

HOW TO GET RID OF FLEAS

When your pet has fleas, it can be tricky to get rid of them properly. Following the advice below will ensure that you remain flea-free!

1. FIRST TREAT THE HOUSE

Once inside the house, eggs, larvae and adults will have been dropped and travel throughout the house in the carpets, soft furnishings and floorboard cracks. Eggs will continue hatching out for the next 3 years, so it is important to stop this cycle by using a household spray which kills eggs and larvae, as well as adult fleas. These are not readily available from pet shops, which tend to sell sprays killing adult fleas only. Just a couple of weeks later, more eggs will have hatched out and you will be back to square one.

The spray we recommend is Vetkem Acclaim 2000. It needs to be used on every room of the house, even if animals do not enter these rooms. Before spraying, vacuum everywhere, even under furniture and in crevices to remove as many fleas as possible. Bedding and animal bedding should be washed at 60 degrees. The spray is then used on carpets, floorboards, soft furnishings and animal bedding (please patch-test first). Where there are impervious floorings such as lino, laminate and tiles, you must spray at least around the edges of the room and under all the furniture. On carpets and floorboards with cracks between them, the whole area must be covered, including under the furniture. Please do not forget to spray in your vacuum bag or cyclone and filters. This will ensure that fleas sucked up during vacuuming are killed.

Each can of spray will treat a 3-4 bedroom house. The spray is toxic to birds, fish, reptiles and insects, so if you keep any of these in the house, please remove them first. A heavy fish tank may be taped up and the filter turned off to prevent fumes entering, and the room ventilated well before removing tape.

2. TREAT ALL ANIMALS FOR FLEAS

Pet shop products are often ineffective at getting rid of fleas. We recommend one of the following for treating your pets effectively.

- Stronghold- available as a spot-on application for cats and dogs. It kills fleas very quickly after application. It will also prevent further infestations when used monthly.
- Simparica tablets for dogs- Simparica is a new-generation flea and tick treatment which is given as a tablet once a month. It starts killing fleas within hours of being given and also kills all species of ticks. This is especially important since European ticks carrying nasty diseases have been brought into the UK by dogs travelling abroad. Fleas are killed too quickly to be able to lay eggs in the house.

3. TREAT ALL ANIMALS FOR TAPEWORM

Fleas carry tapeworm eggs inside them and will pass worms on to the pet during grooming. Again, we do not recommend pet shop products as they do not kill the many different species of worms found in cats and dogs.

- Milbemax is the wormer we recommend for treating round, tape and lungworm. It is the most comprehensive worming tablet available and treats all worms that can be passed on to humans. It should be used at least every 3 months, and after any flea infestation. In animals that eat debris off the ground or mice and birds. It should be used monthly.

Please remember these products are only available from veterinary practices and are prescription medicines. This means that your pet needs to be seen annually in order for us to prescribe them. The surgery will provide an annual check-up with a nurse free of charge, as necessary, to make this as easy as possible for you.