

## A Guide to Parasites

Parasite	Affects	What do they look like and where do they live?	How can my pet contact them?	Symptoms can include	Can it affect human health?
<b>Roundworm</b>		Roundworms are large white worms with cylindrical bodies. The adult roundworm lives in the small intestine.	Pets can contract roundworm by swallowing infected eggs from the environment. Puppies are usually born infected with roundworms; kittens and puppies can also become infected via their mothers' milk. Pets that like hunting can also be at risk of roundworm infections by ingesting host species such as rats or birds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🐾 Pot belly</li> <li>🐾 Poor coat</li> <li>🐾 Diarrhoea</li> <li>🐾 Poor growth</li> </ul> <p>Often there are no outward signs.</p>	Roundworm can affect human health. Disease is not common however it can be devastating.
<b>Tapeworm</b>		Tapeworm look like long flat ribbons, divided into rice size segments. Adult tapeworm live in the small intestine. Once mature the tapeworm releases segments containing eggs, these pass out the pet and can be seen in dog/cat poo.	Pets contract tapeworm by ingesting an infected host eg rabbit mice. A flea is the most common tapeworm host.	<p>Your pet may show no symptoms, however common symptoms include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🐾 Licking bottom</li> <li>🐾 'Scooting' along the ground</li> <li>🐾 Vomiting and diarrhoea</li> </ul>	Unlikely, but possible.
<b>Lungworm</b>		<p>Lungworm resides in the heart and pulmonary arteries and can be fatal to dogs.</p> <p>Adults are slender worms of around 2.5cm in length but they are never seen as they remain inside the infected dog or fox. The larvae, which are passed out in poo, are impossible to see.</p>	Dogs can become infected by swallowing infected slugs and snails.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🐾 Coughing</li> <li>🐾 Exhaustion</li> <li>🐾 Weight loss</li> <li>🐾 Poor appetite</li> <li>🐾 Vomiting and diarrhoea</li> <li>🐾 Excessive bleeding from wounds</li> </ul> <p>With early treatment, dogs can make a full recovery. If untreated, lungworm can be fatal.</p> <p>Reinfection is possible.</p>	Not considered a threat.

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Hookworm		<p>Adult hookworms live in the gut and are between 5 and 16mm in length. In the UK they mainly affect dogs, with cat infections being very rare.</p> <p>Hookworm eggs are passed in dog and even foxes' poo, and are left in the environment.</p>	<p>Animals are infected by ingesting larvae from the environment. Dogs are at risk of contracting this via fox poo as well as hosts containing infective larvae. Larvae can penetrate skin and cause infection, usually of skin around foot.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🐾 Diarrhoea</li> <li>🐾 Anaemia</li> <li>🐾 Anorexia</li> <li>🐾 Lethargy</li> </ul>	<p>In some parts of the world.</p>
Whipworms		<p>Whipworms have a thick head end and a characteristic whip-like tail.</p> <p>The adults live in the large intestine and in the UK they only affect dogs.</p> <p>Whipworms embed their head end into the intestine, they damage the lining and feed on blood and tissue fluid.</p>	<p>Dogs become infected by eating eggs in the environment that have been passed in the poo of infected dogs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🐾 Diarrhoea</li> <li>🐾 Anaemia</li> <li>🐾 Reduced growth in young dogs</li> </ul>	<p>Possible but very rare.</p>
Fleas		<p>They are small, wingless insects, approximately one-eighth of an inch, with back legs that are modified for jumping.</p> <p>Eggs are laid on the animal but fall into the environment, for instance pets' bedding or in the carpet.</p> <p>Only 5% of flea population is on the animal – i.e. 95% in the environment.</p>	<p>Fleas can pass from one infected animal to another.</p> <p>In heavy burdens, you may need to treat the environment – otherwise fleas will continue to emerge in your home and on your pets. The environment is all the areas of the home the pet goes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🐾 Cats, dogs and rabbits will get flea bites</li> <li>🐾 Flea Bite Dermatitis (irritating the skin)</li> <li>🐾 Flea Allergy Dermatitis</li> <li>🐾 Anaemia – particularly small animals, kittens and puppies</li> <li>🐾 Can be responsible for the transmission of viral and bacterial disease</li> </ul>	<p>Humans can be bitten by fleas in the same way that cats, dogs and rabbits are.</p>

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<p><b>Ticks</b></p>		<p>Ticks have 8 legs and their bodies are composed of only two sections. They are generally found in rural areas.</p>	<p>Ticks lie in vegetation and attach to dogs, cats or people that brush past.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🐾 Ticks pierce a hole through the skin and feed on blood, this can cause a reaction at the site of the attachment.</li> <li>🐾 Anaemia can develop from severe infestation in a young animal.</li> <li>🐾 Ticks can transmit Lyme Disease in the UK and Ireland.</li> <li>🐾 Babesiosis and Ehrlichiosis can be transmitted by ticks to pets traveling abroad.</li> </ul>	<p>Ticks can attach themselves to humans and can transmit the same diseases to humans.</p>