

Fleas, Ticks, & Heartworms

Today we have 3 topics:

What are these parasites?

What are our local rates and cases?

Finally, how to naturally prevent and treat them!



What are fleas, ticks, and heartworms?

Fleas: There are over 2,000 described species of fleas worldwide, however the most common flea encountered in and around homes is the cat flea. The dog flea, while very similar to the cat flea, is relatively rare in North America. Most dogs infested with fleas have cat fleas! On pets, fleas tend to concentrate their bites to the neck, shoulder blades, and base of the tail regions. However, with heavy infestations, the fleas can be seen running across the sparse hair areas of the belly.



Common Name	Scientific Name
Cat Flea	Ctenocephalides felis (Bouche)
Dog Flea	Ctenocephalides canis (Curtis)
Northern Rat Flea	Nosopsyllus fasciatus (Bosc)
Oriental Rat Flea	Xenopsylla cheopis (Rothschild)
Rabbit Flea	Cediopsylla simplex (Baker)

Ticks: The American dog tick is the most commonly encountered species throughout Ohio.

Ticks are hard to spot, initially, but they usually look something like the below. You'll find them anywhere but the warmer and the thinner the skin, the better, so ears and armpits are favorite spots.



If you see a tick, remove it. You can do it. Should you remove a tick, keep it in a covered jar (ideally with a bit of alcohol in it, yes vodka is fine). If suspicious symptoms pop up in your pet (or you), you can easily have the tick examined to see if it was a carrier of any diseases. Secondly, once the tick is removed, disinfect the area with a skin safe disinfectant, (50/50 Apple Cider Vinegar and water (add salt for extra power), lemon juice, Colloidal Silver, iodine, or any suitable medical swab or antiseptic cream, etc.). You can use easy Tick tools to remove them. be sure to always start at the point where there is contact with the skin. Do not pull the tick out by its butt. Find the head and twist or pull gently from there. All remains have to be taken out to start the healing process.



Heartworms: Heartworm disease is not contagious, meaning that a dog cannot catch the disease from being near an infected dog. Heartworm disease is only spread through the bite of a mosquito. Inside a dog, a heartworm's lifespan is 5 to 7 years.

Signs of heartworm disease may include **a mild persistent cough, reluctance to exercise, fatigue after moderate activity, decreased appetite, and weight loss.** As heartworm disease progresses, pets may develop heart failure and the appearance of a swollen belly due to excess fluid in the abdomen.



Reducing the Risk

Having said that, there are a number of things you can do to reduce the chances of your dog developing heartworm infection, or to minimize side effects from conventional treatment.

- Reduce the frequency of vaccinations, feed your dog a healthy diet, and use antioxidants and omega-3 fatty acids to reduce inflammation and oxidation. This will improve your dog's overall health and make it less likely that infection could develop into heartworm disease.
- Take your dog for regular veterinary visits and blood tests to allow for early diagnosis. The sooner it's diagnosed, the less likely the infection will turn into disease.
- Limit your dog's exposure to mosquitoes. They can be controlled naturally with citrus oils, cedar oils, and diatomaceous earth.
- Dogs needing conventional treatment may benefit from herbs such as milk thistle and homeopathic options such as berberis; these minimize toxicity from the medications and dying heartworms.

What are our local rates & cases?

Check out these sites to follow the forecast of local parasites in our area. If we know which bugs are prevalent each season, then we should ask ourselves - do we need preventative care all year round? The short answer - no, we do not. It is best to give our pet's bodies a break from conventional meds during the "off seasons".

For example - Mosquitos, they do not survive the winters here in Ohio, so we do not need to treat for them. This same idea can be used for Holistic options as well. We can back off or replace a supplement based on the current season. For example - the type of probiotic we use each season should change. We use Lactic Acid Probiotics in the winter and Soil-Base Probiotics in the Spring and Summer. As the seasons change our dog's bodies can too.

