

How often should you deworm your CAT?

Indoor cats

Low risk of worm infection, as they do not eat rodents.



Group A

Deworm 1-2 times per year based on the results of a faecal examination or preventively deworm 1-2 times per year against roundworms.

Outdoor cats

High risk of worm infection due to eating rodents.



Group B

Treat 4-12 times per year against roundworms or based on the results of a faecal examination.

Treat 4-12 times per year against tapeworms.

Preventive measures

- If tapeworm segments are seen around the anus or in the stool, your cat should also be dewormed against tapeworms using praziquantel, and a flea treatment should be started.
- Having your cat's stool examined regularly is a good alternative to the 'standard' deworming recommendation.
- Important hygiene measures for people and animals:
 1. Wash your hands thoroughly (especially children's hands), particularly before eating.
 2. Wash fruit and vegetables thoroughly before consumption.
 3. Do not feed raw meat. Always provide fresh drinking water.
 4. Cover sandpits when they are not in use.
 5. Clean up your dog's stool immediately, whether in the garden or while walking, and dispose of it in the general waste bin — not on the compost heap! Wash your hands afterwards.

Additional treatment

Treatment against roundworms:

- Kittens should be dewormed at 3 weeks of age, with the treatment repeated every 2 weeks until 2 weeks after weaning. If there is a persistent increased risk of infection (for example, free roaming outdoors), monthly treatments are recommended until the kitten is six months old.
- Deworm a nursing female cat at the time of the kittens' first treatment (3 weeks after birth).
- Cats with an increased risk of infection (show cats, catteries, shelters) should be treated twice, 2 weeks before and 2-4 weeks after the event. In catteries, deworming should be done monthly or based on the results of a monthly faecal examination.
- Pregnant cats should be dewormed once with emodepside spot-on (Dronspot) 7 days before the expected birth to prevent transmission of *Toxocara cati* larvae through the milk to the kittens.

- Cats living with small children (under 5-6 years old), immunocompromised individuals, or elderly people (YOPs) should, according to the decision chart, be dewormed monthly or treated based on the results of a monthly faecal examination.

Treatment against tapeworms:

- Deworm in case of a flea infestation.
- Deworm if a tapeworm infection is detected.
- Cats that eat raw meat, prey, and/or carcass remains, or that hunt, should be dewormed at least 4 times per year or based on the results of a faecal examination carried out every 4 months.
- In areas where the fox tapeworm occurs, cats that eat rodents may shed infectious eggs that pose a risk to humans. However, compared to dogs, the risk of egg shedding in cats is significantly lower. To eliminate any remaining risk, a higher treatment frequency can be applied. Monthly treatments (12 times per year) prevent the shedding of eggs.

Treatment against lungworm:

- In areas where lungworm occurs, or for cats that go outdoors, eat slugs, or hunt, preventive treatment every 2 months is recommended.

Treatment against heartworm:

- Cats living in areas where heartworm is present should receive monthly preventive treatment against larvae during the mosquito season and continue up to 30 days after the end of the season.
- Cats that travel to areas where heartworm occurs should be treated within 30 days of arrival and then monthly until 30 days after returning home.
- Cats imported from areas where heartworm occurs should be treated immediately after import. Then, they should be tested for an existing heartworm infection and retested after at least 6 months.

If you would like to get more information about worming from our veterinarian, please visit <https://www.vetsend.co.uk/wormers>



Explanation about different worm types

Worms are parasites that can live in different areas of the animal's body. Dogs and cats can get infected at any time, no matter the age. They could even get infected with worms that pose a risk against humans. The important worm types are round, tape, and hookworms whose adult worms live in the small intestine. Heartworms live in the pulmonary artery and adult lungworms live in the vessels between the heart and lungs. Some worms can pose a risk to human health.

Roundworms

Roundworms are one of the most common worms found in dogs and cats. They are called roundworms cause of their round shape. You can find these worms in the intestines, airways, under the skin, in cavities of the nose, and in large heart vessels. The most common roundworms found in dogs and cats in the UK are the *Toxocara canis*, and *Toxocara cati*.

Heartworms

Heartworm is the name of the parasite *Dirofilaria immitis*. This parasite can cause infections in dogs and cats. They are called 'heartworms' because they live in the pulmonary artery of the heart. Thankfully, these heartworm infections are not present in the United Kingdom, however, they could be found in animals that are from, or have been to South Europe.

Tapeworms

Tapeworms have an indirect life cycle. Adult tapeworms live in the intestines of the definitive host (for example, a dog or cat). They get there when young tapeworms (also known as hydatid cyst) settle themselves in the intermediate host (like sheep, fleas, rabbits, or mice). The dog consumes part of this intermediate host, which causes the cyst to settle in the dog's gastrointestinal tract. Here, they develop into adult tapeworms. In the definitive host, the tapeworms are not likely to cause major issues.

French Heartworm

French Heartworm (lungworm)

French heartworm is the name of the parasitic worm *Angiostrongylus Vasorum*. This parasite is able to infect dogs. This worm lives in the vessels between the heart and lungs, hence the name. It is also called lungworm because the infection can lead to severe lung damage. This parasite is becoming more common in the United Kingdom. Dogs can become infected when they eat slugs or prey animals that carry this worm.

Lungworm

In addition to the French heartworm, cats can also be infected with the feline lungworm *Aelurostrongylus abstrusus*. Symptoms such as coughing, difficulty breathing, poor appetite, and weight loss usually appear only in severe infections. A cat can become infected with lungworm by eating slugs, frogs, mice, birds, or reptiles.

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