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American Heartworm Society Releases New [Heartworm Incidence Map](#)

Texas leads the nation in heartworm incidence, with cases reported nationwide

APEX, NC – The American Heartworm Society (AHS) Incidence Survey has revealed the highest U.S. heartworm rates are once again in the traditional heartworm strongholds of the Gulf Coast and southeastern states. At the same time, the survey and new [heartworm incidence map](#) also identified several new and troubling trends thousands of miles from so-called heartworm epicenters.

The AHS conducts a nationwide canine heartworm incidence survey every three years, working with veterinary practices and shelters that submit data from heartworm antigen tests run over the previous year. The latest survey was conducted in early 2026 and reflects data from heartworm testing conducted throughout 2025.

Texas leads the nation in heartworm cases with new “footholds” found in cooler, drier areas

For the first time, Texas topped the list of leading states for heartworm incidence, followed closely by Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi and South Carolina, said AHS president Marisa Ames, DVM, DACVIM (Cardiology). Rounding out the top ten states in heartworm incidence were Tennessee, Alabama, North Carolina, Florida and Georgia. New “hot spots,” where high infection density was notably higher than in previous surveys included east Texas, the Florida Panhandle, southwest Florida, the central Carolinas and southern Illinois. In these areas, more than 100 cases/clinic were diagnosed.

Newly expanded areas with moderate infection rates (6-25 cases/clinic) included southern California, southwest Colorado, east-central Wisconsin, western Virginia and southern Maine, while several areas in the western and mountain western states saw cases increase from less than 1 case/clinic three years ago to 3-5 cases/year. These areas included central Washington, northern Idaho, northwest Nevada and southeast Wyoming.

Majority of practitioners report steady heartworm incidence rates

Along with submitting their numbers, participating practitioners completed a multiple-choice survey on incidence trends noted since the previous survey, which was conducted in early 2023. Among practitioners surveyed, almost 3 in 5 (59%) said heartworm rates had stayed the same, with the remainder divided between those who saw rates increase (19%) and decrease (22%). Only 10% of survey participants reported seeing no heartworm cases.

“From catastrophic hurricanes that trigger mosquito proliferation and high heartworm transmission rates to human error and compliance lapses, the factors associated with increased heartworm incidence rates in individual practice areas are complex,” said Dr. Ames. Meanwhile, she noted, because of the length of the heartworm lifecycle, changes in compliance or weather

patterns that affect mosquito populations usually take at least a year to affect upward or downward shifts in heartworm incidence.

“While the bad news is that heartworm continues to be a serious and nationwide threat to pet health, the good news is that heartworm disease continues to be almost 100 percent preventable with year-round heartworm prevention,” said Dr. Ames. “We encourage veterinarians and shelters to leverage the new AHS incidence map in client outreach about heartworm disease—and to remind their clients that pets need protection from this devastating disease.”

The new [AHS map](#) can now be downloaded and [compared](#) with maps generated every three years since 2001.

About the American Heartworm Society

The mission of the American Heartworm Society is to lead the veterinary profession and the public in the understanding of heartworm disease. Founded during the Heartworm Symposium of 1974. The American Heartworm Society aims to further scientific progress in the study of heartworm disease, inform the membership of new developments and encourage and help promote effective procedures for the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of heartworm disease.