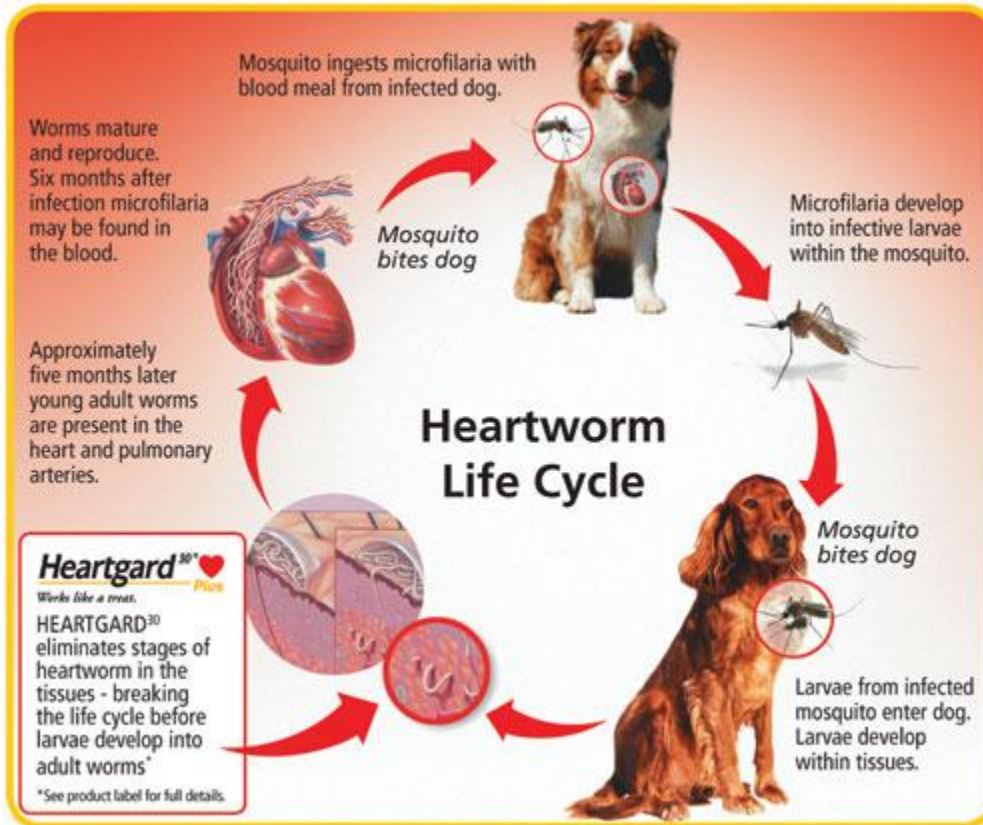


Fleas, Ticks, Mosquito's Oh My!!!!

IT IS HEARTWORM, FLEA AND TICK SEASON!

Heartworms are transmitted to dogs by mosquitoes. Without the protection of a heartworm preventive, your pet could get heartworm disease—a potentially deadly illness of the heart and lungs. All dogs are at risk for heartworm disease no matter where they live. Once a dog is infected with heartworms, treatment can be expensive, difficult and unsuccessful.



Heartworms live in the heart and lungs of infected dogs. Left untreated, heartworm disease may be fatal to your dog. Common signs of heartworm infection in dogs include coughing, difficulty breathing and sluggishness. Recently infected dogs may show no signs of the disease.

Infected dogs are carriers of heartworm disease, as are wolves, foxes, coyotes and raccoons.

As no medication is 100% effective, and some dogs may vomit the medication or

hide it, we recommend annual testing and year-round prevention. Recent research has shown that a single dose of heartworm prevention does not prevent heartworm disease 100%, **but continued, regular, year-round monthly dosing can.**

Another benefit to heartworm prevention and year-round dosing is the prevention of intestinal parasites, such as roundworms, hookworms and whipworms. Roundworms and hookworms can also infect humans, especially children and immune-compromised adults, and infection can occur any time of the year.

