

HEARTWORM DISEASE

Heartworm disease is caused by worms that live in the right side of the heart and the lungs of over 30 species of animals. Mosquitoes carry the parasite between hosts. Once established in the heart the worms may live for many years. Heartworm disease affects dogs and cats in different ways. Preventives are very effective.

DOGS

When affected by heartworms dogs have respiratory and heart problems. Dogs may have cough, weakness, and internal organ damage. Treatment is possible but is expensive and has risks. Prevention is very reliable and simple. A simple blood test should be done once yearly.

CATS

Cats do not get heartworm disease as often as dogs. When infected by heartworm cats tend to have serious problems. Symptoms may include vomiting, coughing, weakness, weight loss, heart and lung disease and even death. Heartworm is difficult to diagnose in cats and treatments given to dogs cannot be used for cats. Preventatives are very effective for cats.

PREVENTING HEARTWORM DISEASE

- Heartworm is a completely preventable disease.
- Preventives work by killing the heartworm before it matures in the host.
- Dogs should be tested annually for heartworm.
- Puppies should start preventive at 6 weeks of age.
- Puppies do not need testing if less than 6 months old.
- Dogs with a negative heartworm test and at risk cats should be on year round preventive given once a month.

We recommend year round use of heartworm/intestinal parasite preventives.

PREVENTIVE MEDICATIONS

Heartgard Plus Also prevents roundworms and hookworms

Interceptor Also prevents hookworms

Revolution Also prevents fleas ticks and some mites

If purchased directly from our clinic and used as directed, the cost of treating labeled parasites is covered 100 % by the manufacturer.

See also petsandparasites.org and heartwormsociety.org

For E Mail heartworm preventive reminders:

For Heartgard: us.merial.com/pet_owners/

For Interceptor: interceptor.novartis.us/

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