

Common Canine Internal Parasites

Most of us are familiar with external parasites such as fleas, ticks and ear mites, which can be easily detected on your pet and treated. However, it is important to take preventative action to guard against the hidden parasites that can be picked up by your pet, and in some cases, even transmitted to you and your family. Some of the most common are heartworms, roundworms, tapeworms, whipworms, and hookworms.

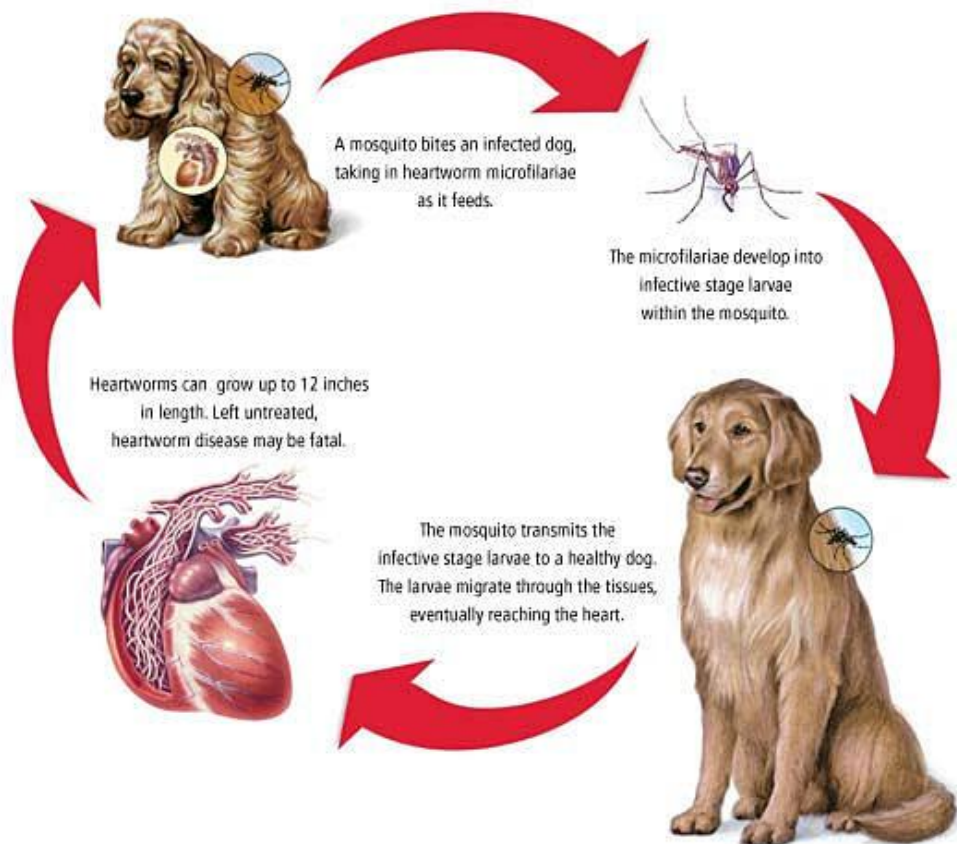
Heartworms

- Are the most dangerous of all canine parasites
- Can cause heart and lung disease
- Are spread by mosquitoes, so all dogs are at risk
- CAN be transmitted to humans in very rare cases, but manifest differently
- **Can KILL your dog!!!**

There are currently a number of prescription medications available that prevent heartworm disease, including Interceptor, Heartgard and Iverhart, among others. Some also protect your dog against intestinal parasites as well. Most are monthly treatments that come in a flavored tablet and that are easily administered orally. Your dog **MUST** be tested for possible heartworm infection before starting a preventative routine. ***Prevention of heartworm disease is safer and less expensive than treatment.***

