



## Flea and Tick Preventatives

### Flea Infestation & Prevention

Fleas not only are a nuisance to people and pet's, but they can also carry various diseases. Pets can have an allergic reaction to flea bites which can lead to significant skin disease and discomfort. Additionally, animals with fleas often develop tapeworms. Other diseases that fleas carry include: flea anemia, infectious anemia, cat scratch fever, etc. Once fleas are discovered either on your pets or in the environment it will take *months* to rid your pets and home of these parasites. Although we like to think we are safe in the colder months we actually may have an increased challenge from fleas as they are trying to find a warm place to spend the winter!

### A Note About Tapeworms

Tapeworms can be transmitted to cats through their contact with fleas. Once a cat has fleas, they groom their bodies and swallow fleas in the process. Once this occurs cats have a 50% chance of developing tapeworms. Although tapeworms do not always cause significant disease, they can interfere with a cat's ability to gain weight and challenge their immune system, possibly making them more susceptible to other diseases. Generally, tapeworms look like cucumber seeds or pieces of rice and are visible in the cat's stool or around their anus. If this is seen please contact Sequist Animal Hospital for an appropriate de-wormer.

Additionally, we recommend internal parasite screening at least once per year. This gives us the ability to check for parasites hopefully before they become a problem in your cat. Parasites can cause a wide variety of health problems, not just diarrhea and/or weight loss. Please bring in a fresh fecal sample with you to your annual appointments or more often if you suspect that there is a problem with your cat.

### Tick Diseases & Prevention

Unfortunately, cats are susceptible to multiple diseases that ticks carry. A few examples are feline infectious anemia, tularemia, babesiosis, etc. Most of these diseases can be treated but can be difficult to treat and leave cats with lifelong problems. Ticks are very hearty and are able to withstand even very cold temperature. That, combined with the fact that our tick populations are increasing every year makes year-round protection essential in Vermont.

### Flea & Tick Prevention

There are many flea and tick preventatives available for purchase. We carry products that can be administered topically or collars that they can wear. Please discuss with us what would work best with you and your pet's lifestyle and comfort.