

# Fleas and Your Pet



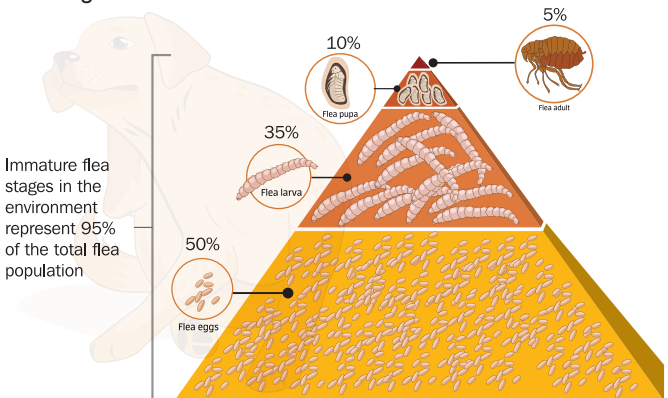
# Why prevention is important

Fleas are the most common and therefore troublesome parasite of cats and dogs. They are blood sucking parasites and will feed from any animal where they live, including dogs, cats, wildlife and us. These tiny insects' lifecycle ensures their survival through all weather conditions, leading to a population explosion when conditions become favourable. Importantly seeing fleas on your pet is a problem of the environment they live in, as well as the individual.

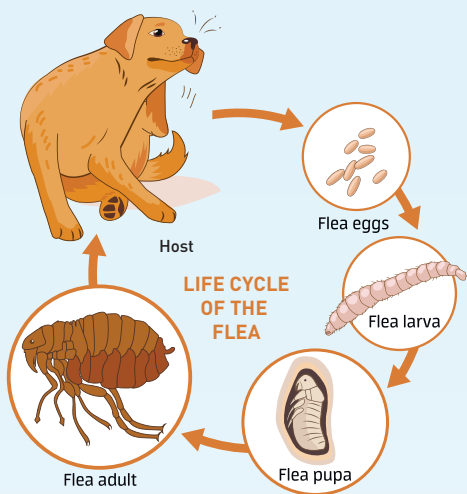
Fleas will bite for feeding, particularly as the population grows in the environment. These bites will result in skin disease through irritation that may result in discomfort and distress for your pet. Unfortunately for some dogs and cats they have a hypersensitivity or an allergy to flea saliva. For these animals as little as a few bites may lead to disease as the irritation is magnified. Fleas less commonly result in other diseases which include the transfer of tape worm and anaemia.

It's much easier to prevent the build-up of fleas in the environment rather than eradicate one. This is primarily because fleas are not specific to who they feed from and are prolific breeders. Regular use of control measures for the environment and preventative treatments on your pets minimises the chance of population growth and therefore any disease.

The flea population explosion, and consequently disease on your pet, often occurs in warmer months. It is the flea's accelerated lifecycle under these conditions which results in a growth of numbers.



# Understanding the flea life cycle



Fleas are an environmental problem, parasitising any animal who lives or visits the area where they are. Only 5% of the entire population are adult fleas which live on and feed off your pet. The remaining 95% of the flea population live in the surrounding environment, surviving off organic matter.

**Adults** – Once on your pet, adult fleas spend the rest of their lives there, feeding and laying eggs. Female fleas lay eggs on your pet and can produce 40 to 50 eggs a day, beginning almost immediately, for up to 60 days, leaving them to fall off your pet all over your home.

**Eggs** – Eggs represent about one-half of the entire flea population and are slightly smaller than a grain of sand. Each egg can hatch into larvae in 1 day when conditions are warm and humid, and as many as 30% will develop into adults.

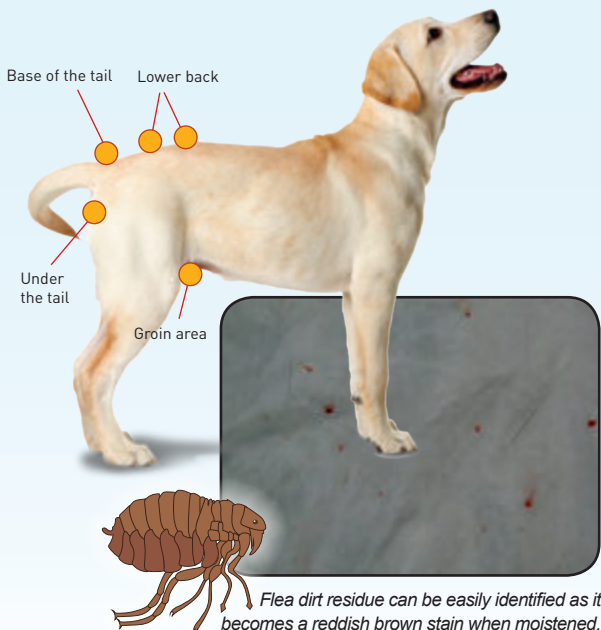
**Larva** – These move away from light deep into your pet's bedding and your carpets. They feed on flea dirt produced by adult fleas and other organic material. There are three different larval stages that may be completed in 5 days when conditions are warm and humid.

