



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **WHAT IS HEARTWORM?**

- Heartworms are bloodworms transmitted from dog to dog by mosquitoes.
- Heartworms live and grow in your dog's blood vessels. They can reach 15 – 30cm in length.
- All dogs, regardless of age, sex or breed are at risk of contracting heartworms where mosquitoes are present.
- Heartworm disease can be fatal. Adult worms can block blood flow, damage the lungs and cause other health problems.
- Heartworm disease is identified in our dogs by testing a blood sample.

### **WHEN SHOULD MY DOG RECEIVE HEARTWORM MEDICATION?**

During mosquito season, once a month from June to November. The June 1<sup>st</sup> dose of heartworm prevention prevents heartworm disease from developing as a result of mosquito bites during the month of May.

### **WHEN DOES TESTING BEGIN?**

Testing can begin after March 15<sup>th</sup>.

### **HOW DO I KNOW MY DOG IS DUE FOR A TEST?**

- Your dog should have a negative heartworm test for 2 consecutive years before switching to alternate year testing.
- If you have a puppy that was born after November 1<sup>st</sup> last year he/she will not need a heartworm test because they have not been exposed to mosquitoes. Your puppy will require preventive medication for the upcoming season.
- If your dog missed a dose of preventive medication last year then they will require a test this year.
- If you have travelled with your dog to the United States or other heartworm prevalent areas they should be tested this year.
- If your dog vomited any of last year's doses they will need a test this year.
- If your dog was exposed to ticks last year a test is recommended this year. This year's test is also testing for Lyme Disease.
- If you have faithfully given all of your preventive medication last year after doing a test, then you may choose to skip this year's test.

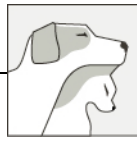
### **WHAT IF I AM LATE STARTING THE HEARTWORM PREVENTIVE MEDICATION?**

- If you have not started heartworm prevention during the month of June then a test will be required next year even if a test was performed this year.
- If your dog does not receive the full 6 doses then he/she will be tested next year even if tested this year.
- If you start on June 15<sup>th</sup> then you should give the medication on the 15<sup>th</sup> of each month.

### **WHAT IF I FORGET TO GIVE A DOSE OF THE MEDICATION?**

You should have your dog tested next spring to ensure they were not exposed to heartworm.

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#### **WHAT MEDICATION IS AVAILABLE FOR MY DOG?**

- Heartworm prevention medication is available as an oral or topical medication. Both formulations are equally effective.
- Some heartworm prevention medications are available as a combination product, which means that they also provide protection against fleas, intestinal parasites and mites.
- Medication for tick prevention is NOT part of a combination product. If your dog requires tick prevention they will require a separate medication. Tick prevention is also available as a topical or oral medication.
- Topical tick preventive medications are designed to repel and kill ticks on contact, therefore they do not need to bite and feed on your dog.
- Oral tick preventive medications are designed to kill ticks after they have attached and had a blood meal within 48 hours of feeding on your dog. Therefore you may still see ticks on your dog.

#### **MY DOG NEEDS TICK PREVENTION BUT WE ALSO HAVE A CAT, WHAT CAN WE DO?**

- Topical tick preventive medications are toxic and fatal to cats when they come into contact with the WET product. Therefore, cats should be separated from dogs while the product is wet (usually 24 – 48 hours).
- Oral tick preventive medication is now available for dogs. This product should not be given to cats.

**A GUIDE TO MEDICATIONS OFFERED BY HUNTINGTON ANIMAL HOSPITAL:** please call for pricing.

#### **TOPICAL**

Advantage Multi – Heartworm, flea, mite, intestinal parasite prevention.

Advantix – Tick and flea prevention.

Advantage – Flea prevention.

Revolution – Heartworm and flea prevention.

#### **ORAL**

Trifexis – Heartworm, flea, intestinal parasite prevention.

Heartgard – Heartworm and intestinal parasite prevention.

Nexgard – Tick and flea prevention.

Sentinel – Heartworm, intestinal parasite prevention, flea birth control (it does not kill live fleas).

If your dog requires tick prevention, the following combinations of medications are commonly used:

- *Advantage Multi* and *Advantix* – both topical medications. They must be applied separately, we recommend alternating each product every 2 weeks.
- *Heartgard* and *Nexgard* – both oral medications. We recommend separating each medication by 12 hours. For example, giving one medication in the morning and the other in the evening.
- *Heartgard* (oral) and *Advantix* (topical).