



FLEAS, MOSQUITOES, AND YOUR CAT

Assessing your cat's risk: If any of the cats in your house go outdoors, or if they have contact with other animals who are exposed to fleas, you should consider protecting them from contracting fleas. If your cat spends a significant amount of time outdoors where it is exposed to mosquitoes, you should also consider protecting it from contracting heartworm disease, which is spread by mosquitoes.

Fleas: In downtown Chicago, we start to see fleas in June. All over our environment, fleas begin to breed and thousands of their young will establish residency on our pets. The eggs are laid on the animal, but they fall off into our homes and yards and hatch three weeks later. Imagine how rapidly a flea problem occurs when an adult female can lay up to 18 eggs at a time.

The best way to deal with fleas is to prevent them. Start prevention in June and continue these measures until the temperature falls below 32 degrees F, usually late-November or December. The flea population peaks during October and November.

Mosquitoes: In Chicago, mosquitoes start to appear around the same time as fleas. Our recommended Heartworm preventative drugs kill the parasite that causes Heartworm Disease, but not the mosquitoes that carry that parasite. DO NOT use human mosquito repellent products on your pets!

The following products have been determined by the doctors at Family Pet to be the safest and most effective options for preventing fleas and, if necessary, heartworm and intestinal parasites in your cat:

ADVANTAGE

- Topical **flea** preventive
- Applied **once monthly** to the skin along the pet's back
- Remains effective even after a shampoo treatment (do not over bathe).
- Kills **98-100% OF EXISTING FLEAS ON PETS WITHIN 12 HRS.** Reinfesting fleas are killed within 2 hours. Larval flea stages in the pet's surroundings are killed following contact with treated pet.
- Main active ingredient: *Imidacloprid*, which binds with the oils in the pet's skin and spreads across the whole body, paralyzing any fleas that come in contact with it and killing them before they can lay eggs.
- *Age limitations:* for felines aged 8 weeks and older.
- **Product-of-choice** for cats who need protection against fleas only. *Advantage is the only product of its kind that's completely non-toxic to mammals.*

REVOLUTION

- Topical **flea & heartworm** preventive, plus treats and controls **hookworm** and **roundworm** intestinal parasites.
- Applied **once monthly** to the skin along the pet's back
- *Age limitations:* For felines 8 weeks of age or older.
- **KILLS EXISTING FLEAS on pets within 36 HRS**, and no viable fleas hatch from eggs after the first administration.
- **PREVENTS DEVELOPMENT of ADULT HEARTWORMS** when administered monthly year round or seasonally June-February.
- **One dose** will treat any active **HOOKWORM or ROUNDWORM** infestation.
- Active ingredient: *selamectin*, which kills parasites via cat's bloodstream and redistribution to skin and other tissues
- **Product-of-choice** for medically eligible indoor/outdoor cats who need protection against parasites.

SHAMPOOS: Cleans the skin and kills the adult fleas on the pet with a ONE DAY residual effect. Ask your veterinarian which specific shampoo s/he recommends for your pet.

HOUSE SPRAY: When using the new generation of flea treatments, house (premise) sprays are recommended only in cases of heavy flea infestation. Ask your veterinarian what type of spray we currently carry, or if s/he recommends you call an exterminator to assist you with flea control.

PRODUCTS NOT RECOMMENDED BY THE DOCTORS AT FAMILY PET:

FLEA COLLARS: Given the number and variety of safe, effective alternatives, our doctors cannot in good medical conscience recommend any commercially available flea collars to our clients.

FOGGERS/BOMBS: If the flea infestation is so great that it requires more than topical animal treatment plus a premise spray, we recommend calling an exterminator as a safer and more effective alternative to any commercially available flea fogger or bomb.

FLEA DIPS: Not only are these extremely toxic to your pet, they are entirely unnecessary given the modern alternatives available.

GARLIC: No evidence, experimental or otherwise, exists as to the efficacy of garlic in flea treatment/prevention.

IN CONCLUSION:

When your pet actually has fleas you must choose a type of control for the animal and the home. Additional measures are vacuuming weekly (throw away the bag), washing hard floors with a pine cleaner weekly, and washing linens weekly

The safety and efficacy of the products carried by our hospital has improved greatly over the past few years, while those products available at pet and grocery stores may be outdated. Please choose wisely when it's time to treat your pet for fleas & ticks, which are a nuisance to all of us. Besides causing skin rashes and discomfort, fleas can transmit tapeworms. Ask us how to outline the safest and most practical prevention program to start prior to flea & mosquito season.