

CRITTER CARE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

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Intestinal Parasites and Your Family

Certain intestinal parasites can be transmitted to you and your family from your pet (if your pet is infected with these parasites). The parasites that have the potential to infect humans are: tapeworms, hookworms, and roundworms. There are things that can be done to protect you, your family, and your pet from these intestinal parasites.

HOW CAN INTESTINAL PARASITES PASS TO HUMANS?

Intestinal parasites do not pass from pets to people by petting or other direct contact; people must come in contact with eggs or larvae of these parasites in order to be infected. The most common way for a human to become infected is to accidentally eat or be in direct contact with contaminated dirt. For example: playing in an area that an infected animal has defecated in and then eating without washing your hands or walking barefoot in an area that has become contaminated. There are also ways of being in direct contact with these parasites, such as cleaning up the feces of an animal that is carrying these intestinal parasites.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF AND MY FAMILY FROM BECOMING INFECTED?

The best way to prevent your pet from becoming infected is to regularly see your veterinarian. When puppies and kittens are born they are often infected with intestinal parasites (the mother passes them to her babies before they are born). When you take your new pet to the veterinarian a fecal exam can detect if your new pet is carrying intestinal parasites. While doing a fecal test is one of the only ways to detect worms it can miss them if there are no eggs or larvae present in that part of the stool (another reason de-worming your new pet is recommended). If your new pet has come from a store or shelter they have most likely been de-wormed while there, but it is recommended that you de-worm them again after bringing them home just in case they were infected during their stay at the store or shelter.

ALWAYS WASH YOUR HANDS AFTER PLAYING WITH YOUR PET AND HANDLING FECES

After you have tested and de-wormed your new pet it is recommended that a yearly fecal check be done to ensure that your pet hasn't contracted any parasites.

Products such as HEARTGARD can protect your pet and ultimately yourself from internal parasites. HEARTGARD prevents heartworms (which can be deadly to your pet) as well as the intestinal parasites your pet may pass to you such as hookworms and roundworms. This monthly chewable pill can protect your pet and your family from parasites.

WHO IS THE MOST AT RISK OF BECOMING INFECTED?

While anyone can become infected with intestinal parasites, there are people who are at greater risk:

Chemotherapy patients
People with HIV/AIDS
Organ transplant patients
Infants and young children
Elderly people
Pregnant women

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF INTERNAL PARASITE INFECTION?

Symptoms of roundworm infection (toxocariasis):

1. Ocular larva migrans- an eye disease that occurs when a roundworm enters the eye. A scar on the retina may occur. Each year more than 700 people are infected with a toxocara and experience a loss in vision.
2. Visceral larva migrans- while rare, this disease causes swelling of the body's organs and central nervous system. Symptoms of this include fever, coughing, asthma and pneumonia.

Symptoms of hookworm infection:

1. Cutaneous (skin) larva migrans- this occurs when a hookworm moves within the skin, from here it can penetrate into deeper tissue and cause damage to the intestine and other organs.

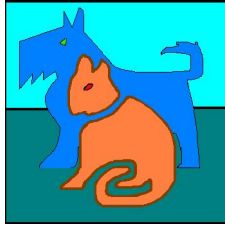
General Symptoms of hook and roundworms:

1. Stomachache
2. Pneumonia
3. Skin rashes
4. Blindness

TAPEWORMS

Tapeworms are contracted to both humans and animals differently than other parasites; humans and pets become infected with tapeworms by fleas. In order for a flea to pass tapeworms to people and animals, the flea must accidentally be swallowed.

The best way to prevent tapeworm infection for both your pet and your family is to control fleas on your pet and in your home. Products such as FRONTLINE PLUS are able to control fleas on your pet and thus able to keep fleas away from you. There are many flea control and prevention products available, however we recommend FRONTLINE PLUS because it is 100% effective killing and preventing fleas on your pet.



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Date _____

I have been given the handout "Intestinal Parasites and Your Family" during my visit today. I understand the risks of these parasites as well as prevention. I do not hold Critter Care Animal Hospital, it's staff or doctors liable for any damages that I incur as a result of intestinal parasites.

I understand that intestinal parasites are preventable, and that it is my choice to accept or decline the measures recommended to me.

Signature _____

Printed Name _____

Please Initial

_____ ACCEPT DEWORMER

_____ DECLINE DEWORMER

Critter Care Animal Hospital Staff Member _____