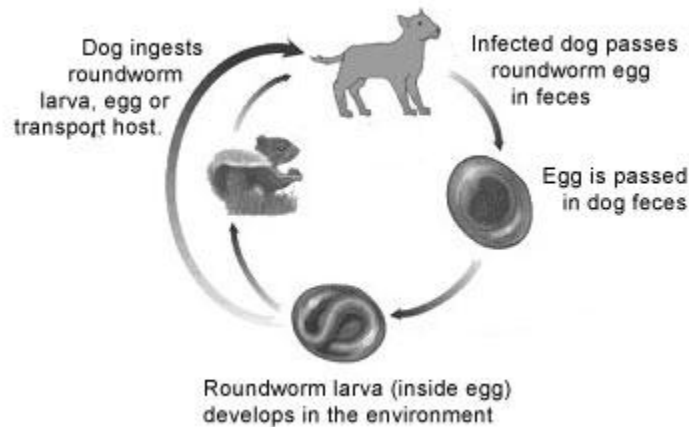
Heartworm Life Cycle

The life cycle of the heartworm begins when a mosquito bites and feeds on the blood of an infected dog that is carrying tiny immature heartworms in its blood. During the next two to three weeks, the larvae develop into the infective stage within the mosquito. When the infected mosquito feeds again, it can transmit heartworm larvae to a healthy cat or dog.



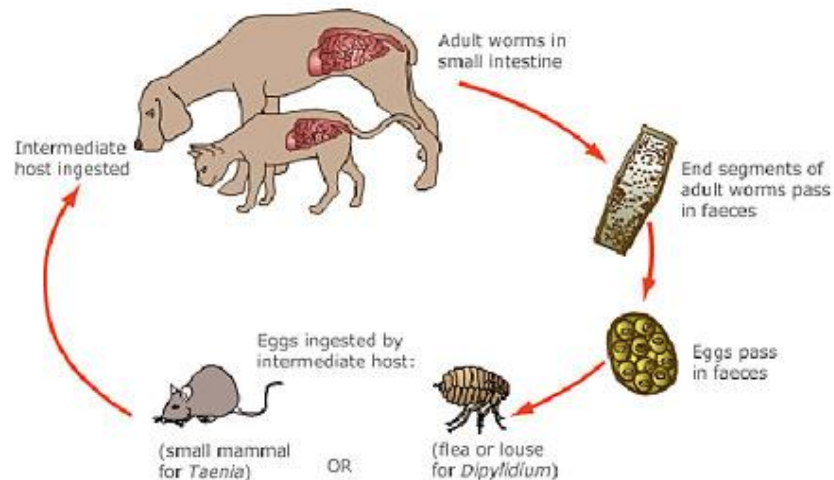
Roundworms

- Are the most common parasites found in dogs
- Can cause vomiting and diarrhea, abdominal pain, and lack of appetite
- Can stunt a puppy's growth; almost all puppies are born with them
- Can be picked up from soil, feces of infected animals, and eating small animals like mice and birds
- CAN be transmitted to humans, especially children



Tapeworms

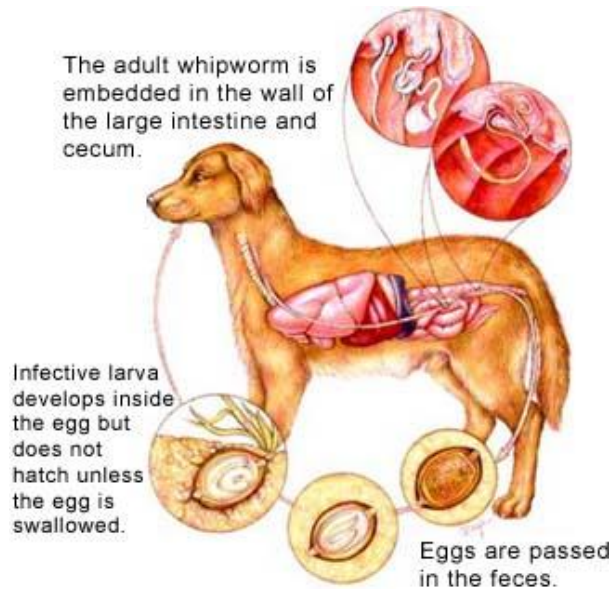
- Are more dangerous for puppies and can stunt growth
- Can cause digestive problems and intestinal blockage
- Can be transmitted directly from another dog (or cat) and transmitted by fleas or rodents
- Dogs can get two different kinds of tapeworms, one of which CAN be transmitted to humans



Whipworms

- Cause anemia, chronic diarrhea, and weight loss
- Affect 1 in 7 dogs, but are extremely difficult to detect
- Can be picked up from soil and feces of infected dogs
- Can NOT be transmitted to humans

Whipworms (cont.)



Hookworms

- Can cause severe anemia, eczema and secondary bacterial infections
- Leave bleeding intestinal wounds
- Infect nearly 20% of all dogs in the United States
- Are often passed from puppies to their mothers
- Enter dogs by mouth or through the skin, particularly the feet
- CAN be transmitted to humans

