

## Worms

Worms are parasites that can live in the gut tract, heart or lungs in dogs and cats.



### What are the main classes of worms?

Intestinal worms include roundworms, hookworms, whipworms and tapeworms. Heartworm is more of a problem abroad where they are transmitted by mosquitoes. Lungworm is a parasite that is present in pockets in the UK and for dogs is contracted by eating infected slugs or snails.

### How do I know if my pet has worms?

Many infections are subclinical. That means that you may not even know if your pet has worms. However, with larger burdens intestinal worms can cause diarrhoea and potentially weight loss. The intestinal roundworm *Toxocara canis* is always a concern as it can be transmitted from dogs to humans through ingestion of worm eggs often on hands etc. Although the incidence of larval migration in humans to organs such as the eye (causing blindness) or the brain is low, with 50-100 new cases in the British Isles currently reported yearly, regular worming is essential to reduce numbers of worm eggs in the environment.

Lungworm is always a big concern in dogs as this may just cause a cough or exercise intolerance. However, in more severe disease clotting issues can also be seen which can be life threatening. Treatment is available but prevention is always better than cure for those pets who are at risk (eat slugs and snails).

### How to do I treat my pet for worms?

There are several options. This can come in the form of tablets or skin “spot on” formulations. There are individual worming tablets available as well as what I would term of “dual treatment options” that would help treat internal parasites such as worms and external parasites such as fleas or ticks.

### So a solution “spot-on” the back of the neck of my pet can kill internal such as worms and external parasites?

Yes. We sell several options for dogs and cats. Each has a different spectrum of treatment. So different treatments may suit different pets depending on the diet and lifestyle of your animal.

### So how to do I know which product to buy?

I would recommend for you to utilise our nurse clinics. At Scarsdale Vets we provide free flea/worm appointments for all our clients. We can look at the diet and lifestyle of your pet and see what parasites your pet is most at risk of catching. We can then offer you a tailor-made worming program and may even offer you a choice of 2 or 3 different products to provide the protection that your pet and family need.

### What happens if I struggle to give my pet a worm tablet or “spot-on”?

Don't worry. Our practice teams are very happy to give your dog or cat any worming product that you purchase from our practice. Many are very happy to visit us even monthly for their treatments and we are always happy to see you and your pet. Frequent visits not only help us get to know your pet but also help them to be much more relaxed with any future veterinary visits.

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