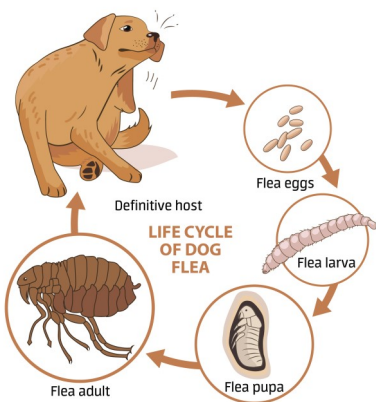


COMPANION ANIMAL NEWSLETTER— NOVEMBER 2023

UNDERSTANDING A FLEA INFESTATION



Fleas are the most common external parasite in dogs and cats, they cause intense itching and often hair loss or skin infections. Fleas can also carry different diseases that may affect not only our pets but also us humans. Year-round flea preventative products are crucial for keeping fleas off our pets, remember prevention is always better than a cure! Most of the flea population lives in the environment, so successful flea treatment must also focus on interrupting the fleas' life cycle.

Flea infestations typically begin around 6–8 weeks before you even notice fleas on your pet. Unprotected pets can pick up fleas from gardens, parks or even another infested home and then bring them into your home. Adult fleas live on your pet, then feed from their blood and start to lay eggs within just 24 hours. These eggs can fall off your pet into your home where they develop into larvae before creating protective cocoons, called pupae. These will then develop and emerge into adult fleas. Female fleas lay up to 50 eggs per day, we only see 5% of fleas on the animal as 95% of fleas are in the

environment. By the time you notice a problem there could already be thousands of immature fleas developing in your home. Fleas hatching from pupae will then jump onto our pets, even if they are treated. Flea products don't stop newly hatched fleas from jumping onto your pet and these fleas can take up to 24 hours to die. Therefore, it is normal to see fleas on treated pets whenever they have been in an infested area. Most home infestations begin to resolve around three months after treatment has been started, but if the home infestation is particularly heavy, or the weather has been colder, it can take longer. As your pet can pick up new fleas whenever they go outside, it is important to continue to regularly treat your pet against fleas. Regular treatment will NOT stop fleas from jumping on to your pet when your pet goes out of the house, but it WILL prevent your home from being re-infested with eggs.

How to target a home infestation

- **Correctly treat all cats and dogs in your home**— flea products are designed to kill fleas once they have jumped onto your pets. Modern vet-prescription flea control products work rapidly and effectively (and are often the only treatment needed).
- **Vacuum the home**— do this more than usual, always making sure that you move all furniture. Concentrate on the skirting boards, carpeted areas, wooden floorboards and laminate floors, this will remove some of the eggs before they develop into pupae.
- **Wash pet's bedding**— for the flea eggs and larvae to be killed bedding must be washed at 60 degrees.
- **Using a household insecticide spray**— thoroughly spraying all floor space in the home. Making sure the household flea spray contains an IGR (insect growth regulator) this will kill the flea eggs and larvae but does not kill the pupae, so you may still see some new fleas hatching out a while after using the spray.
- **Encourage the remaining flea pupae to hatch out**— with the new adult fleas hatching they can jump onto your treated pet and be killed before they lay more eggs. You can stimulate hatching by providing warmth, vibration (vacuuming) and humidity. **Ensure your treated pet has access to all parts of your home, turn up the heating in your home, place damp towels on warm radiators, vacuum and generate warmth and vibration.**

Once the home infestation has been resolved, you will need to continue treating all dogs and cats in your home regularly, if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact the surgery and speak to one of our clinical team.

RUNNY OR STICKY EYE?

Eye discharge is a common problem in pets. Some types are completely normal, while others may be associated with potentially serious health concerns. In order to determine when you need to take your pet to the vet, you'll need to understand the various types of eye discharge and what each may mean.

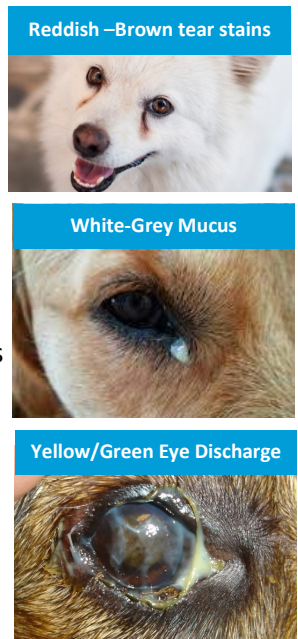
5 most common types of eye discharge:

1. A little 'gunk' or crustiness – generally made out of dried tears, oil, mucus, dead cells, dust etc. Typically, clear or a slightly reddish-brown colour that accumulates at the inside corners of the eyes. Most evident in the morning and is perfectly normal, with the amount produced each day being relatively constant. It should be easily removed with a damp cloth or eye cleansing solution made for pets. The eyes shouldn't be red and shouldn't exhibit any signs of discomfort.
2. Watery Eyes – Excessive eye watering (AKA epiphora) is associated with many different conditions that can range from being relatively minor to more serious. Below are some of the common causes of watery eyes in pets:
 - Allergies
 - Irritants
 - Infection
 - Foreign body in the eye
 - Anatomical abnormalities (e.g. rolled in eyelids)
 - Blocked tear ducts
 - Corneal wounds
 - Glaucoma (increased eye pressure)

Your pet may have simply received an eyeful of pollen or dust, and the increased tearing is working to solve the problem. If eyes continue to water or your pet develops red, painful eyes or other types of eye discharge, make an appointment with your vet.

3. Reddish-Brown Tear Stains – many pets, especially those with light coloured fur, develop a reddish-brown discolouration to the fur near the inner corner of their eyes. This occurs because tears contain a pigment called porphyrin that turns reddish-brown with prolonged exposure to air. In most cases tear staining is cosmetic and can be removed with eye cleansers however sometimes it may be due to underlying disease-causing excess tearing so it is advisable to get tear stains checked by a vet.

4. White-Grey Mucus – Can be a sign of dry eye (AKA keratoconjunctivitis sicca), a condition where the tear film becomes inadequate. A normal tear film is vital for good eye health, so the body tries to compensate by making more mucus to try and lubricate the eyes. Left untreated, dry eye can result in severe discomfort and potentially even blindness.



SYNOQUIN



Osteoarthritis affects many dogs and cats in their later years, sometimes starting at a young age. If you suspect your pet is starting to show signs of joint stiffness, options for investigation and treatment can be discussed at a vet consultation. Management and treatment plans can include diet, weight, exercise and treatments from stem cell therapy through anti-inflammatory medications, to joint supplements.

As an independent veterinary practice we have selected our recommended joint supplement, having reviewed available brands, based on the proven benefit to our patients. Unlike other joint supplements (including well known, and more expensive, advertised brands) Synoquin has clinical trials proving its effectiveness, as well as test results showing it does contain all the active ingredients at the stated beneficial levels, and in a form that is digestible and metabolizable by dogs and cats.

For more information on helping improve your pets mobility, please call the surgery to arrange a consultation appointment with one of our vets or registered vet nurses.



Check out our website www.daleheadvetgroup.co.uk for more information about caring for your pet, special offers, vet and staff profiles and much more!

