



**PARKSIDE** veterinary group

## FLEAS info

These little devils are very common, very persistent and very annoying for pet and owner. BUT they are very treatable and nowadays we tend to prevent them by protecting your pet against them. A little lesson first! Only the adult flea lives on your pet. Here they will bite and suck blood and lay eggs which fall off into the pet's (and your) surroundings.

These bites cause much irritation and subsequent damage from self-mutilation. The eggs hatch into tiny larvae, which are a bit like tiny caterpillars. These feed on dead skin and debris in the environment, until they pupate (like a butterfly) and the flea develops inside the pupa. It will stay in the shell until it feels movement, when it bursts out and jumps until it reaches hair, on your cat, or dog, or rabbit - or you!

Each species has its own flea, but the cat flea is seen on dogs and cats. As you can see, you soon end up with many fleas on the pet and many hundreds of babies waiting their turn. They will bite us too and you see a big itchy "heat-spot". So, we need to use something that will last a long time, so that it keeps killing all the babies which will eventually find your pet. Treating with a flea shampoo may kill fleas on your pet, but only as you shampoo. Afterwards, the pet is immediately open to re-infection from babies in the house.

We recommend that you use a long-acting, "spot-on" preparation - a liquid which you apply on the back of the neck and the ingredient slowly spreads all over the pet's body, where it keeps killing fleas for many weeks. This is also an ideal way to prevent fleas arriving and so preventing an infestation from taking hold in the first place. When it is warmer, fleas can live on the ground, outside, so you have a much greater chance of seeing fleas during Spring to Autumn, when your pet can pick them up when out for a walk.

There are several "spot-on" options which we recommend, and being non-toxic to mammals, they are very safe. After 2 -3 days it won't even wash off with swimming or occasional bathing. Ask our reception staff for details, and they will advise the best approach for treatment and prevention. Beware of look-alikes in pet shops which merely contain so-called repellants which do not work effectively. If your dog goes hill walking, you will have seen ticks. These, as well as fleas can be killed by some of these preparations - we will advise you.