

Roundworms

Roundworms are the most common intestinal parasite of dogs and cats. Dogs and cats can come into contact with roundworms two different ways. They can consume fecal material and soil that is contaminated with roundworm eggs or the immature larval worms. However, more often puppies and kittens become infected before their mother gives birth to them or while they are nursing. After being swallowed larvae go to the intestines where they develop into mature worms. Adult females then deposit eggs, which pass with the stool and develop into infective larvae. It takes 5-6 weeks after infection until the eggs are passed in the stool.

The most effective way to diagnose roundworms is through checking a stool sample for the presence of the eggs. If roundworm eggs are seen in the stool the veterinarian will prescribe a general dewormer for your pet. A stool sample should be checked 14 days after the last treatment to ensure that all worms have been eliminated. Yearly stool samples should be performed to monitor for internal parasites. Using a monthly heartworm preventative medication that also prevent roundworms offers the surest method of roundworm control. Eggs can remain infective in soil for several years; so contaminated ground becomes a source for re-infection. This is especially true for dog pens, runs, or areas where your pet may be tied. Control measures for these areas include replacing dirt runs with concrete, which seems to be the most effective control procedure, or move your pet to a new, uncontaminated area.



Human infection with roundworm larvae is possible but does not occur frequently if good hygiene is practiced. Just like dogs, eating contaminated stool or soil is necessary for infection. The best insurance against human infection is keeping your pet free from roundworms by regular stool examination and treatment if necessary.

For more information contact Cedar Grove Veterinary Services at (920) 668- 6212 or info@cgvet.com. You can also find out more at www.capcvet.org.