



Maidstone Veterinary Clinic

Veterinary Surgeons: P.J. Warmerdam BVSc, MRCVS and Associates.
28 King Street Upper Hutt, Telephone (04) 5285-927, fax (04)5282-042

FLEA CONTROL

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Fleas are a real menace to our pets as well as ourselves. Pets can pick up fleas whenever they are in areas where other cats and dogs have been, both outside and inside. NO CAT OR DOG is immune from picking up or carrying fleas. Most fleas we find on cats and dogs are actually the cat flea. Unfortunately this flea is very adaptable and is quite happy to reside on and feed off your dog as well. Fleas need to feed on its host animals blood to be able to lay eggs. Often people will say their dogs are the only ones with fleas, this is because the dogs show more of a reaction to the flea bites whilst it is often the cat is the culprit and has brought the fleas home.

For this reason is it important to treat all the animals in the house for fleas.

We mostly see dogs with a dermatitis caused by an allergic response to the flea's saliva. This then causes an intense itch and further damage is done from continued scratching once your pet starts the itch, scratch cycle.

It is hard to keep your pet free from fleas by just killing the adult fleas as you find them. A female flea can lay up to 1000 eggs in her short lifetime. These fall off into the environment such as your carpet, your furniture and your pet's bedding. (Did you know that within thirty days, 10 female fleas can multiply to a quarter of a million!!) However, the adult flea only accounts for a tiny part of the flea problem, 95% of the problem is the immature flea stages. The pupae stage of the flea is impossible to kill and in the early stages of flea eradication these can remain an ongoing source of flea reinfestation and ultimately an irritation to your pet. The pupae can remain alive in their cocoon for over a year, warmth, high humidity and vibrations are what stimulate the fleas to hatch out. This is why people often find that their house comes "alive" on returning from vacation.

Below are a series of 3 steps needed to achieve total flea control in your house and on the pets. We recommend the use of new generation flea compounds as they are very effective against fleas, they have no effect on animals nor humans and are thus very safe to use.

There are many different products to choose from and you should look for ones with good instructions on their usage or follow our recommendations. You should always follow the instructions of the frequency and the method of application of the product, as this will have major influence on its effectiveness of eliminating the fleas.

1. TREAT THE ANIMALS. (Kill adult fleas)

This is to eliminate fleas on the animals. When you treat your pets - do all of them at the same time. This reduces transmission and makes it easier to remember when they were treated. The flea is not fussy whether it bites a dog or a cat (it will not bite humans unless it is very hungry and cannot find a more suitable host to feed off!!!). There are a 2 very good 'spot applicators which when applied to the skin on the back of the neck, will migrate around the rest of the body.

2. TREAT THE ENVIRONMENT.(Stop fleas breeding in your home)

As mentioned before, the immature stages of the flea (eggs and larvae) that are hiding in the carpet, bedding etc. accounts for 95% of the problem and will provide a continued source of hungry fleas that will reinfest your pets.

You will either need to kill the larvae with an environmental control compound - Insect Growth Regulator (IGR) or ensure that any eggs laid by the adult flea are infertile.

3. PREVENT REINFESTATION

This can be started at the beginning of the Spring and has as primary goal to reduce the numbers of fleas over the warmer summer months. By starting early you will not have had the explosive increase in environmental larvae/pupae numbers before you are aware of the problem and the summer “epidemic” of fleas that happens, can then be avoided.

Below is a list of quality fleas products currently on the market. It includes information on their action and benefits. The staff are trained to assist you in finding the products that will achieve the best results for you.

Please read all the directions before you start and follow all precautions written on the packet.

☐ **FRONT-LINE:** Is a compound specifically active against adult fleas and ticks and has a wide safety margin for pets and owners. It kills 100% of fleas within 24 hours and continues killing them for 2 months in dogs and 6 weeks in cats. The secret in the compound is the unique storage and release of fipronil. This spreads through the skin into the sebaceous glands to form a ‘reservoir’ and a small amount is continuously released onto the skin surface and hair. This provides long-lasting protection and makes it resistant to the effects of water and normal shampooing.

Front-line comes in 125 & 250 ml spray bottle, or easy to apply, 3 pack of single pipettes based on the animals body weight..

☐ **ADVANTAGE:** Is a compound which is active against the adult flea and will aid in environmental control. It begins working immediately, killing 100% of fleas in 24hrs and keeps on killing them for at least a month. So any new fleas which jump onto the pet are killed immediately before they can lay any eggs. This then means the constant flea reinfestation of the pet’s home is rapidly controlled and the flea life cycle can be broken. It is not as water and wash resistant as the Front-line. As the compound falls off the pet into the environment, it will have a degree of control on flea larvae which then come into contact with the molecules.

Advantage comes in an easy to apply, 4 pack of single pipettes based on the animals body weight.

☐ **PROGRAM** Is a compound that gets to the source of the problem. When adult fleas bite the animal, they also take in PROGRAM. This works on the flea eggs by killing them before they hatch. As a result, the normal build up of the flea population on the pet and in its living area is stopped. With the knowledge that only 5% of the flea population are adults, this is a powerful tool to use in flea control. It is important to start this product before a flea problem has developed and then to use it on the same day every month.

Program does not kill adult fleas and the use of an adulticide may be necessary in the summer. It comes in a convenient monthly dose as a tablet for dogs and oral liquid for cats. It is also available as a 6 monthly injection for cats.

☐ **DUOGARD Line-on** Is a combination of adulticide(permethrin) for adult fleas which lasts 4 weeks and an ovicide which kills flea eggs for 8 weeks. It continues to work if the pet is wet, although frequent shampooing will reduce the period of protection.

It comes in a 4 pack of single pipettes or is sold as a single application. It is only for dogs and is applied to the backline in the direction from the base of the tail to the mid neck area.

☐ **INDOREX FOGGERS:** These are an aerosol can that contain an IGR compound that kills flea larvae for 12 months.

A spray or a target aerosol is also available for treating specific areas within the house such as pet’s bedding, kennel, under furniture etc.

It is in ideal product to hit a stubborn environmental based flea problem.



