

Deworming Your Pets: Showing Parasites the Way Out

Guelph, ON

When it is time for your pet's annual examination, your veterinary team may ask you to bring in a fresh stool sample. This is so they can check if your pet has a gastrointestinal parasite infection due to roundworms, hookworms, or whipworms, to name a few. Simply scoop up some of your pet's poop, seal it in a clean plastic bag or container, and bring it to the appointment.

The fecal sample will be checked under a microscope to see if there are parasite eggs, and, if so, what kind. Some parasites, like tapeworms, are actually visible in the feces and the veterinarian will be able to confirm this by looking at the sample. Your pet is at risk of picking up parasites year-round. Annual fecal testing is a good way to diagnose infections and have your pet treated early.

If your pet has parasites, your veterinarian will prescribe safe and effective deworming medication. It is important to give the medication as directed to eliminate the infection. Adult pets can receive monthly deworming medication to control any newly acquired infections. However, if your pet is diagnosed with an active infection your veterinarian may ask you to give the medication every 10-14 days until it is cleared.

For more information:

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Puppies and kittens are often infected through the placenta and are born with parasites, or they acquire them during nursing. This is why veterinarians will prescribe deworming medication at an early age without checking a fecal sample first. It is recommended to de-worm them for the first time at 2 to 3 weeks old, then every 2 weeks until they are 8 weeks old, then monthly until 6 months of age. Nursing animals should be treated for parasites at the same time as their offspring.

Many veterinary-approved products are available. Your veterinary team will help you choose the best option for your pet. There are topical and oral formulations of dewormers to choose from, depending on what is easier for you and your pet. With regular deworming you can keep your pets parasite-free and healthy all year long.