

youngsters are going to suffer more from the worms being present than an adult would.

Pups and kittens tend to grow poorly, have an unkempt look, and often appear quite pot-bellied.

How often does my pet need worming?

The British Small Animal Veterinary Association recommends worming dogs and cats four times a year.

It is important to realise that wormers do not give your pet any protection against worms, but merely kill the ones already in the body. Modern wormers are easy to use and over 95% effective. However, they will not kill the dormant worms in adult females.

We use two wormers:

Drontal Plus (dogs) and **Drontal Cat** (cats) are tablets which are given once every three months, and therefore are easy to use, and very effective.

For puppies & kittens, we recommend **Panacur** which is easier to give as it comes as a paste, a liquid or granules to go on the food. The wormer should be given at 2 & 5 weeks old, and then at vaccination time (8-9 wks old & 12 wks old). Each dose is given over three days.

Pregnant bitches should be wormed while they are pregnant, as this is the time that the puppies become infected in the womb. This is done daily but at a lower dose than usual. Ask at reception for details.

RINGWOOD HOSPITAL

69 Christchurch Road
Ringwood

01425 473683
01425 480849 (Fax)

E-mail: Admin@cedarvets.
com

Website: Cedarvets.com

VERWOOD SURGERY

17 Ringwood Road
Verwood

01202 825217

FERNDOWN SURGERY

522 Wimborne Road East
Ferndown

01202 861622



WORMING YOUR PET



This is one of a series of
information handouts
written by our vets and
nurses for our clients
and their pets

What are “worms”?

There are two types of worm which our pets can suffer from: Roundworms and Tapeworms.

Roundworms look a bit like spaghetti and can be up to 15 cm long.

Tapeworms are like strings of flattened rice grains. Most commonly you will only see one segment—looking like a moving piece of rice by the base of your pet’s tail.

Do worms really matter?

Your pet

A severe infestation of worms will cause a nasty gastro-enteritis or constipation. They can also lead to a number of other problems, such as weight loss, pneumonia & a general loss of condition. These illnesses will be much more serious in young puppies or kittens, or in ill adults whose immune system is poor.

The majority of pets will only have a moderate number of worms. This will not tend to make them ill, but will affect their general condition, and make them less able to fight off disease.

Children

Most dog or cat tapeworms are not harmful to people. However, the roundworms can cause serious illness. If a child eats some infected faeces, for example by putting his hand in it in the garden and then putting his fingers in

his mouth, the worms may move around the body. One place they have a preference for is the eye, and this can cause permanent blindness. This does not tend to be a problem for adults, who are more hygienic and also have better immune systems.

Faeces take about 7 days before they are infectious, so regular cleaning up of your garden will help reduce the number of worms.

So, there are two reasons why worming your pet is important - to prevent build up of large numbers which will cause illness; and to provide a hygienic environment for us all to bring up our families in.

How does my pet “catch” worms in the first place?

The most likely way that your pet will become infected is by eating infected faeces. Some dogs and cats love to do this! Worm eggs may also be on the grass or in the soil next to infected faeces so chewing grass or rooting in the soil may also be infectious.

Unfortunately, you cannot tell if faeces are infected by looking at them—the worm eggs can only be seen under a microscope.

Tapeworms are often caught by your pet eating another infected animal. Fleas commonly carry tapeworms, and this is the commonest way that cats catch worms - by eating the flea while

grooming themselves.

Similarly, dogs or cats may become infected when they eat wild mammals, such as mice, rats and rabbits, who are carrying the worms themselves.

What is the best way to prevent worms?

A number of measures will help reduce the number of worms:

- **Clean up faeces—in your garden and in your neighbourhood**
- **Use regular flea control**
- **Use a wormer regularly**

What about puppies and kittens?

Unfortunately, puppies and kittens are the most likely pets to catch worms—you can almost assume that they will be infected if no treatment is given. When an adult female becomes infected with roundworms, some of them become dormant in her muscles. When, at a later date, she becomes pregnant, they become active again and then infect her offspring.

Puppies tend to become infected while still in the womb, while in kittens, the roundworms tend to infect via the mother’s milk.

Of course, being smaller, and with immune systems that are not yet working properly, not to mention some of the stresses of being weaned, these