

## health & well-being

### keep the fleas away!

Fleas are very easy to prevent with a monthly topical or oral medication. These preventatives don't require a vet's prescription and can be purchased at pet stores, supply stores such as Farm & Fleet, online (1800petmeds.com, drsfosterandsmith.com, and jefferspets.com are all recommended), and at your vet's office. **USE ONLY VET RECOMMENDED BRANDS FOR FLEA PREVENTION!**



### parasites and heartworms

#### reality check:

Heartworm preventatives cost about \$5/month. Heartworm treatment can cost upwards of \$1000!

The major types of intestinal parasites are roundworms, whipworms, hookworms, and tapeworms. Symptoms of intestinal parasite infections include weight loss and a swollen belly, diarrhea, and visible worms in your dog's stool. If not treated, death is possible. Roundworms and hookworms can be easily transmitted to people, so it's important to keep your dog free of them! Yearly fecal exams detect the presence of intestinal parasites and are highly recommended.

Another common parasite is heartworm, a worm so nasty that when left untreated in dogs, death is certain. One preventative tablet a month will keep your dog free of heartworms. Check with your vet - many heartworm preventatives also prevent intestinal parasites.

### bloat - a deadly condition

Bloat is a condition in which the stomach flips over on itself and can kill a dog in less an hour. Bloat most often occurs in dogs that eat too quickly, drink too much water after eating, and exercise right after eating. It can also occur in dogs that are unusually stressed, and it can also be hereditary. Symptoms include a swollen belly, unproductive attempts at vomiting, restlessness, and rapid, shallow breathing. If you notice these symptoms in your dog, especially after a meal, take him to the vet ASAP! Time is not on your side when it comes to bloat.

#### slow it down!



Bowls like these (with "speedbumps" to navigate around) help dogs eat more slowly. Dogs that eat their food slowly are less likely to suffer abdominal discomfort after eating. These bowls may also help prevent bloat. Check out [dogpausebowl.com](http://dogpausebowl.com) for deals on these bowls.

### ways to socialize your dog

- training classes
- controlled playdates with dogs you know
- trips to the pet store
- walks in the park on busy days
- walks through large town events (parades, festivals, etc.)

### to dog park or not? that is the question

On the surface, dog parks are fun places to take your dog to socialize with other dogs and maybe for you to make a friend or two. Unfortunately, dog parks are **breeding grounds for irresponsible owners** with poorly trained dogs. While the majority of owners who take their dogs to dog parks are responsible and good-intentioned, many are not. These irresponsible owners bring their unaltered (not spayed or neutered) and unvaccinated dogs. When these dogs interact with yours, it is highly likely that a **fight will break out** due to raging hormones, possessiveness over females, and general territoriality. When fights break out in dog parks, they are very hard to break up since many dogs like to jump into fights that they originally weren't a part of. Not to mention - your dog may pick up fecal worms and other diseases. **It's just not worth the risk!**

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