



Intestinal Parasites

These are the most common intestinal parasites affecting dogs and cats. The chart shows what they are, what they do, and how to treat and prevent them. Use the tips at the end to stay safe!

Parasite	What It Is	How It's Transmitted	Signs of Infection	Treatment	Prevention	Can It Infect Humans
Roundworms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long worms that live in the small intestines • Immature forms (larvae) migrate through tissue 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating eggs from infected stool • Eating infected rodents • Passed from mother through placenta (dogs) or milk (cats) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diarrhea • Vomiting • Coughing • Rough hair coat • Distended belly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two doses of dewormer given 2 weeks apart • Difficult to kill in the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deworm all puppies & kittens • Yearly fecal screenings (to identify eggs) • Use a heartworm preventive with dewormer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • Can cause blindness in children
Hookworms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long worms with hook-like mouths that live in the small intestines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating larvae in the environment or they penetrate skin • In dogs, passing through milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anemia (decreased red blood cells) • Diarrhea • Dark stool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two doses of dewormer given 2 weeks apart • Difficult to kill in the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly fecal screenings • Use a heartworm preventive containing a dewormer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes
Whipworms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long, whip-like worms that live in the large intestines of dogs • The process of egg to adult can take 70-90 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating eggs from infected stool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diarrhea with blood and mucous • Weight loss • Vomiting • Constipation • Abdominal pain • Straining to defecate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Three daily doses of a specific dewormer repeated every month for 3 months • Difficult to kill in the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly fecal screenings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No
Tapeworms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long, segmented worms that live in the small and large intestines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating fleas • Eating rodents or rabbits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most infections do not cause visible signs • Diarrhea 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One dose of a specific dewormer • Deworm when see fleas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flea prevention • Typically owner sees what looks like rice by the anus 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No, though humans can get tapeworms other ways



Intestinal Parasites

Parasite	What It Is	How It's Transmitted	Signs of Infection	Treatment	Prevention	Can It Infect Humans
Giardia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single-celled parasite that lives in the intestines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating eggs or parasite from infected stool 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most infections do not cause visible signs • Diarrhea • Weight loss 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dewormer daily for 1 week • Difficult to kill in the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly fecal screenings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No
Coccidia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A single-celled parasite that lives in the small intestines • Each species has their own type of coccidia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eating eggs or parasite from infected stool • Eggs from a rodent or rabbit will not infect a cat or dog 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diarrhea that is foul smelling, pasty and non-bloody • Weight loss • Dull hair coat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Antibiotic daily for 1 week • Difficult to kill in the environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yearly fecal screenings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No

10 Ways You Can Decrease the Spread of Intestinal Parasites

1. Have your pet's stool checked yearly to catch infections early.
2. Clean up stool as soon as possible and dispose of properly.
3. Wash your hands after handling any pet, especially if disposing of stool.
4. Keep your pet up to date on flea prevention.
5. Use a heartworm preventive that also treats and prevents some intestinal parasites.
6. If your dog eats stool, ask your veterinarian about a taste deterrent.
7. Deworm all puppies and kittens on the recommended schedule.
8. Cover all outdoor sandboxes. Cats use sandboxes like a litter box and this is a common way for children to get roundworms.
9. If possible, do not let your pet eat any rodents or rabbits.
10. Use a bleach dilution to clean any contaminated surfaces (such as an infected dog's toys or kennel or an infected cat's litter box).

Keep your pets and your family safe!