

flea & tick control

What do all dog and cat pet parents have in common? They must all worry about flea & tick infestations on their furry four-legged friend. Fleas and ticks are common parasite problems found wherever animals live. All parasites need a host on which to feed and reproduce, and chances are you have encountered the wide array of topical and environmental treatments available. You want to ensure you use the safest and most effective product for your pet but it can be difficult to navigate the terms used to define each product. Use this Care Sheet as a guide when trying to decide which type of product is best for your family pet.

Flea & tick life cycle:

In order to truly understand how certain products work, you must first understand the life cycle of the enemy. Hard ticks' life cycles can vary from less than a year in warm climates to up to three years in cooler climates. Soft ticks can take up to three years to mature and have several nymph stages. Adult hard ticks can survive several months without feeding.

Fleas eggs:

Found in the environment in which your pet rests, such as dog beds, carpet or furniture.

Larvae:

Three stages which take 1 week to several months to complete. Flea larvae feed on adult flea feces, dead skin and hair.

Pupae:

Mature in a silken cocoon over five to 14 days. A flea can survive within the cocoon anywhere from two months to a year without a blood meal.



Developed with and approved by a qualified veterinarian.

Adult:

Adult fleas found on the animals must have a blood meal to survive and reproduce. Fleas in this stage that have emerged from the cocoon must feed within one week.

Tick eggs:

Found in the environment your pet interacts with outside, such as grass.

Larvae:

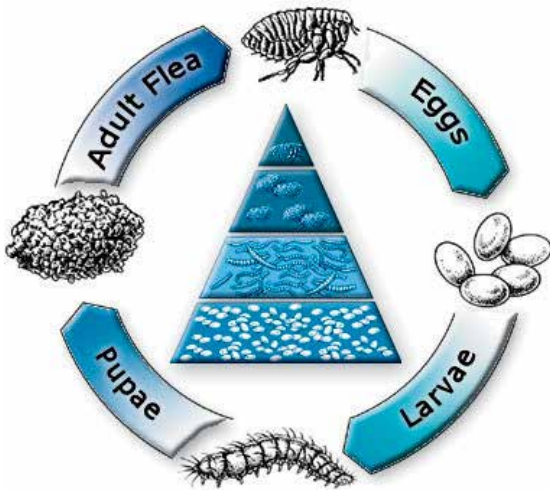
Have six legs at this stage and do require a blood meal in order to move to the next stage.

Nymph:

Have eight legs at this stage. Require another blood meal to move to the next stage.

Adult:

Once reached, the female will have one last blood meal, lay approximately 1,000 eggs and then die.

**Flea & tick-related concerns:**

Flea & tick concerns are not just related to itchy pets. There are several serious consequences of infestation for you and your beloved pet. Your pet may ingest fleas during its routine grooming. These fleas, if carrying the larvae, can lead to a tapeworm within your pet's intestines. People can also become infected with tapeworms if they somehow ingest infected feces. Young pets can also suffer from flea bite anemia if there

is a large flea infestation. As adult biting fleas must feed on blood, too many fleas on a young puppy or kitten can result in significant blood loss requiring immediate veterinary treatment.

Ticks can also lead to serious medical conditions for your pet. While not all ticks carry disease, it is important to note that certain ones can transmit various diseases. The brown dog tick and the American dog tick carry the most common diseases, including Ehrlichia, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Lyme disease and tick paralysis. Seek veterinary treatment immediately if you suspect your pet has become seriously ill from a tick bite.

Flea & tick control**Immediate relief:**

While flea & tick prevention is the key to successfully controlling the health risks associated with infection, you may find the need for immediate relief. A shampoo, spray, powder, oral or topical application will help provide immediate control so that you can set up a maintenance protocol to prevent future infestations. You can also ask your veterinarian for a treatment to help with immediate flea & tick control.

Maintenance:

It is important to remember how the life cycle of these pests works when looking to establish a prevention program. If there are fleas or ticks on your pet, they are in your environment (home). Your home and yard will also require treatment. Remember, fleas and ticks can survive for a long time away from their host in certain stages of the life cycle. The maintenance program you establish will be your most important step to preventing the serious consequences of infestation in your furry family member. Flea & tick products have different active ingredients, so you will want to look for certain features in order to enjoy the best benefits for your friend.

Adulticide:

Products that contain adulticides are de-

signed to kill only adult fleas and ticks on your pet. Many shampoos, sprays and collars feature this form of protection. They are effective for immediate results only and will not prevent fleas from coming back.

Insect growth regulators:

IGR products kill the flea eggs, larvae and pupae stages. They are used to break the flea life cycle, but do not kill adult fleas or ticks.

The ideal product for protecting your pet against adult pests while also breaking the life cycle is one that features a repellent, adulticide and IGR. Most of the oral or topical applications and household premises control products feature both types of pest relief.

Your veterinarian is the best resource for understanding and treating all things related to fleas and ticks.

Resource:

Many Petco stores offer grooming services with the option of adding a flea & tick treatment. Ask your pet stylist for more information.

Note: The information on this Care Sheet is not a substitute for veterinary care. If you need additional information, please contact your veterinarian.