

# Flea and tick control at home

## Know your enemies and take action.

Fleas and ticks can carry diseases that are harmful to dogs and cats. Know what you're dealing with and take steps to protect your pets and the people who love them, in an around your home.

### Fleas: More than skin deep

In a flea infestation, the majority of the population is not the fleas you see; most are eggs, pupae, and larvae living (and multiplying) inside your home. Early prevention is best, but if you already have a flea problem:

- A comprehensive flea-control program will eliminate fleas on pets and in the environment. This may require a number of different products, including indoor and outdoor treatments.
- Moderate-to-severe infestations may take months to control.
- In some cases, professional pest-control services may be necessary.



### Ticks: Latching on, causing problems

Ticks can be found in wooded areas, brush, and wild undergrowth. Any animal or human entering these areas is at risk of becoming a tick's host.

- Early and consistent tick prevention can eliminate the need for a more difficult and thorough elimination plan.
- Ticks are hardy and can survive cold temperatures, only to re-emerge when conditions are ideal, so use of a year-round tick-control product is recommended.
- At certain times of year, particularly in the spring and summer, keep your pets out of habitats that harbor heavy numbers of ticks.



### Fleas and ticks in your home

- **Fleas** often gather around the tail base of dogs, and the neck area of cats. You may not see live fleas, but flea dirt, which is small, dark flea fecal material, may be present. How do you know you've found flea dirt? When it's placed on a wet paper towel, the towel will turn slightly red.
- **Ticks** prefer to attach to their hosts on warm areas without a lot of hair, such as inside ears, between toes, and inside the back legs.

▶ If you see fleas or ticks, contact your veterinary team for advice and recommendations.

▶ For additional resources on flea and tick control, visit the Companion Animal Parasite Council at [capcvet.org](http://capcvet.org).

### Quick tips: Controlling fleas and ticks at home



Begin flea and tick prevention as soon as possible after your pet's birth, and keep it going. Prevention programs should be tailored to your individual pet's needs, according to parasite prevalence in your area. Here are some more keys.

- Follow all product label and veterinary recommendations.
- Don't use dog products on your cat—even if they are the right size, it can be dangerous.
- Keep all household pets, including indoor pets, on flea and tick preventives. Regularly wash all bedding, pillows, and clothing that have come into contact with your pet. Use hot water and dry on high-heat setting.
- Vacuum areas of your home where your pet spends a lot of time, and discard the vacuum bag each time.

