

Amherst Animal Hospital

Modern Medicine. Traditional Values.

Feline Flea and Tick Prevention

External Parasites in Dogs and Cats:

In southern New Hampshire, our patients face a large number of external parasites in their outdoor environments. These include several varieties of ticks, fleas, mosquitoes and black flies. Up to 50% of deer ticks in Hillsborough County carry *Borrelia*, the bacteria that causes Lyme disease in dogs, horses and people. Deer ticks are not carried exclusively by deer. They also live on mice, chipmunks, squirrels and other wildlife in our area. In our region, there are numerous other tick-borne infections, such as Rocky Mountain Spotted fever, Ehrlichiosis, and Anaplasmosis, that can infect dogs and humans. Many ticks carry and can transmit more than one infection. Fleas can carry *Bartonella*, a bacteria that causes lymph node and internal infections in pets and people. Once brought indoors on your pet's hair coat, fleas will continue to reproduce indoors year-round. Mosquitoes transmit larval heartworms to dogs and cats and black flies can create skin irritation and allergic reactions in dogs and cats.

Goal of External Parasite Control:

We advocate the use of a topical, once monthly, tick and flea preventative. We will recommend parasite control measures based on your pet's health and lifestyle (i.e. active, outdoor, indoor, geriatric). Our goal is to reduce the incidence of parasites and preventable disease in your pet and to reduce parasite exposure to your family. Because of the severity of illness and incidence in southern New Hampshire, we recommend both topical and systemic preventatives for Lyme Disease and heartworm infections.

Recommendations for Feline External Parasite Control:

Active ingredients in topical flea products provide rapid and lasting efficacy in killing adult fleas and some products contain an insect growth regulator (IGR) to inhibit development of flea eggs and larval fleas in your pet's bedding and carpets. Cats generally have a lower incidence of tick bites as they readily remove ticks by grooming. The areas where ticks may still be found on cats are around the head and neck. Cats are also more resistant to tick-borne infections than dogs. Permethrin can be toxic to cats, therefore this compound is **NOT** used for flea and tick control in cats. Fleas are common on outdoor cats and fleas can infest even strictly indoor cats, being brought inside on clothing or other pets. If you have an active flea problem, you should choose a product with an insect growth regulator.

- **Bravecto** is a topical product that is applied once every 12 weeks for flea and tick control.
- **Frontline Gold** is a once-monthly topical product that kills adult fleas and ticks on your cat and prevents immature fleas from hatching.
- **Revolution Plus** is a once-monthly topical product that provides heartworm, flea, tick and ear mite protection. Revolution Plus also offers protection for intestinal parasites.
- **Seresto Collars** offer up to 8 months of flea and tick protection for your cat.
- **Vectra for Cats & Kittens** (over 8 weeks) is a once monthly topical flea control for cats and prevents immature fleas from hatching. Vectra for cats does not prevent or kills ticks on cats.

Our hospital values strong relationships with our clients and patients and we are here to help you make the best choice for the health care of your pet. Please ask our staff members if you have questions about the optimal flea and tick prevention for pet.

Our external parasite prevention program is provided as part of an ongoing effort to improve our services and support the bond between you and your pet.