



Fleas and ticks are a common pet owner concern. While prevention is the best method to avoid these parasites on your pet, it is important to also know what to look for and what causes them. Here is some information on fleas and ticks.

FLEAS

Fleas are the most common external parasite we see on companion animals. These wingless insects feed on blood and can jump up to two feet high. Fleas can live anywhere from 13 days up to several months long and during their life span they can produce millions of offspring.

What to look for:

- 1** Droppings in the animal's fur which look like small dark grains of sand
- 2** Flea eggs which look like tiny white grains of rice
- 3** Scratching, licking, and biting at the skin
- 4** Hair loss
- 5** Scabs or hot spots
- 6** Anemia
- 7** Tapeworms

Causes:

- 1** Fleas are easily brought in from the outdoors
- 2** Fleas thrive in warm, humid climates and can be seen year-round
- 3** Adult fleas spend most of their lives on the animal producing offspring
- 4** Flea eggs can drop out onto carpet, furniture, upholstery, and bedding and new adult fleas will find their new host that way whether it be animal or human

TICKS

Ticks are parasites that feed on blood. Although you or your pet may not notice their presence, they can transmit diseases through their bite. Most ticks require blood meals from a host to survive. Ticks tend to be most active in the late spring and summer. Ticks are more prominent in warm climates.

What to look for:

- 1 Most ticks are visible to the naked eye. They can be found anywhere on the body but tend to prefer areas around the head, neck, ears, and feet
- 2 Anemia
- 3 Tick paralysis
- 4 Skin Irritation

Causes:

- 1 Ticks are easily picked up when an animal is outdoors
- 2 Ticks thrive in warm climates but can be seen all year round
- 3 Ticks can crawl from one host to another

TREATMENT FOR FLEAS AND TICKS

Consult a veterinarian if you suspect fleas or ticks on your pet. It is important that all pets in the household are treated including indoor/outdoor pets and the environment that they are in as well. Once a veterinarian confirms a diagnosis a treatment plan may include the following:

- 1 Topical or oral medication or use of shampoos, sprays, or powders
- 2 Thorough cleaning of your house, including rugs, bedding, and upholstery especially with a flea infestation. Severe cases may require using a spray or a fogger, which requires temporary evacuation of the home.
- 3 Lawn treatment may be required to prevent the animal from becoming reinfested.
- 4 Remember only use products intended for cats on cats and dogs of dogs. Read the labels and make sure that the product is appropriate for your pets age and weight.

PREVENTION FOR FLEAS AND TICKS

- 1** Wash bedding at least once a week
- 2** Keep your yard free of organic debris and remember that fleas and ticks like to hide in dark, moist, shady areas
- 3** Keep your yard trimmed and well maintained
- 4** Use a flea and tick preventative which can be purchased as a prescription or over the counter formulas.

RESOURCES

Fleas and Ticks | ASPCA

<https://www.asPCA.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/fleas-and-ticks>

External parasites | American Veterinary Medical Association (avma.org)

<https://www.avma.org/resources/pet-owners/petcare/external-parasites>

