



## Heartworm Disease

[www.citycreaturesbuffalo.com](http://www.citycreaturesbuffalo.com)

Heartworm is a serious and potentially fatal condition. As the name suggests, it is caused by parasitic worms living in the blood (and the right side of the heart) of dogs, cats, ferrets, wolves, foxes and other mammals. This info sheet deals with heartworm disease as seen in **dogs**.

The **life cycle of a heartworm** is involved and depends on and is spread by **mosquitoes**.

**Symptoms may include:** (NOTE: some animals do not have symptoms in the early stages) Difficulty breathing, coughing, tiring easily, listlessness, weight loss and rough hair coat. If not detected and controlled with proper treatment, heartworm can lead to congestive heart failure and death. While treatment is usually successful, prevention is much safer and more economical.

### **Diagnosis**

A *small sample* of blood is all that is necessary for a yearly preliminary heartworm screening test that detects the presence of heartworms.

### **Your puppy and heartworm**

Only puppies **over the age of 7 months** need to be tested.

### **Prevention**

Good news for pet owners-highly effective diagnostic testing and prevention medications have been developed. It is necessary to have a heartworm test PRIOR to using a preventive program, however. Severe or fatal reactions may occur if preventives are given to a dog with heartworm disease. Heartworm medications prevents the larvae from developing into adult heartworms and **must be given monthly**. Call your vet if you miss a dose.

### **Seasonal vs. Year Round**

City Creatures Animal Hospital recommends heartworm protection year round. Although heartworms are spread during the warmer months, the preventative removes and controls intestinal parasites such as roundworms, hookworms, and whipworms. These parasites are spread year around.

### **Endemic (Problems) Areas**

Heartworm is seen in *virtually all parts of the US* and many parts of Canada. Being spread by mosquitoes, areas heavily populated with these insects have a greater incidence of heartworm disease.

# Heartworm Prevention



## Puppies and Dogs

Year Round protection and annual testing is recommended.

Interceptor tablets should be used NOVEMBER thru APRIL and Sentinel \* MAY through OCTOBER.

## Puppies

Puppies can begin heartworm prevention (Interceptor<sup>R</sup> or Sentinel<sup>R</sup>) on or before 4 months of age. Puppy's first heartworm test is done at age 7 months or older.

## Iverhart tablets prevents:

HEARTWORM

and

ROUNDWORM

HOOKWORMS

TAPEWORMS (intestinal parasites)

## Interceptor tablets (special order) prevents:

HEARTWORM

and

ROUNDWORM

HOOKWORMS

WHIPWORMS (intestinal parasites)

## Sentinel tablets (special order) prevents:

HEARTWORM

and

ROUNDWORM

HOOKWORMS

WHIPWORMS (intestinal parasites)

FLEAS from hatching (Does not kill adult fleas\* and ticks\*\*)

NOTE: **Sentinel must be given with a full meal to be absorbed correctly.**

## Heartgard tablets (special order) prevents:

HEARTWORM

and

ROUNDWORM

HOOKWORMS