



勝利動物醫院  
Victory Animal Hospital

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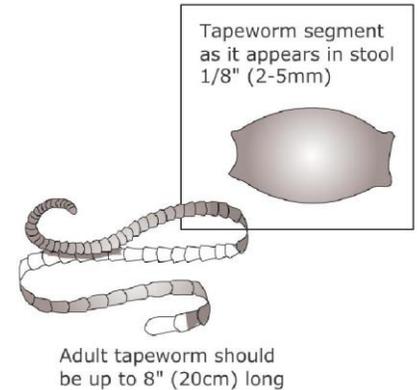
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### Tapeworm Infection in Cats

#### What are tapeworms?

*Tapeworms* are intestinal parasites of the cat. They are classified as *cestodes*. They belong to a different family than hookworms and roundworms, which are the other common intestinal parasites of dogs and cats. Several types of tapeworms are known to infect cats. *Dipylidium caninum* is by far the most common species observed in cats.



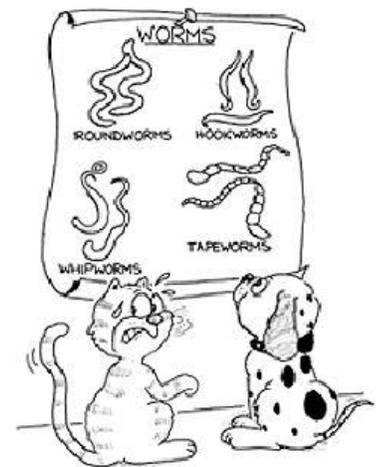
"Fleas are the intermediate host for *Dipylidium caninum*."

Fleas are the intermediate host for *Dipylidium caninum*. In other words, the tapeworm is unable to complete its life cycle without the presence of fleas in the environment. Regardless of whether the owner may have seen fleas, the cat *must* have ingested a flea in order to have tapeworms. Consequently, tapeworms are more common in environments that are heavily infested with fleas. Lice are also reported as intermediate hosts for this tapeworm but they are relatively uncommon parasites of cats.

#### What is the treatment for tapeworms?

A variety of products are available to treat tapeworms in cats but they are *not* all equally effective. For the best advice on the type of de-worming preparation most suitable for your cat, you should seek the help of your veterinarian. The most effective worming products are only available by prescription from a licensed veterinarian.

The deworming medication called an *anthelmintic* may be given as a tablet or an injection. After treatment, the tapeworm dies and is usually digested within the intestine, so worm segments don't usually pass into the stool. Side effects, such as vomiting and diarrhea, are rarely reported with the newer tapeworm medications.



"Flea control is the cornerstone of preventing *Dipylidium caninum* infection."

Flea control is the cornerstone of preventing *Dipylidium caninum* infection. Flea control products are becoming more effective and convenient to use.

*This client information sheet is based on material written by: Ernest Ward, DVM*

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