



INTESTINAL WORMS

Pets can become infected with intestinal worms in the following ways:

- From birth while still in the uterus (roundworms)
- Ingestion of their mother's milk (roundworm and hookworm)
- Ingestion of worm eggs, usually from soil contaminated with faeces
- Ingestion of fleas (tapeworm)
- Ingestion of raw meat or offal (hydatid tapeworm)
- By hunting and eating lizards and other infected animals ("zipper" tapeworm)

People can also become infected with intestinal worms, so it is important to practice good hygiene.

Signs of intestinal worm infection:

- Diarrhoea – sometimes bloody
- Vomiting
- Passing worms in faeces
- Constipation – may be blocked with large numbers of worms
- There may be no obvious signs



How do I prevent infection?

- ★ Teach kids to wash their hands after playing and not to eat dirt
- ★ Cover sand pits and restrict animal access to play areas
- ★ Dispose of dog and cat faeces promptly and wash your hands after handling pet waste
- ★ Take your pets to the veterinarian and follow a regular deworming treatment plan

DOGS

- ★ Treat pups with Drontal Allwormer or Popantel F every two weeks from birth to 12 weeks of age; then every month until 6 months; then every 3 months for life.
- ★ Treat newly acquired dogs/puppies with Drontal Allwormer or Popantel F immediately, again in two weeks, then as recommended above.
- ★ Treat bitches with Drontal Allwormer before mating, at two weeks before the birth of the litter, and then at the same times as the pups.
- ★ Additionally treat dogs/puppies at risk of becoming infected by 'Zipper worm' with 4 times the normal dose of Popantel Tapewormer. Treat every 3 months.

CATS

- ★ Treat kittens with Milbemax Tablets for Cats every two weeks from 6 weeks to 12 weeks of age; then every month until 6 months; then every 3 months for life.
- ★ Treat newly acquired cats/kittens with Milbemax Tablets for Cats immediately, again in two weeks, then as recommended above.
- ★ Treat queens with Milbemax Tablets for Cats before mating, at two weeks before the birth of the litter, and then at the same times as the kittens.
- ★ Treat cats/kittens at risk of becoming infected by 'Zipper worm' with 4 times the normal dose of Popantel Tapewormer. Treat every 3 months.

Roundworm (*Toxocara canis*)



Puppies and kittens become infected by roundworm from their mother while in the uterus and through her milk after birth. Symptoms of a major roundworm infection in a puppy or kitten include diarrhoea, vomiting, weight loss, dull hair or a pot-bellied appearance. Infected pups & kittens release thousands of eggs in their stool which are able to infect humans after about two weeks in the soil.

Children may become infected when they swallow eggs with soil that is contaminated with animal faeces containing *Toxocara* eggs.

Hookworms (*Ancylostoma braziliense* & *Ancylostoma caninum*)

Puppies and kittens are infected by hookworm larvae that are swallowed in the milk from their mother. These worms suck blood from the intestinal wall. Infected animals can be asymptomatic, they may have diarrhoea or show ill thrift. In severe cases, puppies and kittens may even die from anaemia due to blood loss.

Infected animals pass hookworm eggs in their stools. The eggs can hatch into larvae, and both eggs and larvae may be found in dirt where animals have been.



Whipworm (*Trichuris vulpis*)



Whipworm is a parasite seen more commonly in puppies and dogs than in cats and kittens. Whipworms are found in the colon and caecum (where the small and large intestine meet). They are relatively small with a thin anterior end and a thicker posterior end giving the appearance of a whip. They are usually 5-7cm long. Dogs become infected with whipworms by swallowing infective whipworm eggs in soil or other substances that may be contaminated with dog faeces.

Whipworms feed on tissue fluid and blood while attached to the lining of the intestinal tract. Dogs that are infected with a few whipworms may not show any signs of infection. More severe infections can cause bloody diarrhoea. If an infected dog is not treated, then severe whipworm infection can cause serious disease and even death. Whipworm infections can be prevented by regularly cleaning up dog faeces from your yard.

Tapeworms

The term 'tapeworm' describes a group of parasitic worms that live in the gut of animals, including humans. These infestations are found worldwide. In Australia, the most serious locally acquired form of tapeworm infestation is caused by the hydatid tapeworm (*Echinococcus granulosus*), which can infect dogs and dingoes.

Tapeworms are long, flat worms that attach themselves to your pet's intestines. A tapeworm body consists of multiple segments, each with its own reproductive organs. Tapeworm infections are usually diagnosed by finding segments, which appear as small white worms that may look like grains of rice or seeds around your pet's anus, in their faeces or where they sleep.

