

## Worm Your Dog

[www.pethealthcouncil.co.uk](http://www.pethealthcouncil.co.uk)

### Simply done four times a year gives a healthy worm-free dog.

Regular worming is essential to make sure your pet enjoys the best of health – and worming is easy to do. Dogs give us loyalty and companionship and in return we owe it to them to take positive steps to keep them fit, healthy and happy.



#### WHY WORM?

Roundworms (including *Toxocara canis*) and tapeworms are intestinal parasites which can be found in any dog although infection is easily treated. Worms may cause sickness and diarrhoea in young animals. Adult dogs may show no signs of ill health but still need regular worming.

Human infection (toxocariasis) may occur if mature *Toxocara* (roundworm) eggs are swallowed, however, it is very rare for anyone to become ill as a result. About 1-2% of healthy adults in the UK already possess *Toxocara* antibodies which mean that they have been exposed to *Toxocara* eggs or larvae with no ill effects.

Children are more vulnerable to *Toxocara* infection because they might pick it up when playing on grassland where the faeces from dogs carrying worms have been deposited.

On the rare occasions when human disease does occur it usually causes only mild symptoms. In exceptional cases it can cause damage to the eye in young children.

The chances of developing toxocariasis are minimal. It is estimated that there are only about two new cases of disease due to *Toxocara* infection per one million people each year. However, if every owner treated their dog with a worming preparation, and cleared up after their dog, toxocariasis would be virtually eradicated. Newly deposited faeces are not infectious.

#### WHAT TO DO

Worming is easy, effective and costs little. You can get a suitable worming preparation from your vet, pharmacist, pet shop or supermarket. There are many worming preparations on the market, so ask your vet or pharmacist which is the most effective product for your pet and for help in choosing which you will be able to administer successfully. Always follow the manufacturer's instructions carefully. If in doubt, ask your vet or pharmacist for advice.

#### ADULT DOGS

Adult dogs are relatively resistant to infection but nevertheless, they should still be routinely wormed at least every 6 months.

#### PREGNANT BITCHES

Pregnant bitches and bitches with young puppies should be wormed more frequently. Bitches should be wormed before mating, after the first 45 days of pregnancy and after giving birth to, and whilst weaning, pups. Consult your vet when treating a pregnant bitch.



#### PUPPIES

It is important to worm puppies as it is reasonable to assume that all puppies are infected with *Toxocara canis* and produce larger numbers of eggs than an adult dog. Puppies should be wormed from about 2 weeks of age. Great care has to be taken when treating a young animal, so always seek the advice of your

vet before doing so. Worming should continue at regular intervals (a minimum of four times) until the puppy is at least 6 months old. Thereafter follow the advice of your vet or pharmacist.

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### WORM YOUR DOG - IT'S EASY, EFFECTIVE AND INEXPENSIVE

Worming your dog is one of the easiest ways of making sure that your pet enjoys the best of health. What's more, if every dog owner wormed their dog on a regular basis it would virtually eradicate the possibility of any human illness due to infection by *Toxocara*. Healthy pets help to keep humans healthy too. Your pharmacist or vet can recommend an appropriate wormer.

**So worm your dog – it's the responsible thing to do!**

### Remember a healthy pet is a happy pet and a happy pet means a happy owner!

The Pet Health Council was formed in 1979 with the specific aim of promoting the health and welfare of pet animals in the interests of both pets and people. The PHC works with medical and veterinary advisers who are experts in this field.

The leaflet range currently comprises the following:

Insuring your Pet	Pets and The Family
Choosing a Pet	Your Pet's Teeth
Fit Not Fat	Practical Steps for Healthy Pets
Getting a Puppy	Stressed Pets
Health Benefits of Pets	The Facts about <i>Toxocara</i>
International Pet Travel	The Facts about Toxoplasmosis
Nutrition for Cats and Dogs	Worm Your Dog
Pets and Allergies	Your First Pet

Download leaflets from the PHC website:  
[www.pethealthcouncil.co.uk](http://www.pethealthcouncil.co.uk)

**The Pet Health Council**   
working for healthy pets & people

### The Five Golden Rules to Successful Pet Ownership

1. Follow a preventive health programme for your pet that includes:
  - a good diet
  - regular exercise
  - worming
  - vaccination
  - annual veterinary check ups
  - health insurance
2. Observe basic hygiene practices around your pet
3. Respect your pet, you have a duty of care, to fulfil your pet's basic needs including privacy and space as well as love and attention
4. Be a responsible owner, clear up after your animal and be considerate of other people and animals
5. Consider the changing needs of your pet throughout his life.

Associated organisations of the Pet Health Council include:

Association of Chartered Physiotherapists in Animal Therapy, Association of Pet Behaviour Counsellors, British Small Animal Veterinary Association, British Veterinary Association, National Office of Animal Health, National Pharmacy Association, Pet Food Manufacturers' Association, Royal Pharmaceutical Society of Great Britain and Society for Companion Animal Studies.



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