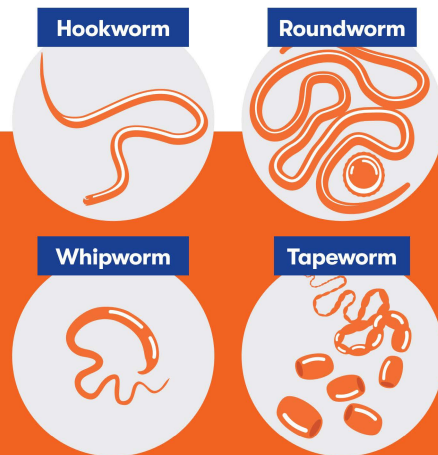


# Tapeworms

**Tapeworms are a common intestinal parasite often transmitted by fleas.**

When a pet ingests an infected flea or infected prey (like rodents or rabbits), tapeworms travel to the intestines, where they attach, grow, and steal important nutrients from their hosts. Segments containing new eggs are passed out again through contaminated stool. Pets with fleas are often treated for tapeworm.



- ▶ All dogs should receive a monthly heartworm preventive that includes protection against intestinal worms.

## What does it look like?

Common signs:

- Diarrhea or blood-tinged stool
- “Scooting” (dragging the anus on the floor)
- Decreased appetite
- Dull, dry coat
- Weight loss
- Tapeworm segments in the stool or under the tail



Tapeworm segments

## How is it diagnosed?

Fecal and anal area examination for parasite segments.

- ▶ Fresh tapeworm segments are whitish tan in color, about ¼ to 1 ½ inches long, and may expand and contract. Dry segments resemble sesame seeds or grains of rice.

## How is it treated?

Prescription oral or injectable medications force tapeworms to detach from the intestinal lining. Don't be surprised if you see worms in your pet's feces, even after treatment.

- ▶ It is not safe or effective to use over-the-counter deworming solutions to treat tapeworms.



## How to help your pet



- Administer all medications as prescribed by your veterinary team
- Treat your pet and their environment for fleas, both indoors and out, and keep your house and yard free of rodents and other small mammals
- Do not allow your pet to eat raw meat, fish, rodents, rabbits, or garbage
- Regularly bring in your pet for their routine fecal exams and deworming treatments
- Contact your veterinary team with any questions
- Need immediate advice? Ping Vet Chat™—included in all pet Optimum Wellness Plans®!
- ▶ Treatment must include treating your pet's environment for fleas and small rodents, which spread the disease.

