Did you know?

- **Heartworms are spread by mosquitoes**—if there are mosquitoes in your area, your dog is at risk!

- **In addition to dogs, wildlife in your area can be a source of infection.** Mosquitoes that bite an infected fox, wolf, or coyote can then transmit the infection to unprotected dogs.

- **Even dogs that look healthy can be infected** with heartworms, so annual testing for heartworm disease is recommended.

- **Annual testing is critical** to avoid a delay in detecting early infection and starting life-saving therapy, as heartworms cause significant damage to your dog’s heart and lungs.

- **Heartworm preventive medications are very effective** when given properly on the prescribed schedule. Combining prevention with a mosquito repellent is an even more effective strategy.

- **The best way to reduce the risk of heartworm infection in your dog is to give the preventive medication year-round.** Mosquitoes can survive 12 months a year, even in parts of the country where there is a cold winter, so all dogs are at risk.

- **While heartworm disease can be treated, prevention is always safer and more affordable** than treating adult heartworm infections.

Heartworm disease is found in all 50 states.

**2019 HEARTWORM INCIDENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average number of cases per reporting site</th>
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<td>≤1 cases/district</td>
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The cornerstone of heartworm management is prevention.

The American Heartworm Society recommends year-round administration of a heartworm preventive medication and annual testing for heartworm disease for all dogs.

To learn more about the increasing threat of heartworm disease, talk to your veterinarian and visit the American Heartworm Society website at [www.heartwormsociety.org](http://www.heartwormsociety.org).

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What Does a “Negative” Heartworm Test Mean?

Can a dog be infected even though it has been on heartworm preventive?
Yes. Even the most diligent owner can forget a dose now and then. Even if a previous owner tells us the dog has been on preventive, not all pills are swallowed, and not all topical medications are properly applied—resulting in a pet that may be less protected than we think.

The use of heartworm prevention medication in a heartworm infected dog can make detecting the presence of heartworms more difficult. The good news is that using preventive medication in a heartworm-infected dog reduces the impact of those worms on a dog’s health.

Well, now I’m really confused! What does it mean and what am I supposed to do?
Talk with your veterinarian about steps to take to keep your newly adopted dog healthy. A “negative” heartworm test result means that the chances your dog still has heartworms are lower. Your dog should be kept on preventive year-round and should be tested every year, with both types of tests. This increases the chances of an occult (hidden) infection being detected sooner, before the worms can cause serious and irreversible damage.

What if a later test is positive? Will you pay for the dog’s heartworm treatment?
As much as we would like to treat our shelter animals for all of their conditions, we simply cannot afford to do so. We are grateful to you for partnering with us to save this dog’s life! Please speak to a member of our staff for our post-adoption medical expense policies.

The veterinarians listed below understand the reasons for our testing policy, and are happy to see recently adopted dogs.

Please make an appointment today.