IN YOUR REGION

Top 5 Regional Parasites: A Quick Guide for Pet Owners

The Midwestern United States hosts many parasite species as the warming climate allows their ranges to expand and overlap. The Great Lakes region is a hot spot for Lyme disease, but pets must also battle several other parasitic threats. Here is a quick guide to the top 5 most common Midwestern region parasites and how to protect your pet.

PARASITE	WHAT ARE THEY?	WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT THEM?
Giardia	*Giardia* causes diarrhea and may be passed to immunocompromised people.	• Treat and bathe infected pets. • Pick up feces and practice good hygiene.
Ticks	Black-legged ticks transmit Lyme disease and anaplasmosis in the Midwest. Other species may transmit additional diseases.	• Use tick prevention products on dogs and cats year-round. • ***Do not*** use canine products on cats.
Heartworms	Transmitted by mosquitoes, heartworms cause heart and lung disease that can be fatal in pets.	• Administer a monthly heartworm preventive. • Have your dog tested for heartworms annually. • Testing for cats is recommended on a case-by-case basis.
Roundworms	Roundworms are intestinal parasites that cause gastrointestinal effects in pets but pose a danger to children who accidentally consume infective eggs.	• Administer heartworm preventives that also control intestinal parasites. • Have fecal tests done 4 times a year for puppies and kittens and twice annually for adult pets.
Fleas	These external parasites infest pets and homes, cause allergic reactions, and transmit diseases to people and pets.	• Administer veterinary-approved flea preventives ***to all household pets*** year-round.

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