

## Intestinal parasite Information for new owners:



**We recommend puppies and kittens should be wormed every 2 weeks up to 12 weeks of age. From 12 weeks of age to 6 months of age, you need to worm them once a month. Over 6 months of age they should be wormed at least every 3 months.**

If you are using revolution or advocate on an adult animal – we still recommend worming once every 6 months to kill the tapeworm.

### Why should I worm my pet?

Intestinal worms in cats and dogs may cause poor health, malnutrition, diarrhoea, vomiting and stunted growth. Serous hookworm infections can cause death in your pet.

Dog and cat intestinal worms can cause serious health problems for people. This is especially true for children or immunosuppressed adults. Below is a summary of the health problems cat and dog worms can cause in people.

**Roundworm** – of the cat and dog can cause Toxocariasis in people. Toxocariasis occurs when people ingest the parasite eggs. The eggs are deposited on the ground in cat and dog faeces. Most infections are asymptomatic. However, it can cause fever, anorexia, cough, abdominal pain, muscle and joint pain and eye problems. The most concerning of these problems is retinal granuloma formation. This can result in the person losing their site.

**Hookworms** – Ancylostoma(dogs) and Uncinaria can cause cutaneous larva migrans or ‘creeping eruption’ in people. It occurs when the worm larvae penetrate a person’s skin. The larvae move under the skin leaving red tracts and causing extreme irritation. This lesion occurs most in gardeners and children playing in on soil that was previously contaminated by faeces. Treatment is available.

**Flea tapeworm – (Dipylidium caninum):** Dipylidiasis is transmitted by digesting fleas or flea eggs. It can cause diarrhoea or restlessness. It does not usually cause serious health problems.

**Dog tapeworm – (Echinococcus granulosus):** Echinococcus granulosus can cause serious disease in people called hydatids. People are infected by ingesting worm eggs present in dog faeces, or on their coat. It can also be ingested in soil contaminated by faeces. The parasite ova enter the body and migrate through the human body. They hatch inside an organ and form a large cyst. The cysts destroy organs. There may be no symptoms of infection or the symptoms could be related to the organ being destroyed. Treatment is surgical removal of the cysts. You can also be infected by eating uncooked offal (farm or native animals). Hydatids is rare in New Zealand but because of it’s serious nature, we recommend regularly worming your dog.