

Why do we deworm our pets?

Guelph, ON – Deworming might seem to be a small part of taking care of your pet but it plays a big role in keeping your pets, and your family, healthy. Dogs and cats can be exposed to worms in the obvious way, like eating feces from other infected animals. They can also get worms from eating worm eggs or larvae in dirt, on grass, toys or sticks they put in their mouths, or when licking their feet and coats. Dogs and cats that hunt are exposed when they eat rodents and other wildlife. Pets can even be infected by worm larvae that crawl through their skin.

Once pets have worms, they can pass those worms in their feces. Some worm eggs need time to develop in the environment before they can infect people or other animals. This is one of the reasons there are such strong recommendations for cleaning up after your pet, both at home and in public spaces. The risk of some parasites (like roundworms and hookworms) is pretty much eliminated if pet feces are picked up and disposed of right away.

Other parasites can infect people and pets more quickly. Wash your hands well after cleaning up after your pet and before eating. Dogs and cats can also pass worms to their babies, either before they are born or when the puppies and kittens nurse. This is why your veterinarian recommends frequent deworming for puppies and kittens.

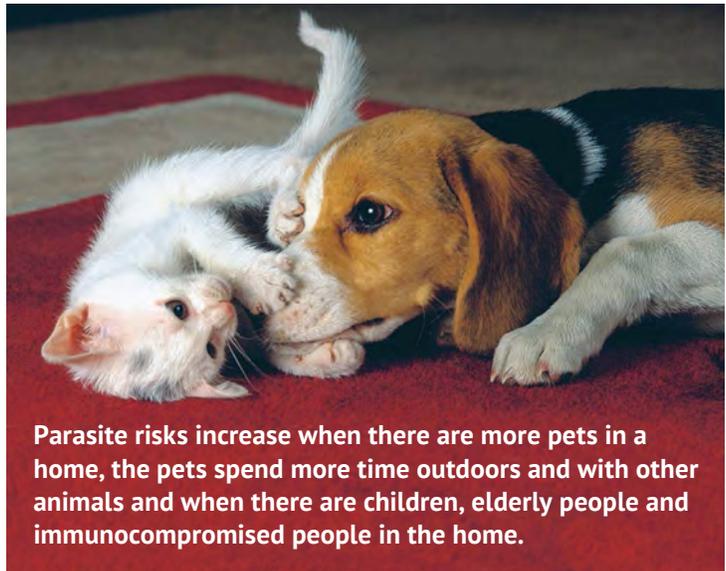
Deworming remains important throughout a pet's life. Since parasites exist outside and inside our homes, animals of any age can be exposed. Most pets with worms don't show any signs of being infected so you can't just wait until you see worms to act. Your veterinarian can make a recommendation for how often your pet should be dewormed based on risk.

Pets and families at low risk include strictly indoor pets in single pet families with healthy adult pet parents. Parasite risks increase when there are more pets in a home, the pets spend more time outdoors and with other animals and when there are children, elderly people and immunocompromised people in the home. Pets at low risk may only be dewormed once a year. Pets at high risk may be treated monthly for some or all of the year.

Deworming is an essential part of your pets health care that keeps both your pet and family healthy. Talk to your veterinary healthcare team today to determine the deworming schedule that is best for you and your pets.

For more information:

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