



Veterinary Hospital

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Heartworm Disease

Heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal condition transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. The parasitic worms live in the major blood vessels of the lungs and in the hearts of dogs and cats.

Heartworm disease can cause a variety of medical problems affecting the heart, lungs and other internal organs and can lead to **death**. Treatment is available, however, it can be a costly and complicated treatment. Depending on the severity of the infection, treatment may be fatal.

Signs of Heartworm Disease

Most dogs may show no signs of infection. Depending on the number of worms and duration of infection symptoms may including:

- Persistent coughing
- Lethargy
- Difficulty in exercising
- Decreased appetite and weight loss

Diagnosis

Heartworm disease can be diagnosed using a simple laboratory test to check a dog's blood for infection. The test requires only a couple drops of blood and results are available in as little as 8 minutes.

Treatment

If the infection is found early enough, heartworm disease can be treated before there is any permanent damage to the internal organs. The longer a dog is infected the greater the probability of complications. If left untreated, heartworm disease can be fatal.

Prevention

Safe and simple once monthly preventatives are effective at preventing heartworm disease. Most heartworm preventatives protect against roundworms, hookworms and whipworms in addition to heartworms. Ask us for details.