



Parasites, Pets, and Kids

Know the Facts: Don't expose your children!

- Hookworms and roundworms can be harbored by your dog or cat and transmitted to children who are living in homes with pets. In some cases these parasites can cause blindness in humans. It is thought that 30-50% of dogs and cats carry GI parasites and that 1-3 million people in the U.S. have infections from the same parasites carried by pets. Children, elderly people, and immuno-compromised people are at high risk.
- Dogs get infected with hookworms and roundworms by walking places where other dogs have defecated. The microscopic roundworm eggs and hookworm larvae end up on your dog's feet. Your dog then licks his feet and infects him or herself with these GI parasites. Three weeks later, your dog is shedding hookworm eggs and larvae from his GI tract. If your dog licks his anus and then licks your child or if your child pets your dog, he or she can become infected with these parasites.
- Giardia is a one-celled parasite that is common in puppies and kittens and can also be contracted by adult pets from contact with places that wildlife have soiled.
- Dogs can get ticks which spread Lyme Disease, Anaplasmosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, Ehrlichiosis and Tularemia which can affect people if the ticks detach from the dog and attach themselves to your child. This could be a risk factor for your children if the family dog or cat sleeps in their bed.
- Cats get infected with hookworms and tapeworms by hunting prey. Even if your cat lives indoors, the ingestion of one house mouse or cockroach can expose your cat to GI parasites. Cats with a flea infestation can spread cat scratch fever to people.

How can you decrease the risk of spreading parasites to your children?

- Keep your dog or cat on a monthly heartworm and intestinal parasite preventative once per month, all year. We carry Iverhart Plus for dogs, which prevents heartworm, roundworm and hookworm infection. We carry Advantage Multi for cats, which prevents Heartworm, Hookworm, Roundworm, Flea and Ear Mite infections.
- Keep your dog on a flea & tick preventative once a month, all year. We carry Frontline plus for protection from fleas and ticks.
- Keep your cat on a flea preventative, once a month, all year, and consider tick control if they go outside and get ticks. We carry Advantage Multi for cats, which prevents Heartworm, Hookworm, Roundworm, Flea and Ear Mite infections. We also carry Frontline for cats for flea and tick prevention.
- If you have a new puppy or kitten make sure you give all deworming medication recommended by your veterinarian and bring stool samples for testing as recommended by your veterinarian.
- Scoop the yard where your dog defecates at least weekly; ideally daily, as worm eggs and larvae are found in stool and can contaminate the environment.
- Bring a stool sample in from your dog or cat at least yearly to your veterinarian. We will give you a special collection cup at no cost in which to collect the sample. For best results bring a fresh sample. You may drop off the sample at any time. We will submit the specimen to a diagnostic lab where they are able to perform the most up-to-date and reliable testing available. We will call you with the results.

***It is important to always practice and teach your children good hygiene around pets.
Always wash your hands after handling your pet, especially before eating.***