



# Flea Control for Dogs

Fleas are tiny insects that feed on warm-blooded animals. Beyond the intense itching and discomfort they cause, fleas can also endanger your dogs' health.



## Health Risks

### Parasites

Fleas can carry tapeworm eggs and pass the parasite on to a dog or to a person if accidentally ingested. Dogs are likely to swallow an infected flea while grooming or licking themselves.

### Disease

Fleas can also carry the bacteria that causes plague, a disease that threatens both animals and people. The United States typically has several cases of plague every year.

### Anemia

Large numbers of fleas can consume enough of a dog's blood to cause anemia. Anemia will make your dog feel tired and weak and can even be fatal. Smaller dogs and puppies are especially at risk.

#### DID YOU KNOW?

If a dog has pale gums, it may be anemic.



## Check for Fleas



Brush or comb your dog's fur or part the fur to see down to their skin. The best places to check are the lower back, near the tail, or the abdomen.

Look for adult fleas or flea feces (often called "flea dirt"), which resemble ground coffee. Flea feces are mostly dried blood and make reddish-brown streaks when mixed with a little water.

## Protect Your Dogs

All dogs are at risk of picking up fleas from their environment. You can protect your dogs by taking a few simple steps:

- **KEEP YOUR PROPERTY WELL-MAINTAINED** (cut grass, remove overgrown vegetation, etc.). This discourages flea-carrying wildlife and rodents from visiting.
- **CHECK YOUR DOGS REGULARLY.** Finding and treating fleas early helps prevent an infestation.
- **USE PREVENTIVE TREATMENT.** There are many options available that kill fleas before they lay eggs.



### PRACTICAL TIP



Flea preventives come in many forms. While certain products work well together, others counteract one another and should not be used at the same time.

### TALK WITH YOUR VETERINARIAN

about flea prevention to find the best option for your dogs.

ANIMAL CARE AID