**Pupae** – Larva spin a cocoon and pupae develop into adult fleas inside. Fully formed adult fleas can survive in the cocoon for up to 6 months waiting for outside conditions to improve. They emerge to warm ambient temperatures, high humidity, together with vibrations and carbon dioxide emitted from a passing animal.

# Recognising fleas

When environmental conditions are optimal, with warmth and humidity, the development cycle from egg to adult flea may be completed in as short a period as 2 weeks.

## Examine your pet for signs of fleas



Adult fleas, when present, are found by parting the coat near the base of the tail using either your hands or a flea comb. Most fleas will move or jump when disturbed.

If no fleas are seen the next step is to examine for flea dirt, these are dark, pepper-like particles on the surface of your pet's skin and coat. To find these flea dropping simply moisten a cotton ball, part your pet's fur and place the cotton ball on the skin over the rump. The particles will attach and turn reddish brown when moistened.

Finally recognising the predictable location of skin disease caused by fleas on your pet will indicate the likelihood that fleas are present in your pet's environment even if no evidence is found. This is irritation and hair loss in the lower back and tail region in dogs. In cats this skin disease is often more generalised.



## Treating a flea outbreak

It is important to recognise that once there is evidence of fleas being present on your pet that the environment it lives in is now contaminated. This is a result of the prolific ability of fleas to reproduce, releasing hundreds of new eggs daily, falling off your pet onto its surroundings.

Use a product such as Moxiclear on your pet that is fast acting and works by coming in contact with fleas. By not requiring the flea to bite and have a blood meal, this limits further irritation to your pet as well as stopping environmental flea egg contamination.

## Breaking the environmental lifecycle will take up to 3 months

- ✓ Identify the favourite spots where your animal likes to spend time and concentrate there.
- ✓ Regularly vacuum to remove previously laid eggs and stimulate fleas to emerge from cocoons.
- ✓ Wash pet bedding regularly using the hottest cycle; at least 60°C for more than 10 minutes.
- ✓ Stop pets from accessing areas that are dark and humid where larvae survive. For example going under the house.
- ✓ Use environmental treatments if required.
- ✓ Don't invite untreated animals into your home.



## Breaking the flea lifecycle

- ✓ Use Moxiclear on all cats and dogs in the household monthly to stop fleas breeding.
- ✓ Never use a dog flea preventative product on a cat or vice versa. They may contain different chemicals or strengths.
- ✓ Prevent problems by following a year-round flea environmental control and preventative treatment plan.



## Meeting your pet's needs

Your veterinarian is the trusted professional to meet your pet's needs. This leaflet contains important information that can help you work with your veterinarian to manage and more importantly prevent flea problems with your pet.

Fleas are common in all environments and when they infest your pet it often results in skin disease. Deciding upon medications to prevent parasites is best done in consultation with your vet. They will advise which product is suitable to protect against the most important parasite diseases in your region. We trust that the information contained will help you work with your vet to achieve the best outcome.

## Parasite control programs

Fleas are an important consideration when deciding which preventative treatment is chosen for your pet. Other parasite diseases which should be discussed include heartworm, gastrointestinal worms, mites, and ticks. These other parasites can also cause illness in your pet and may simply be prevented by the use of a regular treatment that provides broader protection.

# Moxiclear™

**Affordable Parasite Protection**



Fleas



Heartworm



Sarcoptes mites\*



Ear mites



Intestinal worms\*\*

*\*Registered for the treatment and control of sarcoptic mange in dogs.*

*\*\*MOXICLEAR™ treats and controls the major gastrointestinal nematodes of dogs and cats but does not control tapeworms.*

Norbrook Laboratories Australia Pty Ltd A.C.N. 080 972 596  
Unit 7, 15-21 Butler Way, Tullamarine, VIC 3043 Australia  
Email: [moxiclear@norbrook.com.au](mailto:moxiclear@norbrook.com.au)

