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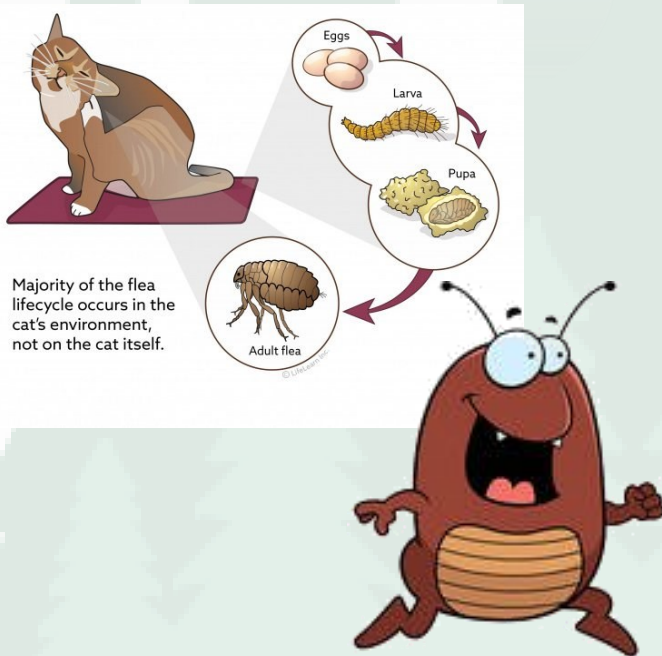
Flea and Tick Prevention

Fleas and ticks are everywhere in the environment! Even if your pet does not go outside (such as an indoor-only cat), humans are exposed to these parasites and can bring them in the house! It is important to make sure that your pets are protected against these common parasites.

Why Prevention?

Fleas can cause a lot of issues for your pets. These mini vampires, when involved in a large enough infestation, can cause anemia and skin issues, bartonella (cat scratch fever), and even tapeworm infections (if ingested!) Ticks are just as problematic, especially in Northwest PA/ Northeast OH. Lyme disease is incredibly common in this area, causing arthritis and even kidney disease. Furthermore, Anaplasmosis is becoming more common in this area, which can also cause joint issues in addition to problems with white blood cells and platelets in dogs.

How do we avoid these infestations and infections? Making sure your pet is on year-round prevention! While infestations of fleas and ticks are worse in the summer, the tick that carries Lyme disease actually prefers cooler temperatures, meaning that your dog can contract Lyme disease during the winter months as well!



Types of Preventions

There are three main categories of flea/tick preventatives. It is important to remember that it takes 24 hours for Lyme disease to spread to your pet after a tick bites your pet. Similarly, it takes around 12-24 hours before Anaplasmosis can spread to your pet. The below products kill ticks before the bacteria that cause Lyme disease and Anaplasmosis to spread from the tick to your pet.

1) Tablets: Oral tablets, such as Credelio, NexGard, Simparica, and Bravecto, all contain a compound called isoxazoline. While these products do not repel fleas or ticks, they do cause the parasites to die after attachment, before any infectious diseases can pass on from the flea/tick to your pet.

2) Collars: Collars, such as Seresto, do repel ticks and fleas. One downside of the collars is that they need to be tightened securely around your pet's neck in order to work. If skin contact is not made with the collar, the ingredients in the collar will not be activated, and therefore will not adequately protect your pet.

3) Topicals: Some topicals, such as K9 Advantix and Provetexa, will repel and prevent flea/tick attachment. Other topicals, such as Frontline, require the tick to bite before it dies.

There are many flea/tick products that work well in protecting your pet against parasites. As long as the product is administered/applied correctly, and as long as it is a product that is proven to be safe and effective, there is no right or wrong answer as far as what product may work the best. If you have any questions or concerns on what product might be best for your pet, make sure to give your veterinarian a call!

If you have any further questions about fleas, please feel free to reach out to me or one of our staff members!

Best regards,
Rachel Rielinger, DVM



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