

# Flea infestations



## Eliminate that flea infestation!

Fleas are never pleasant for pets or owners, but it's important to treat for all stages of the flea lifecycle to prevent re-infestation. We've put together some useful information to show you how to manage a flea infestation and stop the pesky parasites from returning!

## All about the flea cycle

- It's made up of four stages (egg, larva, pupa and adult flea) and typically takes around two to four weeks to complete depending on the conditions.
- Pets are actually more likely to catch fleas from their home or outside than from another pet.
- The majority of a flea infestation is found in a pet's environment, rather than on the pet themselves. It's therefore very important to prevent and control infestations on your pet and in their surroundings!

## Signs that your pet has fleas

It can be hard to spot fleas when your pet first gets them, but you can look out for the following signs:

- Your pet might be itching, scratching or chewing themselves.
- Hair loss and irritated, red skin (caused by the frequent scratching).
- Visible fleas or flea poo on your pet's body that present as tiny dark brown or black particles, often mistaken for mud or dirt.

## How to tackle a flea infestation

House sprays are an easy and effective way to tackle fleas. Just remember to read all the instructions, as some products will differ in method, and read all the smallprint if you are asthmatic or have any medical conditions. You should also close your windows and doors before starting.

# Flea infestations



## Step one: Prepare your house

- Thoroughly vacuum your floors and carpets, so that the spray can soak deep into the fibres and surfaces. Try to vacuum under furniture if you can too!
- The vibrations and heat from a vacuum cleaner also encourage adult fleas to emerge, making it easier for the treatment to reach them.

## Step two: Protect your pets and family

- Keep pets and children away from the rooms being treated.
- If you have fish that can't be moved, cover their tank with a thick blanket or waterproof sheet and turn off aerator pumps while spraying the treatment and for an hour after.

## Step three: Start the spraying

- Spray floors, surfaces, skirting boards, under furniture and in any nooks and crannies.
- Hold the flea spray about 30cm away from everything you spray, and spray in a criss-cross pattern to ensure you cover everything. As a rule, spray each square metre for about four seconds.

## Step four: Spray soft areas and your pet's favourite spots

- Spray your pet's bed, soft furnishings and large areas of carpet, as well as places such as your car and any outbuildings that your pet goes in often.
- However, don't spray your own bedding, pillows or mattresses! Remove these before spraying any bedrooms and wash them on a high heat (around 60C is best) to kill flea eggs and larvae.
- Eggs and larvae don't typically develop in human bedding or mattresses, but it's good practice to vacuum mattresses regularly.

## Step five: Ventilate your home

- After you've sprayed each room, wait 30 minutes, then open the windows and let the room air out for at least an hour before letting pets and children back in.
- It will be safe again once surfaces feel dry and the spray mist has settled.

## Step six: Vacuum again

- After 24 hours have passed, give your home another vacuum as soon as you can, and vacuum again daily for the next two weeks, as this will help prevent future infestations.

**For further advice about preventing and treating fleas and other parasites, please get in touch with our practice.**