

Heartworm

HOW DO DOGS GET HEARTWORMS?

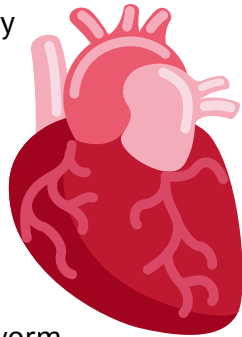
Dogs get heartworms from being bitten by an infected mosquito. Tests do not show positive results until six months after infection.

Heartworms go through three life stages:

Microfilariae - heartworms begin as microfilariae and are ingested by a mosquito when they feed on an infected host. After 10-30 days, they develop into infectious larvae.

Adolescent - Adolescent heartworms live in the skin tissue of dogs and other animals where they continue to grow and develop.

Adult - Fully mature heartworms migrate into the heart and surrounding pulmonary arteries where they mate and reproduce microfilariae within six to seven months.



TREATMENT

The product used to treat heartworm in adult dogs is melarsomine dihydrochloride, commonly known as DIROBAN®. Dogs are given injections in the muscles along their spine.

PREVENTION

TO PREVENT A DOG FROM GETTING HEARTWORMS, THEY MUST BE KEPT ON HEARTWORM PREVENTION.

Heartworm Association Treatment Protocol*:

After diagnosis, a heartworm positive dog is started on a veterinarian prescribed antibiotic called Doxycycline. As with all medications, it is important that your dog finishes the full medication as prescribed.

One month after finishing the doxycycline, call your vet to schedule your pup's first injection. Your dog will be started on a veterinarian prescribed anti-inflammatory steroid (Prednisone) after their first injection.

One month after the first injection, call your vet to schedule the second set of injections. These must be given back-to-back and on time. Your dog will once again be prescribed Prednisone after their injections.

After the second set of injections, you must schedule an appointment with your vet to complete a heartworm re-test four to six months later. At this point, they will be able to determine if treatment was effective and your dog is heartworm negative.

**Your veterinarian may use a different protocol*

IF YOUR DOG IS HAVING ANY ISSUES AFTER RECEIVING AN INJECTION, PLEASE CALL YOUR VETERINARIAN.



This information is strictly for educational purposes only. If your dog is experiencing symptoms, please contact your veterinarian.



THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND...

Limit your dog's activity - Dogs being treated for heartworm should be limited to minimal, low-intensity exercise. Too much exercise increases the rate at which heartworms cause damage in the heart and lungs.

Watch their weight - Remember, these worms are located in your dog's heart. They don't need the added issue of excess weight.

Prevention is protection - Stop heartworms before they even start and talk to your veterinarian about heartworm prevention medication.

Injection site sensitivity - It's not uncommon for a dog to be sensitive at the site of injection. Be extra gentle with your furry friend a couple days after.

Animal ID: _____

Diagnosis Date: _____

Injection 1: _____

Injection 2 & 3: _____

Heartworm Re -test: _____

**CONTACT YOUR
VETERINARIAN**

**Ask us about becoming a
volunteer or foster!**

