



552 Laconia Road, Tilton, NH 03276 Phone 603-524-2553 Fax 603-524-2577

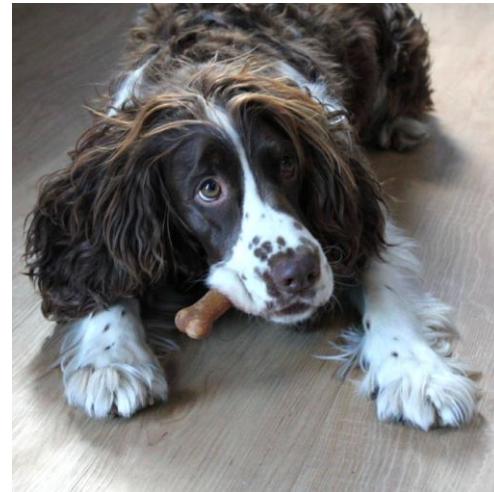
Heartworm Awareness Month

Pet Photo Contest

April is Heartworm awareness month and we will be celebrating by having a pet photo contest on Facebook.

<http://www.facebook.com/lake-side-animal-hospital-205204119510220/>

The photo with the most likes will win a six month supply of heartworm prevention (as long as they are up to date on a physical and heartworm test). The contest will start April 9th and the winner will be announced May 11th. If you have any questions, please give us a call (603) 524-2553.

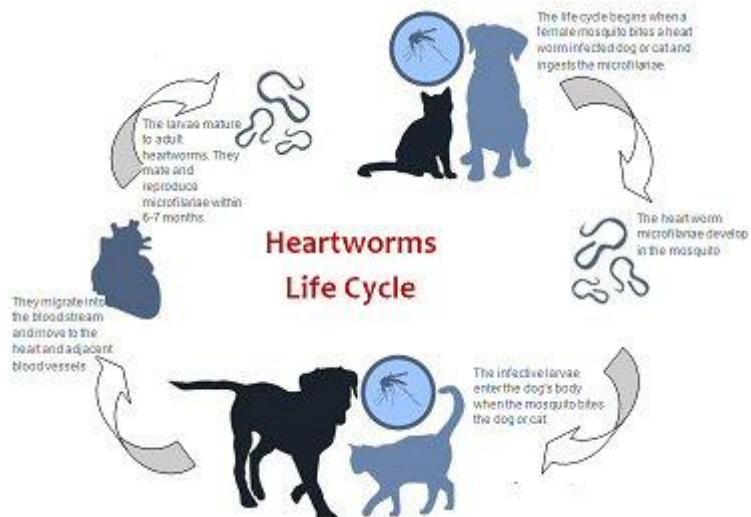


What is Heartworm?

Heartworm disease, a potentially life-threatening condition, is found in geographic areas that house mosquitoes. While treatment is available for heartworm infection in dogs, prevention is much safer and without side effects.

To understand more about how heartworm infection affects your pet, let's begin by looking inside the heart of an infected dog:

Adult heartworms live and reproduce in the heart and large blood vessels entering the lungs of an infected dog. Mature female heartworms pass their offspring (called microfilaria) into the dog's bloodstream to circulate throughout the body.



The transfer of infection to another susceptible animal begins when a mosquito takes a blood meal from a heartworm-infected dog. Once inside the mosquito, the microfilariae spend the next 30 days maturing into an infective stage. Maturation of the microfilariae to infective larvae within the mosquito is required for transmission of heartworm infection. At the next blood meal, the mosquito injects the infective larvae into the skin of a naïve dog. After a short time in the skin, the larvae migrate through the body to finally land in the pulmonary arteries to mature into adults 5-6 months later and restart the lifecycle. The entire life cycle takes 6-8 months to complete depending on environmental conditions.

Cats Get Heartworm Too!

Current research shows that heartworm infection in cats is more common than previously thought. Feline heartworm disease was considered to be a rare condition – likely because this disease is difficult to diagnose in cats. New strategies for diagnosing heartworm disease in cats have improved detection rates. Today we know that heartworm infection is a serious disease that does occur in cats. In fact, the incidence of heartworm infection in cats rivals that of Feline Leukemia Virus and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus. Because cats are not a natural host for the heartworm, the typical development of the parasite does not occur as it does in the dog and the symptoms related to infection differ as well. See symptoms in cats below..

Heartworm Symptoms

Symptoms of heartworm infection vary by the stage of the disease. The American Heartworm Society classifies heartworm infection in dogs to determine the extent of the disease, develop the safest treatment protocol and monitor therapy.

- **Stage 1:** Early infection/Mild disease. Symptoms range from asymptomatic to a cough
- **Stage 2:** Moderate disease. Cough, exercise intolerance
- **Stage 3:** Severe disease. Cough, exercise intolerance, labored breathing, collapse, death
- **Stage 4:** Caval syndrome. Large worm burden that impairs blood flow to the heart causing abdominal distension, swelling of the limbs, weight loss, weakness and/or death

Cats infected with heartworms typically have low numbers of worms in their pulmonary arteries and lungs. Although the number of worms is low, the amount of lung damage caused by the worms is tremendous. Symptoms related to heartworm infection in cats vary widely:

- Asymptomatic
- Vomiting
- Asthma-like symptoms such as coughing and wheezing
- Acute respiratory distress or death



As always, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to give us a call!

Your friends at,

Lake Side Animal Hospital
552 Laconia Rd. Tilton, NH 03276
(603)524-2553
LSAH1@metrocast.net
www.lakesideanimalhospitaltilton.com