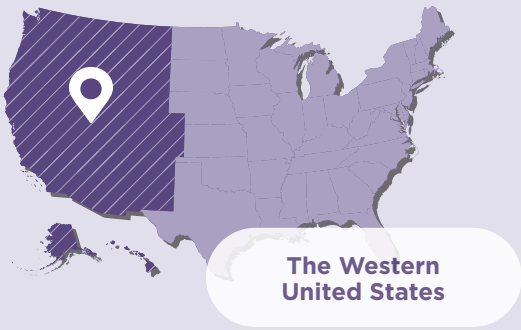
IN YOUR REGION

Top 5 Regional Parasites: A Quick Guide for Pet Owners

The western United States enjoys relatively low parasite prevalence rates compared with other regions, thanks to low humidity and high temperatures. However, some parasites thrive here and put pets at risk for infection. Here's a quick guide to the top 5 most common parasites in the West and strategies to protect your pet from infestation.



PARASITE	WHAT ARE THEY?	WHAT CAN YOU DO ABOUT THEM?
Giardia	*Giardia* is a protozoan parasite that causes diarrhea and may be passed to immunocompromised people.	• Bathe infected pets after treatment. • Pick up and dispose of feces and practice good hygiene.
Ticks	Prominent tick species include the Western black-legged tick and Rocky Mountain wood tick. Ticks are active year-round in this region and can transmit diseases to pets and people.	• Use tick prevention products on dogs year-round. • ***Do not*** use dog products on cats.
Fleas	Two flea species in the West can infest pets; cause allergic reactions; and transmit diseases, such as the bubonic plague, to people and pets.	• Administer veterinary-approved flea prevention ***to all household pets*** year-round.
Heartworms	Transmitted by mosquitoes, heartworms cause serious heart and lung disease that can be fatal in pets.	• Administer a monthly heartworm preventive. • Have your dog tested for heartworms annually.
Roundworms	Roundworms are intestinal parasites that cause minor 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 per year for puppies and kittens and twice annually for adult pets.

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