Cats are also susceptible to heartworms, though slightly less than dogs. However, there is no treatment for heartworms in cats, and until recently there was no reliable test. At River Ridge Animal Hospital, we now have a reliable test for cats, and safe prevention is also available. As in dogs, we recommend yearly testing and year-round prevention. Symptoms in cats are often confused with asthma, such as coughing, but can include sudden death.

Fleas are the most common parasite affecting dogs and cats. In just one month, 10 fleas can become an infestation of up to 250,000 adult fleas on your pet and in your home. In a flea infestation, only 5% of the fleas are adults living on your pet. The remaining 95% live as immature stages in the pet's surroundings, i.e., **your home**.

Fleas can cause several health problems in dogs and cats, including one of the most common skin allergies seen by veterinarians, Flea Allergy Dermatitis. Fleas also carry tapeworms, which are transmitted to the pet after ingestion of a flea, via grooming in cats and chewing in dogs. With a very heavy infestation, fleas can cause anemia, especially in very young pets, older pets, and sick pets.



Flea maggots in your carpet

Protecting your pet against fleas monthly, year-round is crucial when it comes to preventing an infestation. Even if all adult fleas are killed, the immature life stages (remember 95% of fleas in an infestation are immature stages) will continue to develop into adult fleas and reinfest your pet for up to several months. It is very important to use a product that kills all life stages of fleas in a single formulation.

Ticks are also emerging at this time of year. Ticks are capable of transmitting organisms that cause diseases such as Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted diseases can become chronic in nature.



Ticks can lay several eggs at one time.

Some of the products available repel ticks and kill them, preventing them from attaching to your pet at all. Some products kill the tick after it attaches but before it can transmit any disease to your pet. Fortunately, most tick prevention products are combined with flea preventives so you only have to apply one product monthly.

We have several types of prevention available for heartworms, fleas and ticks, including individual and combination products, oral preventives and topical. Please contact us for more information and check our website at www.riverridgevets.com for specials and coupons.

SEVEN SUBTLE SIGNS OF SICKNESS IN YOUR CAT

Cats are very good at hiding signs of illness. Sometimes it can be difficult to tell if your cat is truly ill until symptoms have progressed to a serious point. Here are seven signs to look for:

- 1. Any change in routine behavior:** Maybe your cat is suddenly sleeping in a different spot, or maybe he is hiding more than usual. Does he not greet you at the door anymore when you get home? Is he vocalizing more, or less?



2. **Any change in food consumption:** If your cat has lost his appetite, or if he has become ravenous and wants to eat anything and everything, both are cause for concern. Is he eating and drinking more or less than usual?
3. **Any change in litterbox habits:** Is your cat urinating or defecating outside the litterbox? Is he crying while trying to urinate? Is he suddenly spraying or unable to urinate? Is there blood in either the urine or stool, or does he have diarrhea?
4. **Any change in grooming behavior:** Does your cat excessively groom, and is he getting bald spots or sores? Maybe your cat has stopped grooming and is getting matted.
5. **Unexplained weight loss:** If your cat is not on a weight loss diet but has lost weight, or one cat has lost weight but the other hasn't, this can indicate a health problem.
6. **Bad breath:** Does your cat's breath just about knock you out? Infection as well as metabolic disease can cause foul breath in your pet.
7. **Vomit or change in bowel habits:** If your cat is vomiting and it is not associated with hairballs, or you notice diarrhea or blood in either the vomit or stool, your pet may be seriously ill.

Please contact your veterinarian as soon as you notice any of the above subtle illness signs in your cat as prompt attention can help the treatment outcome. Waiting can worsen signs, cause irreversible organ damage in some diseases, and make treatment less successful.

VISIT US ONLINE!!

Please visit our new website at www.riverridgevets.com for a virtual tour, learn about our new facility, meet the doctors, find coupons and specials, and contact us by email! The site is being continuously updated and will have added new features so check back often-in fact bookmark us!

You can also find us on Facebook where you can view pet pictures, enter contests and chat with staff and other clients. We also post important updates such as weather closings, dog training schedules and more!



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