

Parasitic Worms

HOW DO PETS GET INFECTED?

Hookworms, roundworms and tapeworms - oh my! Dogs, especially puppies, can easily become infected with worms. These parasites are typically transmitted through fleas, ingestion, and from mother to pup.

Worms can be passed from an infected mother to unborn puppies in the womb or during nursing. This can be extremely dangerous for young puppies, and even fatal in severe cases.

WHICH WORMS SHOULD I WATCH OUT FOR?

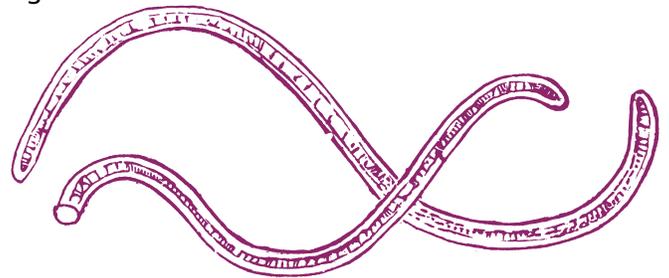
Hookworms live in the small intestine of their host where they latch on to the intestinal wall using their teeth. Unlike many worms, hookworms feed on the blood of their host. Adults live and reproduce within the intestines, with females eventually producing eggs that are released into the intestinal contents and passed into the world through the host animal's stool.

Roundworms, also known as nematodes or ascarids, are a parasitic worm that live freely in the intestine and feed off of partially digested contents of the stomach. They are the most common gastrointestinal worm found in dogs.

The two common species of this parasite found in dogs are known as *Toxocara canis* and *Toxascaris canis*. The former causes more significant illness and can also be transmitted to humans.

Tapeworms are spread through ingesting infected fleas, which are then digested, releasing a tiny tapeworm in the small intestine of a host.

This particular worm attaches to the intestinal wall where it absorbs nutrients through its skin and drops egg sacs from the end of its tail that are eventually passed through the stool. Tapeworms are relatively flat like a piece of tape (hence the name) and can grow to six or more inches in length.



WHAT ARE THE SIGNS & SYMPTOMS?

- Diarrhea and vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Weight loss
- Lethargy
- Pot-bellied appearance
- Intestinal blockage or pneumonia
- Dehydration
- Nutrition deficiency
- Bloody stool
- Poor coat condition



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



WHAT IF I THINK MY DOG HAS WORMS?

If you suspect your dog has worms, contact your veterinarian and schedule an appointment as soon as possible. Your vet will typically ask you to bring a stool sample so that they can perform a microscopic examination and look for eggs. Once diagnosed, your veterinarian may prescribe a dewormer.

PREVENTION

Like fleas and ticks, there are preventative medications and steps you can take to keep your pet worm free; regular testing and veterinary care, flea control, and hygiene are the best course of action. Talk to your veterinarian to find the right preventative for your pet.



**IF YOU SUSPECT
YOUR PET HAS
WORMS, CONTACT
YOUR VETERINARIAN
AND SCHEDULE AN
APPOINTMENT.**

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