



# HEART HEALTHCARE & EMERGENCY ANIMAL RESCUE TEAM

a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization  
"HELPING PROTECT PETS AND PEOPLE"  
heart4pets.org 714-993-9193



## IMPORTANCE OF FECAL TESTING

Due to the concerning number of positive parasite/Giardia cases we have seen over the past year, we strongly recommend fecal tests to be performed on pets at least twice a year or possibly more often depending on possible exposure from other animals and environments.

### HEART Offers an Inexpensive and Easy Method of Fecal Testing for Dogs and Cats

It is important to determine if your pet has parasites, as they can easily be transmitted and are very dangerous to the health of other pets and humans. In order to properly diagnose if your pet has parasites/Giardia, a stool sample must be viewed under a microscope. HEART sends all samples to an outside laboratory which provides results within 24 hours, at which time we notify you and email you a copy of the lab report.

If your pet's results are positive, it is crucial that your pet begins proper treatment immediately. Our staff will contact you to go over the results, prescribe the proper medication, and provide you with information as to the steps needed to properly disinfect surfaces while keeping your pet away from other animals in order to minimize the risk of ongoing infestation and transmission to other pets and to your family. (Do NOT simply use "over-the-counter" medications, as they may not be sufficient and can actually delay the ability to use the appropriate prescription medication needed to properly treat your pet).

Pets are easily susceptible to contracting parasites through exposure from environments where other pets or wildlife have access, such as backyards, doggie and people parks, community/shared walking areas, boarding/daycare facilities, and other places. Even healthy pets may become infested and not show early signs of infestation, and not all parasites can be seen in the stool without using a microscope. Please note that Heartworms are a different type of parasite which must be diagnosed through a blood test.



## SIMPLE STEPS TO TAKE



If we HAVE seen your pet within the past 12 months:

- 1) No appointment is needed and we do not need to see your pet.
- 2) Simply drop off a fresh stool sample to us at any of our vaccine clinics. (Instructions provided below).  
Total cost: \$38 lab test fee, payable when you drop off the sample.

If we have NOT seen your pet within the past 12 months:

- 1) Contact us to schedule an appointment for your pet's initial exam.
- 2) Bring a fresh stool sample with you. (Instructions provided below).  
Total cost: \$38 lab test fee plus \$22 exam fee.



Stool Sample Collection Instructions:

Collect a fresh stool sample on the day you bring it to us. Place the sample in a clear, sealed plastic ziploc bag or clean plastic disposable container and place that bag/container inside another sealed plastic bag labeled with your name & phone number, and your pet's name and its accurate weight. Keep the sample in the refrigerator or in a container with ice, but do not allow it to become frozen.

See reverse side for pictures & general descriptions of common parasites.

Prices reflected above may change. Please check our website or ask our staff to confirm current pricing.

## TYPES OF PARASITES, SYMPTOMS & DANGERS

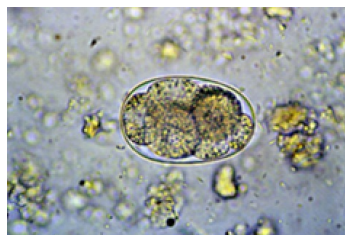
Intestinal parasites live in the gastrointestinal tract and can be a major cause of serious illness to your pet and even death. They can be transmitted between different species, including humans (Zoonosis). The parasites listed below are zoonotic. Although most pets infected with intestinal parasites show some type of symptoms, others may be asymptomatic (not showing any signs).

Symptoms differ depending on the parasite, but some common clinical signs include diarrhea, blood in stool, worms visible in stool or worm(s) seen near anus, bloating, potbellied appearance to abdomen, vomiting, constipation, anemia, weight loss, coughing and trouble breathing.

Listed below are some of the most common types of intestinal parasites effecting dogs and cats.



**Giardia**



**Coccidia**



**Roundworms**



**Tapeworms**



**Hookworms**



**Whipworms**

**Giardia** is a single celled parasitic species which is spread by fecal-oral transmission or by drinking contaminated water. Giardia lives in the small intestine and can affect your pet's ability to properly absorb nutrients, water, and electrolytes, which can lead to diarrhea and weight loss.

**Coccidia** is a protozoan parasite that lives in the wall of the intestine and can cause diarrhea in dogs and cats. Coccidia is most common in puppies but can also infect adult dogs as well as cats.

**Roundworms** are the most common internal parasites in dogs and cats. The adult worms have the appearance of spaghetti and sometimes can be seen in your pet's stool or vomit. Roundworm eggs are microscopic. There are several ways pets can become infected. Nursing puppies and kittens commonly get roundworms from an infected mother's milk which is why deworming is always recommended in puppies and kittens, while adult pets can acquire them by ingesting eggs from the feces of an infected animal.

**Tapeworms** are small and flat segmented parasites that can live in the intestine in many species. The adult tapeworm segments can be seen with the naked eye in the stool or stuck to fur around the anus and resemble a grain of rice, while Tapeworm eggs are microscopic. Tapeworms can cause vomiting and weight loss and they are acquired by ingesting an intermediate host, such as an infected flea or rodent.

**Hookworms** live primarily in the small intestine and feed on an animal's blood. Hookworms can cause life-threatening anemia, especially in puppies and kittens. Hookworm eggs are passed in the stool and hatch into larvae, and a dog/cat can become infected either through ingestion or skin contact.

**Whipworms** live in the cecum and colon (large intestine), where they attach to the mucosal lining. Dogs can become infected with whipworms by ingesting whipworm eggs which can be found in contaminated soil or other substances that may contain dog feces. Whipworms can cause anemia, dehydration, weight loss, diarrhea and bloody stools.