

# PROTECT YOUR CAT. PREVENT HEARTWORM DISEASE.



AMERICAN  
HEARTWORM  
SOCIETY™  
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Cats usually have fewer heartworms than dogs, but even one heartworm can make a cat very sick—or even be fatal.



## WHAT ARE HEARTWORMS?

Heartworms are dangerous worms that live mainly in the blood vessels of a cat's lungs.

- Heartworms look like spaghetti noodles. They can live from just a few months to several years inside a cat and grow to be 8 to 9 inches long.
- Most heartworms die before they become adults. But even immature worms can cause cats to vomit and have trouble breathing..
- Because of cats' small size, a single heartworm can be deadly. When the worm dies, a cat can develop serious breathing problems, as well as blindness and seizures.



## HOW DO CATS GET HEARTWORMS?

Cats get heartworms from the bite of an infected mosquito.

- Just one mosquito bite can cause heartworm infection.
- Because mosquitoes can come inside, indoor cats are at risk, too.
- Your veterinarian can perform tests to help determine if your cat has been exposed to heartworms or has heartworm disease.



## HOW CAN HEARTWORMS BE PREVENTED?

The good news is that heartworm disease is easy to prevent.

- Heartworm medicine comes as a monthly tablet cats eat like a treat or a topical medicine that is applied either monthly or every other month.
- Heartworm medications also protect cats from other parasites. Depending on the product, these can include roundworms and hookworms, as well as fleas, ticks or mites.
- Heartworm medicine does not keep mosquitoes from biting your cat. Instead, it kills tiny heartworms that infect a cat before they are big enough to cause damage.
- If you miss a dose, the tiny worms can keep growing and cause heartworm disease.



## WHY YEAR-ROUND PREVENTION IS THE BEST CHOICE

Some people think heartworm medicine is only needed in warm months. But year-round protection is the safest choice. Here's why:



Mosquitoes can be active whenever the temperature is above 55°. Warm spells and weather changes make it hard to know when mosquitoes are gone.



When the weather turns colder, mosquitoes can come inside and bite pets.



Because of heat held by pavement and buildings, cities and towns often stay warmer than surrounding areas. This allows mosquitoes to survive longer.



Giving heartworm medicine all year long is a healthy habit. It is much easier to remember than stopping and starting the medicine when the calendar changes.

**The American Heartworm Society recommends year-round heartworm prevention for cats.**

Talk with your veterinarian about the best heartworm medicine for your cat.  
Giving heartworm prevention all year long can help keep your cat healthy.