

INFO FOR NEW PET ADOPTERS - -FLEAS, TICKS AND MITES-



What you should know about External Parasites

Congratulations on your new pet! At some point all pet owners (and pets!) will have to deal with external parasites like fleas, ticks and mites. These pests can be very irritating to your new pet and some parasites even carry disease. Speak with your veterinarian about the best treatment and preventative for your new pet.



Fleas

- Fleas thrive in our humid south Texas weather and they're a year round problem. Fleas live on your pet by biting them and sucking their blood. Young or smaller pets can become anemic due to the blood loss.
- Fleas can make your pet itch and scratch themselves so badly they get open sores that can become infected.
- Regular cleaning of any areas your pet comes into contact with can help keep fleas at bay. You may need to treat your yard as well.

Ticks

- Ticks are commonly found in woods and underbrush. Adult ticks like to attach themselves to dogs (and less commonly cats) who check out these areas. Ticks can usually be found near your pet's neck, in their ears, between the toes and in the folds of the body. In addition to skin irritation, severe cases can lead to anemia.
- Ticks can carry serious infectious diseases like Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. These diseases can affect *both* pets and people.
- Tick removal should NEVER be done with alcohol, petroleum jelly or a hot match. Instead, use tweezers to grip the tick as closely to the pet's skin as you can. Pull the tick out without twisting and crush it while avoiding any of the parasite's fluids which can carry disease.

Mites

- Ear mites are very common in young cats and dogs. This condition can easily be treated with medications and cleaning.
- Ear mites can cause severe irritation in the ear canal and your pet may shake his or her head and scratch at their ears. A dark brown or black discharge in the ear is common.
- Scarcoptic mange mites (scabies) are contagious to other pets *and* people. Symptoms include general hair loss, skin rashes and crusting on the skin. Treatment is available but additional medicines may be needed to soothe skin irritation.
- Demodectic mange mites can cause your dog to have patches of scaly skin and redness around the mouth and eyes. Treatment of localized demodectic mange is usually successful but severe cases can be hard to cure.



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