (nursing puppies)
- ▶ Swallowing fleas carrying the infective stage of tapeworms
- ▶ Eating meat (such as a rodent) that is carrying a parasite.

ENDOPARASITES:

THERE ARE TWO MAIN TYPES – HEARTWORM AND INTESTINAL WORMS

Heartworm lives in the blood vessels in and around the heart and causes many different illnesses including coughing, fatigue, listlessness, heart failure as well as kidney and liver problems and it can be fatal. Heart worm is carried by mosquitoes and not directly transferred from dog to dog.

Intestinal worms live in the gut and there are four main types: roundworm, hookworm, whipworm and tapeworm. These may cause diarrhoea, listlessness, blood loss anaemia, poor growth and a pot-bellied appearance. Importantly, some intestinal worms are contagious to humans and can make us sick. This is especially true in children and pregnant women.

No single product is able to kill all the worms, but some come close. To effectively worm your dog, these three questions need to be answered.

- 1) How old is the dog? In puppies twelve weeks and under, we only need to worry about intestinal worms. At twelve weeks and older, we need to add heartworm prevention as well.
- 2) What is your dog's weight? This is important, as we need to know how much medication to give. All worming medication is given on a 'per kilo' basis, too much (overdosing) can be dangerous, and too little (underdosing) will not work. You can drop in and use our scales to get an exact weight and allow us to calculate exactly the right amount of medication to give your pet. Also this is recorded on your pet's file and you can discuss having automatic reminders sent to you.
- 3) What worming medication is most appropriate for the dog's life stage?

Common medications for intestinal worms include

- ▶ CANEX SYRUP kills round and hookworm (good for very small pups twelve weeks and under)
- ▶ DRONTAL kills all four intestinal worms and is useful in dogs for all ages.
- ▶ MILBEMAX is effective against all four intestinal worms in dogs for all ages and can be used to prevent heart worm if dosed monthly.

There are many other commercial wormers available which vary in their efficacy. We recommend staying with one of the above brands. For example:

2–12 weeks Every 2 weeks with Milbemax or Canex Syrup or Drontal for puppies.

3–6 months Every month with Milbemax or Drontal.

Over 6 months Every 3 months with Milbemax or Drontal.

Dogs who have access to the offal of sheep, goats, kangaroos, pigs or cattle are at risk of transmitting hydatid tapeworms to humans. For this reason they require six-weekly hydatid tapeworm prevention. Discuss this with your veterinarian or nurse.

Heartworm protection available at Hall Veterinary Surgery include:

PROHEART SR12 is a 12-monthly heartworm preventative available only as an injection from 6 months of age on. PROHEART a monthly heartworm preventative tablet. HEARTGUARD a monthly heartworm prevention medication which is available as a 'chewable' treat or as a plain tablet. REVOLUTION is a top-spot applied to the back of the neck, used as a heartworm prevention which also kills round, hook, whipworm (but not tapeworm) and fleas. MILBEMAX a tablet given monthly to protect against heartworm (this will include intestinal worms).

HANDY HINTS

Use a calendar to record your worming schedule. If you're using a three monthly schedule, worm with the change in season. Monthly heartworm treatment can be scheduled for the first of the month to help you remember. Use the stickers provided on your calendar or diary.

For advice about dog training and behaviour issues PHONE: 6230 2223 or EMAIL: behaviouradvice@hallvet.com.au