[Flea Activity in the country - Ohio is Low](#) - Pet Disease Alerts | Flea Forecast Map

To check your county - Parasite Prevalence Maps | Pets & Parasites: The Pet Owner's Parasite Resource (petsandparasites.org)

2022 Pet Parasite Forecasts | Pets & Parasites: The Pet Owner's Parasite Resource (petsandparasites.org)

Warren County was rated Low in 2022 for heartworm cases in dogs and cats

[Heartworm Forecast for 2023 - currently rated Low](#) - Pet Disease Alerts | 30 Day Pet Parasite Forecast Maps

Dogs:

Are there parasites in your state or county? Check the Parasite Prevalence Map below to find out!

HEARTWORM ▾

HEARTWORM CANINE ▾

DOG ▾

2022 ▾

ALL YEAR ▾

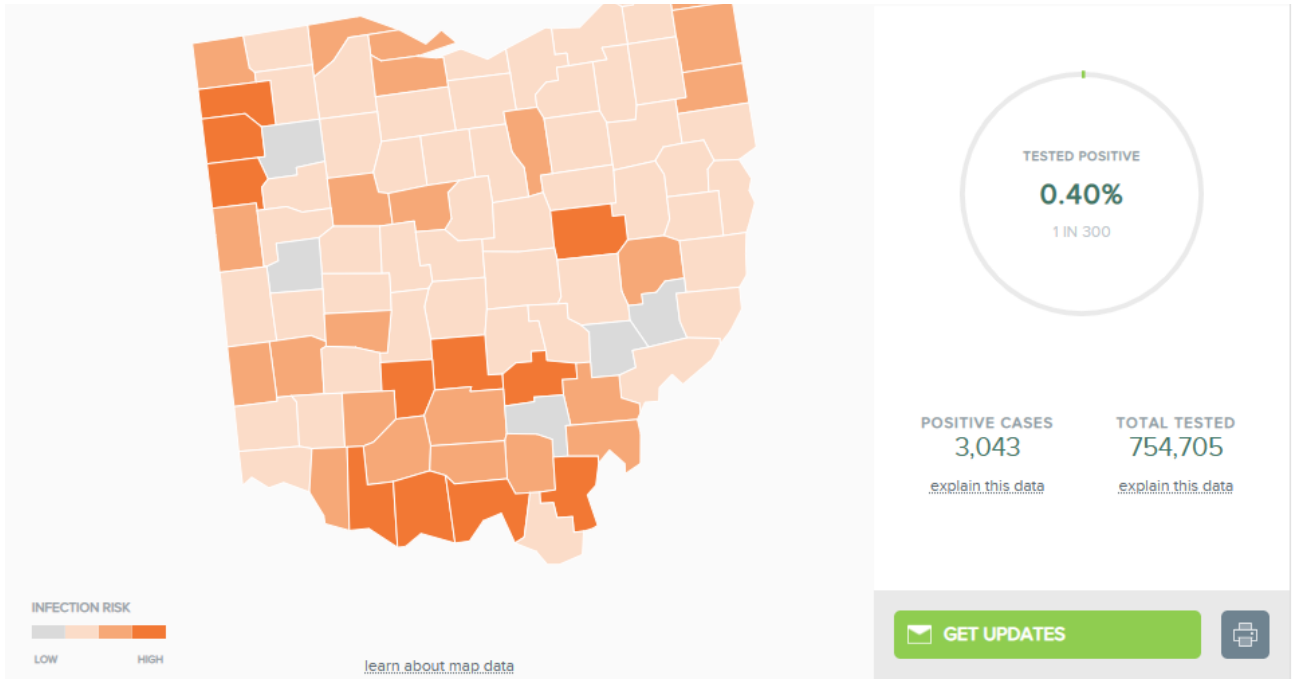
UNITED STATES → OHIO

