



Photo: Celeste Morris, International Center for Veterinary Services

Why should I be concerned about fleas and ticks?

Fleas and ticks are parasites that can carry diseases or other parasites such as Lyme disease and tapeworms. Also, fleas and ticks often bite your animal's skin and withdraw blood for food which can be irritating as well as painful. If your pet becomes infected with fleas or ticks, they can easily introduce these parasites into their surroundings including your home, car, other animals, and even people.

How do dogs and cats get fleas and ticks?

Fleas and ticks can be picked up while outside or from other infected animals. Fleas and ticks coming from other animals or from the environment can jump onto your pet when looking for a meal.

How can I look for fleas and ticks on my pet?

Fleas and ticks may present together or separately. Evidence of fleas includes small amounts of brown or black "dust" on your pet's skin or fur roots. This is called "flea dust" and is actually bits of dried blood that the fleas have digested and excreted. In addition, you may run a comb through your pet's hair to see if you find fleas. They are very small, brown bugs that move extremely quickly. Your pet may scratch or bite itself incessantly if the infection is all over the body.

On the other hand, ticks usually bite an animal's skin and don't move from that location. They can be found anywhere on the body, but especially on the legs or parts of the animal that are lower to the ground. They are larger than fleas, brown, and can vary in size depending on how long they have been there. The longer they've been attached, the more blood they will have withdrawn and the larger they will be.

What should I do if my pet gets fleas or ticks?

As soon as you suspect a flea or tick infection, seek medical help. Removing fleas and ticks can be difficult and may require a trained technician or veterinarian. For fleas, treatment options include administration of a prescription topical treatment to kill the infection or a "flea dip" - a bath with specially formulated shampoo. For ticks, treatment is removal. Ticks need to be removed by a trained and experienced veterinarian or technician as failure to remove properly can result in the re-growing of the tick or further infection.

How can I prevent fleas and ticks?

Fleas and ticks can be *easily* prevented by applying *Advantix®* for dogs or *Revolution®* for dogs and cats. Both of these medicines are legally registered prescription topical treatments applied once a month to the back of the neck. These treatments are an

easy
and
effective

way to prevent fleas or ticks, and all of the problems that come with them. Please consult your ICVS veterinarian to determine which treatment is best for your pet.

For more information about flea & tick prevention, please contact ICVS:

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