

# Be responsible...WORM YOUR DOG



**Dogs give us loyalty and companionship, and in return we owe it to them to take positive steps to keep them fit, healthy and happy. Regular worming is essential to make sure your pet enjoys the best of health – and it's so easy to do.**

## **WHY WORM?**

Roundworms (including *Toxocara canis*) and tapeworms are intestinal parasites, which can be found in any dog, although infection is easily treated. Worms may cause sickness and diarrhoea in young animals. Adult dogs may show no signs of ill health, but still need regular worming.

Human infection (Toxocariasis) may occur if mature *Toxocara* (roundworm) eggs are swallowed, however, it is very rare for anyone to become ill as a result. About 2-4% of healthy adults in the UK already possess *Toxocara* antibodies, which means that they have been exposed to *Toxocara* eggs or larvae with no ill effects.

Children are more vulnerable to *Toxocara* infection because they may pick it up when playing on grassland where the faeces from dogs carrying worms have been deposited. On the rare occasions when human disease does occur, it usually causes only mild symptoms. In exceptional cases it can cause damage to the retina in young children.

The chances of developing Toxocariasis are minimal. It is estimated that there are only about two new cases of disease due to *Toxocara* infection per million of the population each year. However, if every owner treated their dog with a worming preparation, and cleared up after their dog, Toxocariasis would be virtually eradicated.

## **WHAT TO DO?**

Worming is easy, effective and is relatively inexpensive. You can get a suitable worming preparation from us. There are many worming preparations on the market, so ask us which is the most effective for you pet. Always follow the instructions carefully. If in doubt, ask us for advice.

## **ADULT DOGS**

Adult dogs are relatively resistant to infection, but nevertheless should be routinely wormed at least every 6 months.

## **PREGNANT BITCHES**

Pregnant bitches and bitches with young puppies should be wormed more frequently. Bitches should be wormed before mating, after the first 45 days of pregnancy, after whelping and whilst weaning the pups. Consult your vet when treating a pregnant bitch, as there are new ways of worming throughout pregnancy.

## **PUPPIES**

It is important to worm puppies, as it is reasonable to assume that all puppies are infected with *Toxocara Canis* and produce larger numbers of eggs than an adult dog. Puppies should be wormed from about 2 weeks of age. Great care has to be taken when treating a young animal, so always seek our advice before doing so. Worming should continue at regular intervals (a minimum of four times) until the puppy is at least 6 months old.

**Worming your dog is one of the easiest ways of making sure that your pet enjoys the best of health. What's more, if every dog owner wormed his or her pet on a regular basis, it would virtually eradicate the possibility of any human illness due to infection by *Toxocara*. Healthy pets help to keep humans healthy too.**