

Heartworm prevention for dogs is an important and essential concern for every pet owner.

Heartworms are spread by mosquitoes and dogs have been diagnosed with heartworm disease in every state of the country.

How it works:

- Heartworm preventives are available as pills, topical liquids, or injections
- They work by killing the immature heartworm larvae that mosquitoes deposit into a dog's body
- It's important to give the medication on schedule so the larvae don't mature into adults

What to consider:

- You should consult with your veterinarian to determine the best preventative for your dog
- Some preventatives also protect against other parasites, such as fleas, ticks, and ear mites
- You should also test your dog for heartworms annually
- The American Heartworm Society estimates that more than a million dogs in the U.S. have heartworm disease-and heartworm disease can be fatal.
- Cats and ferrets can also get heartworm disease.
- Heartworm preventatives are safe, relatively inexpensive and easy to give, but if a dog becomes infected, heartworm treatment can be costly and difficult, requiring multiple veterinary visits and months of exercise restrictions.

A veterinarian can perform a blood test to check for heartworm antigens and recommend the best prevention method for your pet based on their lifestyle and risk factors.