

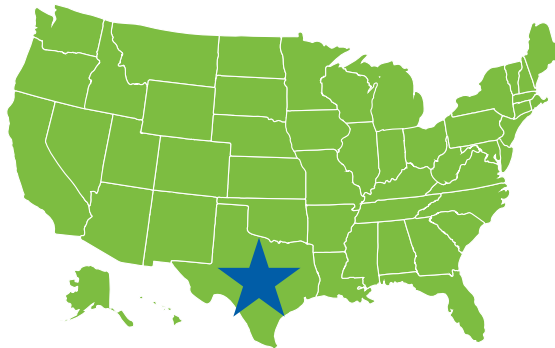
PROTECT YOUR PETS: HEARTWORM DISEASE



Heartworm disease is a serious, life threatening condition in dogs and a major cause of heart disease in cats. It is caused by the presence of the adult stage of the parasite *Dirofilaria immitis* in the pulmonary arteries and the right ventricle of the heart.

It only takes 1 bite from an infected mosquito to transmit heartworm disease to your pets. And there are 22 different mosquito species in the U.S. that carry heartworms.

Heartworm can be found in ALL 50 STATES. Texas leads the country in having the highest heartworm positive dog population.



ALL PETS should be on heartworm preventative year-round. Diagnosis of heartworms is by a blood test. Yearly blood tests are recommended for all dogs including those on preventative medication.

Adult heartworms can grow anywhere between 6-12 inches long!

Advanced symptoms of heartworm include difficulty breathing, coughing, tiring easily, listlessness, weight loss, and fainting. If you think your pet may have heartworms, take him or her to your local veterinarian as soon as possible.

HEARTWORM LIFE CYCLE

- 1. Mosquito Bite:** When a mosquito bites, it injects heartworm microfilariae into the dog.
- 2. Migration:** Small, microscopic worms migrate under the dog's skin and enter the bloodstream. About 6 months after the initial mosquito bite, the microfilariae arrive at the heart.
- 3. Maturation:** The adult worms live in the right side of the heart, where they can survive for up to 7 years. The heartworms will reproduce and release large amounts of microfilariae back into the bloodstream, repeating the cycle.

15x Heartworm prevention is much less expensive than treatment. Treatment can cost up to 15X more than a year's worth of heartworm preventative.



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