

# Safe Use of Flea, Tick, and Intestinal Parasite Preventive Products

They're creepy, they're crawly...and they can carry diseases. Internal and external parasites are not just a nuisance, but pose animal and human health risks. Some parasites can transmit diseases from animals to humans (zoonotic diseases). That's why it's critical to protect your pets from these pesky parasites and keep the creepy crawlies out of your home.

Fortunately, there are many effective parasite preventives on the market to help control the pests and prevent the spread of zoonotic diseases. Knowing what kind of product to use, and how to use it, is critical to the health and safety of your pet. Many are spot-on (topical) products that are applied directly to your pet's skin, but there are some that are given orally (by mouth). Although medicines and pesticides must meet U.S. government-required safety standards before they can be sold, it is still critical that pet owners carefully consider their flea and tick preventive options (and closely read the label) before they treat their pets with one of these products.

Consult your veterinarian about your options and what's best for your pet. Some questions you can ask include:

- What parasites does this product protect against?
- How often should I use/apply the product?
- How long will it take for the product to work?
- If I see a flea or tick, does that mean it's not working?
- What should I do if my pet has a reaction to the product?
- Is there a need for more than one product?
- How would I apply or use multiple products on my pet?



Parasite protection is not “one-size-fits-all.” Certain factors affect the type and dose of the product that can be used, including the age, species, breed, life style and health status of your pet, as well as any medications your pet is receiving. Caution is advised when considering parasite treatment of very young and very old pets. Some breeds are sensitive to certain ingredients that can make them extremely ill. Preventatives and some medications can interfere with each other, resulting in unwanted side effects, toxicities, or even ineffective doses; it's important that your veterinarian is aware of all of your pet's medications when considering the optimal prevention for your pet.