

HEARTWORM DISEASE

When a dog has a mature heartworm infection, female worms release their young (microfilariae) directly into the dog's bloodstream. When a mosquito bites a dog with microfilariae in the blood, it ingests the microfilariae along with the blood. Over 10 to 14 days, they develop and mature into infective larvae inside the mosquito. When the mosquito bites another dog, the larvae are left behind. In 6 to 7 months, these infective larvae continue to grow to full maturity. Heartworms may live for 5 to 7 years in the dog.

A MESSAGE TO TAKE TO HEART

While the risk of infection in dogs varies from one region of the country to another, one fact remains: heartworm disease is a threat to unprotected dogs in every state, even some parts of Alaska. Unprotected dogs, foxes, coyotes, and wolves can spread of this serious disease. **The relocation of dogs, as with humanitarian efforts following natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina, can introduce heartworm disease into parts of the country where it is not normally found.** Unprotected dogs traveling with their owners to areas where heartworms exist will be at risk for heartworm exposure. Heartworm disease is a complicated and deadly illness. **Colorado has had a 67% increase of heartworm positive dogs between 2013 and 2017.**

SIGNS OF HEARTWORM DISEASE

Some dogs can be infected for several years before symptoms develop, so heartworm disease in younger dogs may not be obvious. As heartworms mature, signs of disease may include a mild persistent cough, reluctance to exercise, fatigue after moderate activity, decreased appetite, and weight loss.

DETECTING HEARTWORM INFECTION

Blood tests are available for detecting heartworm infections in dogs. Keep in mind that no diagnostic test can accurately detect all heartworm infections. For example, tests cannot consistently detect infection until heartworms are at least 7 months old.

WHO SHOULD BE TESTED?

Annual testing is recommended for all dogs to ensure that heartworm prevention is achieved and maintained. If an infection is diagnosed in its early stages, the disease may be less severe and easier to treat.

All dogs 7 months of age and older should be tested for heartworms prior to beginning a preventive program.

PREVENTION

Heartworm preventive medications are very effective when given properly on the prescribed schedule. It is important to monitor your pet's weight to ensure your pet falls within the weight range listed on the package. All approved heartworm preventives are safe, very easy to use, relatively inexpensive, and

some provide treatment for additional parasites. Prevention is always safer and more affordable than treating adult heartworm infections.

We offer Iverhart Plus chewable tablets that will prevent heartworm disease, treat and control hookworm and roundworms monthly.

We also offer ProHeart6 Injectable prevention. It's the only heartworm product that provides six months of continuous protection against heartworm disease with a single veterinary-administered dose. You can trust that your dog is completely protected against heartworm disease for 6 months with just 1 shot. This also treats hookworms at the time of injection, and the company will reimburse any costs if the pet is diagnosed with hookworms/roundworms within the 6-month period after injection.

TESTING SPECIAL

We are offering a special on Heartworm testing in the month of April and May.

*If your pet is tested for Heartworm disease in these months, the price will be \$25.00. The regular price is \$40.00.

*If a blood panel is taken along with a Heartworm test, purchase of 6 months of oral heartworm preventative (Iverhart), or a Proheart6 injection is given, the Heartworm test will be discounted to \$15.00.

*If you purchase 1 year (12 months) of Iverhart or elect to have the injectable ProHeart6 done and prepay for the 2nd injection, the Heartworm test will be discounted to \$10.00.