SWITCH TO CANADA 



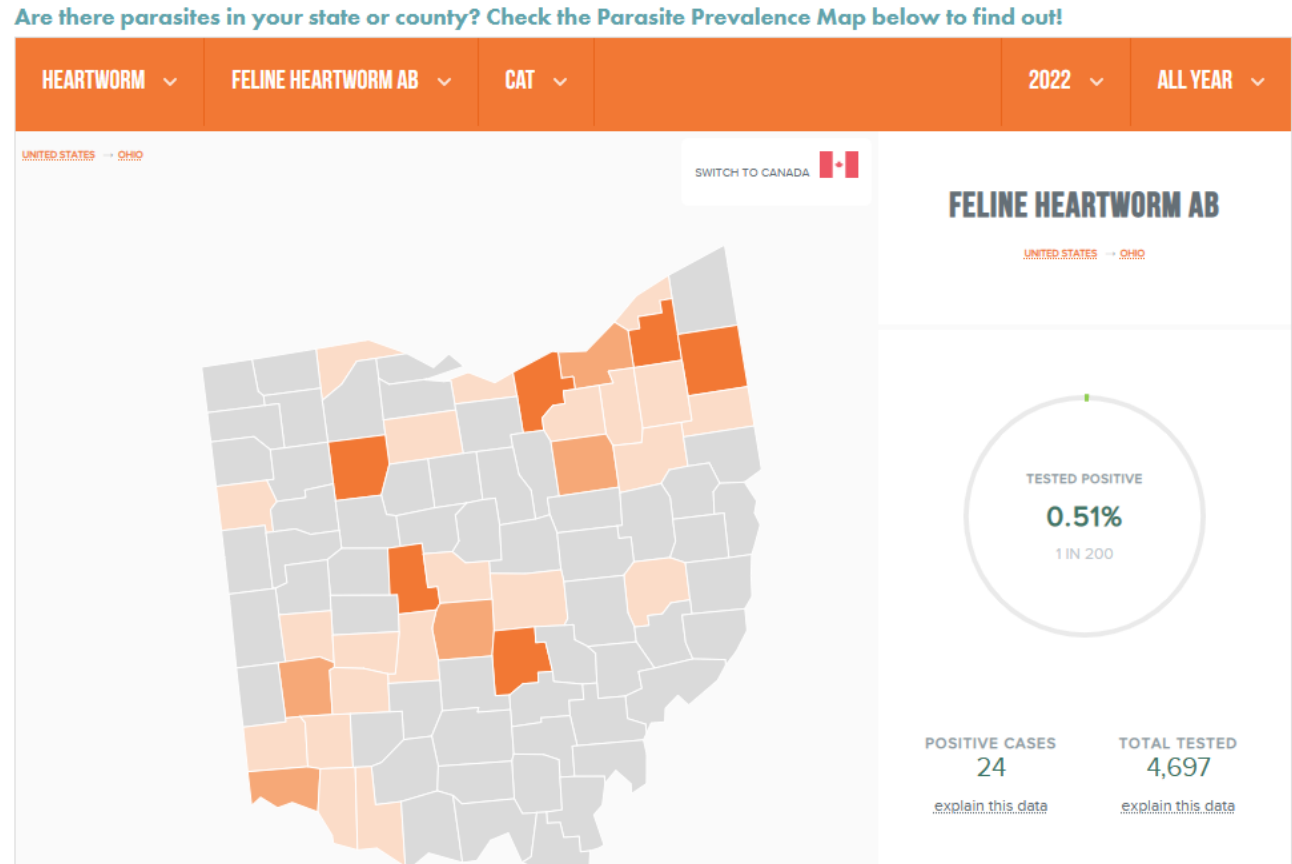
HEARTWORM CANINE

UNITED STATES → OHIO



This map shows the low number of positive heartworm cases - this does not mean these dogs passed away. This shows they tested positive. Heartworms can be treated. Be sure to know the warning signs! Check this site for your state and county!

Cats:



Cats had an even lower number compared to dogs in positive cases.

Natural Options to Try & Consider

Please read the following articles to see why conventional flea, tick, and heartworm medications, may not be the best choice when it comes to preventative care. This information is not to scare owners, but to inform them and help them make the most knowledgeable decisions for their pet's health.

