

## Managing Your Parasites!

You can't get rid of them so learn to manage them...

Intestinal parasites have been around since dinosaurs and are not going away – you need to manage them. Parasites do not want to kill your kitten or puppy; they want to use them as a dinner plate. They do not mind dragging pets down, causing rough hair coats, or anemia! Managing your parasites is not about deworming more or with more products. It is about using the correct dewormer at the right time to get the biggest effect for our time and money.

### Upper GI:

It helps to know the parasites we are targeting. Rounds and hooks are in the small intestine and adults are easy to get rid of as most dewormers are active in the small intestine.

- Roundworms are 18 inches long and look like spaghetti. If puppies or kittens are vomiting parasites, it is roundworms. If you have a lot of roundworms, they can be seen in the stool. Rounds are usually digested before they get through the intestinal track.
- Hookworms are tiny (1/2" long) and difficult to see without a microscope. They become a small cyst on the wall of the intestine sitting in a protected scar tissue egg. They come out of the "scar tissue egg" when they detect pregnancy, milking, or removal of adults from the gut tube.
- Both these parasites can migrate through tissue, especially the liver. They get back to the intestine by migrating to the lungs where they are coughed up and swallowed. Once back in the intestine, they complete the life cycle and reproduce.
- Parasites can play a role in the 8 week old puppy cough! Migrating stages are resistant to dewormer when out of the intestinal tube! Once you get rid of the adults in the intestine, the larvae can pop out of the tissue and set up in the intestine you just cleared.
- Both rounds and hooks can infect humans and must be managed out of our puppies and kittens before sending them to a new home!



### Lower GI:

Tapes and whipworms are in the large intestine. They are about 30 feet down from the mouth so getting dewormer to stay active for that distance is difficult.

- Tapes are as different from other intestinal parasites as cats are from dogs! They mostly live on dog waste and can cause colitis and irritation of the rectal area. Treatment with praziquantel will eliminate adults.
- Egg packets are passed and look like rice in the feces or on the rectal area. These eggs have to mature in an intermediate host (fleas, mice, or birds) and once that host is eaten by the dog or cat they get tapeworms. If you prevent them from getting the intermediate host, you stop tapeworms!
- Whipworms are killed by few dewormers. Preventing re-infection is the key with whipworms that are directly infective. They will seed an exercise area down, mature, and another dog or cat will ingest them. [Raised decks](#) prevent the re-infections and break the lifecycle. New additions to our cattery or kennel need to be cleared of whipworms to prevent introduction.

### Other Problem Parasites:

Giardia and coccidia are active throughout the intestine, but considered a small intestinal parasite.

- Both coccidia and giardia are tiny and are diarrhea causing opportunists. Something starts the diarrhea and they keep it going.
- Coccidia control involves keeping the numbers so low in the kennel that you rarely need to treat and prevention drugs are effective. Much the same is true of giardia.

- We try and get rid of giardia, but it always seems to be around so prevention is the key to control.

### Adults:

Adults are the backbone of preventing parasites. The fewer parasites mom passes to the babies, the fewer we need to manage out of our babies. Males are dewormed twice a year and moms are dewormed before giving birth.

### Bitches and Queens:

Parasites get active in late pregnancy when females are heavy pregnant and stressed. This is the time when moms can least resist parasites. Babies are born with sterile guts and moms seed their guts with good bacteria to assist with digestion. However, she can also seed them with parasites. Rounds, hooks, whips, coccidia, and giardia can all be given to the puppy in the nursing period. As the parasites take in the mother's nutrition, they'll also take in the dewormer - meaning we can kill them effectively. Mom may be the source of these parasites, but the parasites can be controlled. Fenbendazole is labeled for pregnant moms. It not only gets the worms, but it also kills giardia. By cleaning up the mother in late pregnancy, you can also solve the parasite issues for your puppies later!

- After 50 days gestation, deworm 3 days with [Safe-guard®](#) or [Panacur® C](#) to remove as many parasites from mom before birth as possible.

### Coccidia Prevention:

Coccidia prevention in dogs needs to be started before birth and continued to the weaned pups. Be cautious as many products are not safe in pregnant moms! You can never use sulfa between the 25th and 30th day of gestation as you increase cleft pallet in dogs or cats. That is when the pallet closes. (See the article about [Coccidia](#) and the article about [Giardia](#).)

- [Cocci-Guard™](#) is added at 2 cups per 40 lbs of puppy food. Feed the last two weeks of pregnancy. This will decrease the number of coccidia transferred to babies. Decoquate works by preventing coccidia from reproducing so they die of attrition (old age). [Cocci-Guard™](#) is safe for pregnant dogs! Cocci-Guard™ is continued after weaning in the puppy.
- Babies can go on [Albon®](#) or a [generic](#) after weaning for 7 days. Can use after 35 days pregnant!
- [Marquis®](#) (0.1cc/lb) is used one week apart to treat and often given before shipping to prevent coccidia while puppy is stressed from transporting and new home. OK to use late pregnancy!

But coccidia prevention in cats is very different than dogs. Queens cannot have something added to food. Cats have a protective response to things that change texture or taste. They will eat small amounts for several days until they are comfortable. We cannot have that in late pregnancy. Metronidazole is also documented for causing cleft pallets. You can use [Albon®](#) or [Marquis®](#) safely the last 14 days of gestation. Choose [Albon®](#) or [Marquis®](#) – you don't need both!

- [Albon®](#), 7 days before due date. Normal dose 25 mg/lb/sid (once daily).
- Or use [Marquis®](#) at 0.1 cc/1 lb/once 7 days before queening. The treatment for coccidia is two doses repeated in 7 days. We often use one dose before shipping kittens to a new home to prevent coccidia after placement.
- Mom before birth and babies with [Marquis®](#) and [Safe-guard®](#) at 7 and 9 weeks pretty much covers the gamut of parasites kittens take to new home.

### Newly Acquired Animals:

No matter what the history or age, assume they have parasites!

- Deworm immediately, repeat in 2 weeks and start on the above adult program.

Parasites do not want to kill your kitten or puppy; they want to use them as a dinner plate! Your job is to manage dewormers to prevent that from happening.

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