

# Roundworm



## What is Roundworm?

Roundworms are intestinal parasites that infect the intestine of dogs. They are one of the most common intestinal parasites, and can also affect humans. Roundworms are approximately 7 inches long, and white/beige in color, resembling cooked spaghetti noodles!

## How can my pet become infected?

Your dog or cat may be infected by roundworms in several ways including ingestion of an infected rodent, from an infected mother while nursing or in utero, or through the ingestion of stool contaminated with roundworm eggs.

## What are the symptoms of roundworm?

Symptoms of roundworm infestation:

- Vomiting roundworms, which may also be passed in feces
- Lethargy
- Dull hair coat
- Pot-bellied appearance
- Diarrhea
- Coughing due to parasite migration

Roundworms may be diagnosed on a routine fecal evaluation in our in-house laboratory.

## Treatment for roundworm

Treatment for roundworms involves administration of any of several different medications. Medications will only affect adult roundworms. Therefore, the medications need to be repeated at 2 week intervals to deal with any residual larvae as they mature. The number of treatments required may vary. Once dewormed, many of the monthly medications designed for parasite control contain medication that will prevent roundworm infections moving forward.

Also, keep in mind that keeping your backyard free from pet wastes, will help to prevent infection with intestinal parasites.

## Roundworms are zoonotic!

Of bigger importance is the fact that roundworms can be passed on to humans, especially children who may play in areas where there is pet waste. Children may become infected with roundworm eggs via the feco-oral route. The eggs develop into larva which migrate through the body causing organ damage. This can easily be prevented by having a fecal sample evaluated at least once annually, and ensuring that your pet is on an appropriate parasite control product year-round.