Safest Flea And Tick Prevention For Dogs (dogsnaturallymagazine.com)

Natural Heartworm Prevention Without Pills - Dogs Naturally (dogsnaturallymagazine.com)

Natural options: It's important to note that owners should follow the box directions and make sure to speak with your Holistic Nutritionist to make sure items can be used together.

Combinations we recommend:

The Basic Combo: all the essentials, nothing more or less

Flea & Tick Collar for Dogs + Cats with Natural Essential Oils – Wondercide



Flea & Tick Spot On for Dogs + Cats with Natural Essential Oils – Wondercide



Heartworm - HWF For Dogs | Ditch The Un-Natural Chemicals | Supports A Clean Heart
(ambernaturalz.com)



Raw Dog Food and Company | Protect Pre & Probiotics Humic & Fulvic Acid



I'm a Little Extra Combo: for the pet parent that may want one step more than the basics

Repellent Kit for Large Dogs (mercolamarket.com)

Repellent Kit for Small Dogs (mercolamarket.com)



Woof Creek | Flea + Tick Defense for Dogs – Dr. Judy Morgan's Naturally Healthy Pets
(drjudymorgan.com)





Heartworm - Heart Care For Pets | A safe & powerful heart care formula you can trust
(ambernationalz.com)



Whole Food Digestive Probiotic for Pets (102g per Jar): 1 Jar (mercolamarket.com)



Dogs // Flea & Tick Spray - Wondercide



The Overkill Combo: *for the pet parent that wants to make sure their dog is protected at all times*

Natural Baltic Amber Tick & Flea Collar for Dogs – AmberCrown





ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS -

Flea & Tick Collar for Dogs + Cats with Natural Essential Oils – Wondercide

Repellent Kit for Large Dogs (mercolamarket.com)

Repellent Kit for Small Dogs (mercolamarket.com)



ONE OF THE FOLLOWING OPTIONS -

Flea & Tick Spot On for Dogs + Cats with Natural Essential Oils – Wondercide

Repellent Kit for Large Dogs (mercolamarket.com)

Repellent Kit for Small Dogs (mercolamarket.com)

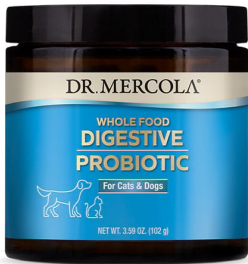




Natural Dog Wormer-Worm Free Naturally (alternativeanimal.com)



Whole Food Digestive Probiotic for Pets (102g per Jar): 1 Jar (mercolamarket.com)



Diatomaceous Earth (1lb. bag) (mercolamarket.com)



Outdoor Flea & Tick Control for Yard + Garden | Wondercide



*** All products listed below can be used in combination with each other - choose what is best for your dog or consult your Holistic Pet Care Nutritionist ***

Collars:

Natural Baltic Amber Tick & Flea Collar for Dogs – AmberCrown

Flea & Tick Collar for Dogs + Cats with Natural Essential Oils – Wondercide

Repellent Kit for Large Dogs (mercolamarket.com)

Repellent Kit for Small Dogs (mercolamarket.com)

Topicals:

Flea & Tick Spot On for Dogs + Cats with Natural Essential Oils – Wondercide

Repellent Kit for Large Dogs (mercolamarket.com)

Repellent Kit for Small Dogs (mercolamarket.com)

Powders and Droppers:

Woof Creek | Flea + Tick Defense for Dogs – Dr. Judy Morgan's Naturally Healthy Pets (drjudymorgan.com)

Heartworm - Heart Care For Pets | A safe & powerful heart care formula you can trust (ambnaturalz.com)

Heartworm - HWF For Dogs | Ditch The Un-Natural Chemicals | Supports A Clean Heart (ambnaturalz.com)

Natural Dog Wormer-Worm Free Naturally (alternativeanimal.com)

Raw Dog Food and Company | Protect Pre & Probiotics Humic & Fulvic Acid

Amazon.com : Four Leaf Rover: Protect - Soil-Based Probiotics for Dogs with Food-Based Prebiotics for Gut Health and Immune Support - 12 to 60 Day Supply, Depending on Dog's Weight - Vet Formulated : Pet Supplies

