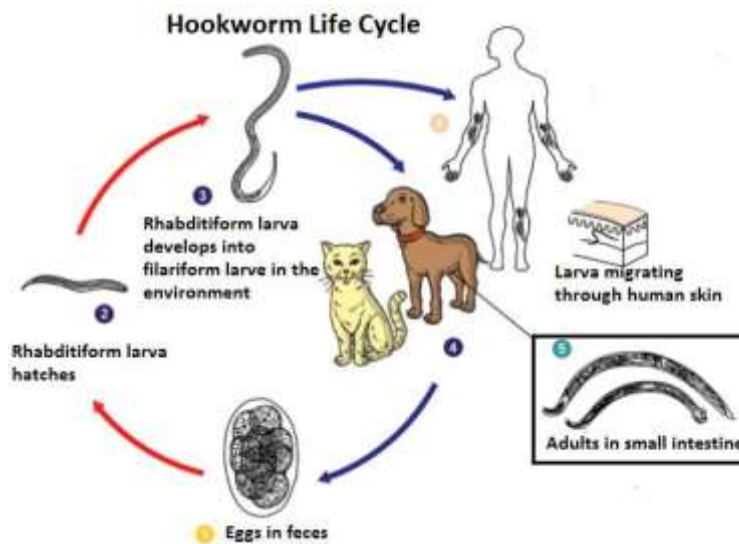




## Hookworms

Hookworms are parasites that live in the small intestines of dogs and cats. They attach to the intestinal wall and feed on blood from the intestines. A heavy infestation of hookworms may cause severe anemia especially in a young pet. Signs can also include diarrhea or a dark stool.

Eggs pass in the stool and hatch into larvae in the environment. The larvae penetrate the skin or a pet eats them. Newborns can get hookworms through their mother's milk. The larvae migrate to the small intestine and develop into adults.



Treatment for hookworms requires two doses, two weeks apart. Only the adults are killed, and not the immature larvae. Most hookworm medications also treat roundworms. Some of the monthly heartworm preventive medications also control hookworms.

Pets continually exposed to a contaminated environment have recurrent infestations of hookworms. However, hookworm larvae can also remain dormant in the body, reactivate later, and develop into adults in the intestines, thus starting a new infection. In this case, frequent treatment is necessary.

Hookworms are a potential threat to humans. The larvae penetrate human skin as easily as our pets. In people, the larvae move under the skin and cause a "creeping eruption".

Clean up after your dog on a daily basis to minimize the environmental contamination. Keep children away from areas that your dog uses and keep sandboxes covered so cats stay out.