



勝利動物醫院
Victory Animal Hospital

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Blk B, 1/F, Chung Yuen Mansion, 71b Waterloo Rd., Kln, Hong Kong

Phone: 852 2711 0332

Email: info@globavet.com

Tapeworm Infection in Dogs

What are tapeworms?

Tapeworms are flat intestinal worms that are made up of many small segments, each about $\frac{1}{4}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$ " (3–5 mm) long. Unlike roundworms that live freely in the intestinal tract, tapeworms attach to the wall of the small intestine using hook-like mouthparts.

How do dogs get tapeworms?

When the infected eggs are released into the environment, they have to be swallowed by immature flea larvae in the environment. Once inside the larval flea, the tapeworm egg continues to develop as the flea matures into an adult flea. During grooming or in response to a flea bite, a dog can ingest the tapeworm infected flea and complete the life cycle.

What is the treatment?

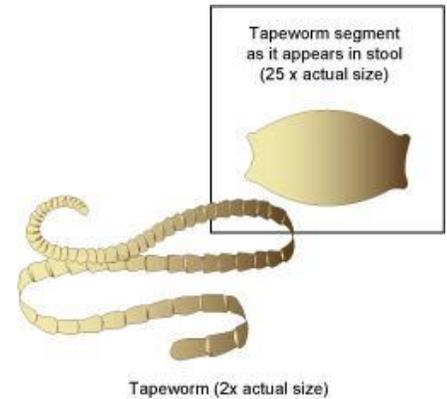
With today's drugs, treatment is simple and effective. The parasiticide may be given either in the form of tablets or by injection. It causes the parasite to dissolve in the intestines so you normally will not see tapeworms passed in the stool. These drugs are very safe and should not cause any side effects.

Is there anything else I should do?

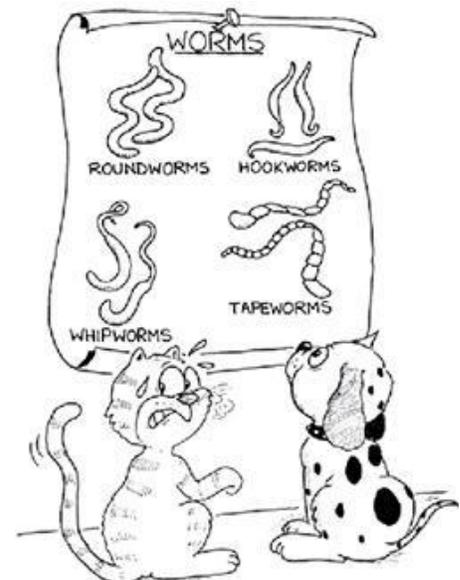
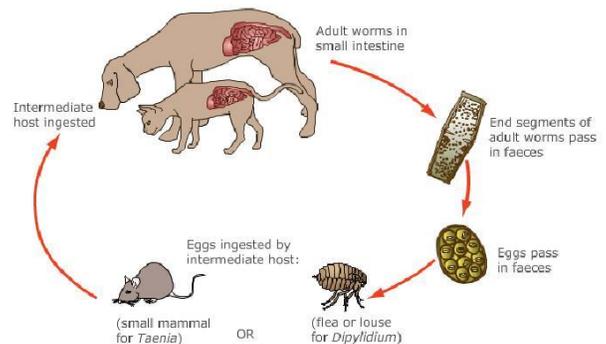
"Flea control is critical in the management and prevention of tapeworm infection."

Flea control is critical in the management and prevention of tapeworm infection. Flea control involves treating the dog and the environment (for more information, see the Client Handout *Flea Control in Dogs* and *Flea Control in Cats*). Your veterinarian can recommend a safe and effective flea control for your pet. If your dog lives in a flea-infested environment, re-infection with tapeworms may occur in as little as two weeks. Since tapeworm medication is so effective, recurrent tapeworm infections are almost always due to re-infection from fleas and not failure of the product.

Prevention of cestode tapeworm infection involves avoidance of uncooked or partially cooked meat or meat by-products.



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

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