Whole Food Digestive Probiotic for Pets (102g per Jar): 1 Jar (mercolamarket.com)

Sprays: additional product to use around the house or daily on your pet (for the buggy days)

Flea and Tick Defense and Tick Stick Removal Tool: 1 stick (mercolamarket.com) Flea and Tick Defense and Tick Stick Removal Tool: 1 stick (mercolamarket.com)

Dogs // Flea & Tick Spray - Wondercide

animalEO EVICT Ready to Use Essential Oil 5ml – Dr. Judy Morgan's Naturally Healthy Pets (drjudymorgan.com)

Kin+Kind Flea/Tick Repel Spray for Dogs Only | Lavender – Dr. Judy Morgan's Naturally Healthy Pets (drjudymorgan.com)

For your Yard: additional options for extra caution

Diatomaceous Earth (1lb. bag) (mercolamarket.com)

Outdoor Flea & Tick Control for Yard + Garden | Wondercide

*{*You can probably find most items on other sites such as Amazon*}*

Final Thoughts:

So, in summary, here's why I don't give my dogs heartworm meds or flea & tick preventatives:

Heartworms are becoming resistant. Even dogs on meds are getting them. Flea also attract themselves to a sick host. Keeping your dog healthy will naturally deter fleas. Simple!

Heartworm and flea & tick meds contain toxic ingredients. These toxins make my dogs more likely to get heartworms and other parasites.

Heartworm and flea & tick meds can be replaced with herbal remedies.

Regular testing can help you identify infections earlier.

Clean Up Your Dog's Lifestyle

A healthy dog isn't a good host for fleas and ticks. Start your dog's journey to good health before flea season begins. Here are some lifestyle changes to start with:

- Feed a whole food, raw meat diet - if that scares you, we should talk!
- Avoid chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers and toxic cleaners.
- Minimize vaccines and pharmaceutical drugs.
- Add finely diced fresh organic garlic to your dog's meals every day. Allow it to sit for 10 minutes after dicing. Give a large dog up to 2 cloves a day. Smaller dogs can have up to 1 clove. Bugs hate garlic, but dog's body's don't!
- Sprinkle food grade diatomaceous earth on your dog's fur from his ears to his tail to dry out ticks and fleas.

Support Your Dog's Immune System

Your healthy dog's own immune system can prevent heartworm disease. Yes, that's heartworm disease, not heartworms. They're not the same thing.

It means ... your dog could have heartworms in his body. But they don't have to make him sick.

Think about wild dogs like wolves, coyotes or foxes. These animals are outdoors 24/7. So, they're much more likely to get mosquito bites than domestic dogs who live mainly indoors. Wild dogs might have heartworms ... but research shows they don't get heartworm disease. And they don't die of heartworms.

Wild dogs are healthier because they eat natural diets. And they're not exposed to drugs and toxins like domestic dogs.

Even if you aren't already doing these things, it's not too late to start. Your dog won't develop a robust immune system overnight. It'll take time ... but you can help him along the way by giving some immune boosting herbs and supplements!

I hope this helps & if you have any questions, please email me at:

holisticpawsnutrition@gmail.com





HOLISTIC PAWS NUTRITION

Real Nutrition for the Everyday Pet

Disclaimer: All owners are responsible for their pet's well-being. This is a diet guide and should be changed if the owner is seeing any negative changes. Not all dogs respond the same, so all owners must keep a close eye on their dog. The author of this diet is not a veterinarian or medical professional. If you have concerns about your pet's health, and before you start any recipe or nutritional program, you should consult your veterinarian or another healthcare professional. None of the authors statements have been evaluated or approved by the FDA. Nutrition facts presented on this document are there for your convenience, and decision making is solely up to the owner in following the diet. Under no circumstances will Abigail Kamalian or Sit Stay Dog Watching LLC be responsible for any loss or damage caused as a result of your reliance on nutritional information provided on this document.