IN YOUR REGION

Top 5 Regional Parasites: A Quick Guide for Pet Owners

Pets in the southeastern region of the United States and Texas are at risk for contracting parasites that thrive in warm, humid weather. Here's a quick guide to our area's top 5 most common parasites and how to protect your pet from infestations.

PARASITE	WHAT ARE THEY?	WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT THEM?
Heartworms	Spread by mosquitoes, heartworms cause serious heart and lung disease that can be fatal in pets.	• Give your pet a monthly heartworm disease preventive. • Have your dog tested for heartworms every year.
Giardia	*Giardia* is a protozoan parasite that causes diarrhea and may be passed to immunocompromised people.	• Bathe infected pets after treatment. • Pick up feces promptly, keep your home clean, and practice good hygiene.
Hookworms	Hookworms are intestinal parasites that cause blood loss and diarrhea, most commonly in puppies. They may also cause itchy rashes in people.	• Give your pet a heartworm disease preventive that controls intestinal parasites. • Check fecal tests 4 times annually in puppies and twice annually in adults.
Fleas	Fleas are external parasites that infest pets and homes, cause allergic reactions, and can transmit diseases to people and pets.	• Administer veterinary-approved flea preventives *to all household pets* year-round.
Ticks	Ticks are external parasites that live freely but feed on pets and transmit serious, sometimes fatal, diseases to people and pets.	• Use tick prevention products on dogs year-round. • **Do *not* use** dog products on cats.

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