



Heartworm Prevention & Dewormer

The number of positive Heartworm cases in dogs has quadrupled in Washington state from 2012-2019. King County alone reported 242 positive cases in 2019, compared to the mere 28 cases reported in 2012. The positive cases have increased due to many reasons including climate change, lack of prevention and rescue dogs that are being brought to Washington from different states & countries. We also need to take into account that we live in such close proximity to a major military base where people from all over live with their pets. Medications like Heartgard not only prevent your pet from getting Heartworm disease but it also deworms them monthly for the most common intestinal parasites; Hookworms & Roundworms. Both Hookworms & Roundworms are contagious to humans. Roundworms can especially be dangerous for young children, causing blindness in some cases. Hookworms & Roundworms can be contracted by ingesting contaminated soil or feces, larvae in the soil actively penetrating the skin or an affected mother nursing her puppies. We can get them from our pets if they lick around our mouths or if they lick somewhere that we have a break in the skin, like a cut.

Heartworms are parasites that live in the heart and can lead to severe heart disease. Preventing this disease is critical because of the damage it inflicts on the heart & lungs, treatment of adult worms in the heart is expensive, and it requires strict crate rest for up to six months.

Mosquitoes transmit larval heartworms from one dog to another by sucking the blood of an infected dog, then regurgitating a little blood when they bite their next victims.

Several products are available for preventing heartworm infection, most of them monthly chews that are so tasty your dog will think it's a treat! Heartworm preventative's can be given to a puppy with their first set of vaccinations. If your dog is over 1 year of age, a blood sample must be tested to make sure they are not already infected. This simple test can be done in our hospital while you wait. It only takes a few drops of blood, 10 minutes to have the results & costs \$45.

It is highly recommended that dogs still be tested every year even when taking a heartworm preventative, just in case the medication was forgotten or ineffective.

