

Protect Your Pets and Family from Parasites

Springtime means warm weather and more time spent outside with our children and pets. This translates to more exposure to parasites. While many parasites affect only dogs and cats, did you know that some parasites can be passed to humans and may pose serious health threats? This doesn't mean you shouldn't keep or enjoy your pets, but it does mean you should consider protecting them regularly with parasite control products.

Roundworms are one of the most common parasites found in dogs, cats and other animals.

Children may become infected by accidentally ingesting dirt contaminated with dog or cat feces containing roundworm eggs. Roundworms can cause serious disease in people as larvae migrate out of the intestine and through internal organs. Roundworms can also cause a condition known as ocular larva migrans leading to blindness if larvae enter the retina. Ocular larva migrans is thought to affect approximately sixty-five people across the United States each year.

Hookworms may also infect both pets and people. Hookworm larvae burrow into the bare skin of the feet or body when walking barefoot or lying on soil or sand contaminated with hookworm eggs. This is known as cutaneous larval migrans and it causes an itchy raised, red rash on the skin.

Keeping your yard or litter box clean of pet feces dramatically reduces the chance of infection with parasites as does using a monthly parasite control product like Sentinel™ or Revolution™. Having fecal samples checked for parasites twice a year is also a good idea. Keep your pets and your family healthy by making sure they receive regular protection against intestinal parasites from your veterinarian.

Submitted by: Dr. Sabrina Walters