

The Animal Welfare Branch

The functions, powers and responsibilities of the Animal Welfare Branch are defined and determined by the *Animal Welfare Act* the objectives of which are to:

- ensure animals are treated humanely
- prevent cruelty to animals
- promote community awareness about the welfare of animals.

The Animal Welfare Branch also provides advice to the minister responsible for animal welfare, issues licences for research and teaching involving animals, investigates animal welfare reports and prosecutes offenders.

Acts of cruelty or other offences defined in the *Animal Welfare Act* can mean severe penalties for offenders.

For more information visit
www.nt.gov.au/animalwelfare or call the
Animal Welfare Branch on 1300 720 386.

Roundworm

This can affect both animals and humans, living mainly in the small intestine of the host and absorbing nutrients from the food the animal eats. This interferes with digestion and causes pneumonia. Roundworms also cause anaemia.

Heartworm

This infects animals through the bite of a mosquito. Heartworms spend their adult lives in the heart of the host animal, where they can live for several years eventually killing the animal through congestive heart failure. Once infected, treatment can be difficult and uncomfortable so it is best to use a regular preventative medication.

Tapeworm

This doesn't usually have any obvious symptoms, but may cause a serious disease known as hydatid cysts which can be very serious for humans. Regular preventative de-worming of animals, especially dogs, is essential.

Treatment

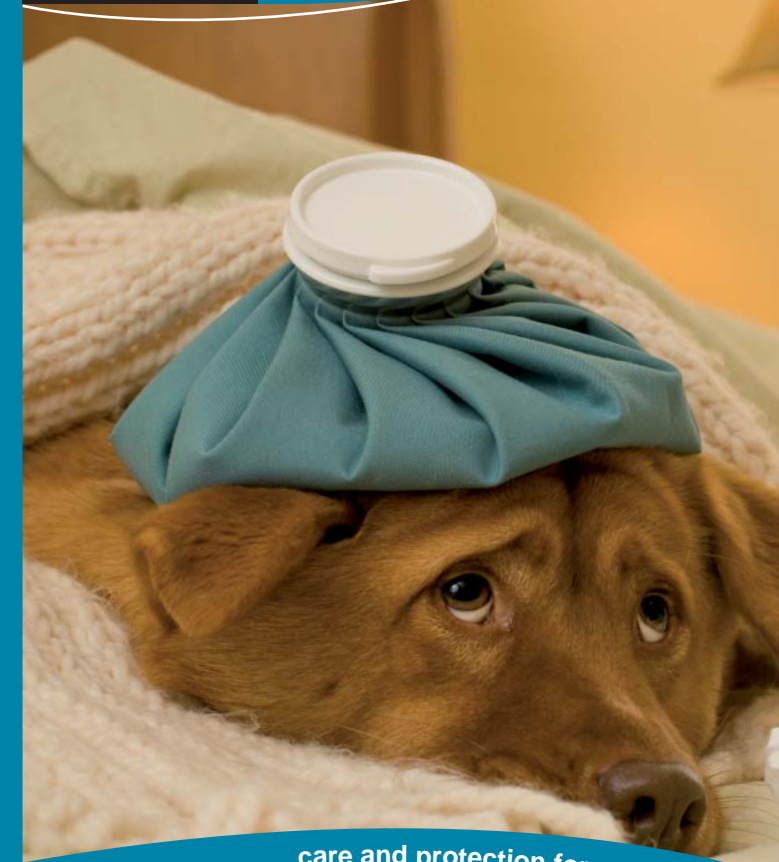
Worms can be difficult to identify so veterinary advice is needed.

Prevention

All dogs, cats and horses need to be treated for worms on a regular basis to prevent contraction. Basic hygiene can also help prevent worms as some worms are transferred through contact with infected faecal matter.

Penalties

Parasites left untreated will eventually affect the health and wellbeing of the animal. Severe infestations can cause unnecessary suffering which is considered to be neglect and owners could face penalties for failing to take appropriate measures to treat infestations.



care and protection for our animals

looking after
your pet's health
ticks, worms and mange

Pets are an important part of the family and bring many benefits to pet owners, however owning a pet is also a large responsibility that should not be taken lightly. Pets need to be treated with respect and owners are responsible for the pet for its entire life span with time taken every day to devote to their care.

There are a number of health concerns and diseases that pet owners should be aware of as there are often preventative measures that can be taken and various treatment options available.

Parasites are endemic, debilitating diseases which can occasionally be passed on to humans. The chance of this is increased when there is close contact between the affected dog and humans, especially children.

Ticks

Ticks come from the arachnid family like mites, spiders and scorpions. They are a blood feeding parasite which can anchor itself to an animal or human.

Continuous infestations of ticks can cause irritation, infection, loss of vitality and life threatening anaemia.

Treatment

Care should be taken when removing ticks as they may leave a wound which could become infected. Pets can be treated with dusts, dips or sprays and treatment of the animal's home environment may also be required.

Prevention

Regular grooming helps keep parasites at bay and gives the owner an opportunity to check for parasites before they become a problem. The animal's bedding and surrounding areas should be kept clean and checked for items which may harbour ticks.

Mange

Mange is a microscopic mite that attaches itself under the fur of the animal. There are three types of mange mites which can affect pets:

Demodectic mange

This is a commonly occurring mite that causes problems when the animal's natural immune system is weakened due to extreme stress or malnutrition. It can cause mild irritation, hair loss and secondary infection. This type of mange is not normally transmitted to humans.

Sarcoptic mange (scabies)

This is a highly contagious, scabies mite that burrows into the skin and causes intense itching, crusting, hair loss and infection. Treatment should begin quickly and include isolating the affected animal and thoroughly cleaning its bedding. This type of mange can be transmitted to humans and other types of animals.

Cheyletiella mange

This is highly contagious and although not a burrowing mite, it may infect humans and animals. In dogs, this type of mange causes mild itching and looks like dandruff. Treatment usually requires a topical pesticide appropriate to the animal.

Treatment

Depending on the type of mange, bathing with medicated shampoo may be enough to keep mild infestations in check, however antibiotics may be required.

Prevention

The first defence against mange is to keep the pet's natural immune system working effectively by taking care of its overall health and fitness.

Worms

Worms are intestinal parasites that can infect animals including dogs, cats, horses and humans. Worms are serious especially in dogs and horses.

Hookworm

This can lead to anaemia as the worm sucks blood from the inside of the small intestine causing loss of iron and protein. Diarrhoea and vomiting can lead to puppies and kittens becoming dehydrated. Hookworm infection should be treated as soon as possible.

