Flea & Tick Control Overview

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

Flea & Tick Control: Doctors' Overview

Fleas and ticks can cause a host of problems for your dog, from flea allergy dermatitis (FAD) to Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. In large enough numbers, both ticks and fleas can cause dangerous amounts of blood loss, especially in young animals. An effective flea and tick prevention program is essential to your dog's health.

Preventing fleas and ticks from infesting your pet is much easier and less expensive than treating an existing tick or flea problem. As veterinarians, we have seen the devastating effects of Lyme disease on a beloved pet and witnessed the struggle of a house overrun with fleas. Choosing the right flea and tick control products now can save you considerable time, money, and heartache in the long run.

Below is a basic overview of the types of products available to help prevent or control a flea and tick problem. Please take a moment to review our Flea & Tick Product Selection Guides, Flea & Tick Product Comparison Charts, and flea and tick article links, all of which are provided to help you select the flea and tick products that will best meet your needs.

Monthly Flea & Tick Treatments

Flea/Tick Topical & Oral Buyer's Guide Topical Flea & Tick Products Comparison Chart

- **Topical and Oral Monthly Preventives** like Frontline Plus, K9 Advantix II, or Bio Spot® ACTIVE CARE SPOT ON® for Dogs are by far the most popular flea and tick control products available, because they are easy to use, have a high margin of safety, and protect against ticks and the entire flea life cycle for up to 30 days. Each combines effective flea and tick protection with a simple one-minute or less application. Easy-to-use liquid solutions are applied to your dog's skin in a bead along his back. The liquid then combines with oils on the skin's surface and moves through the haircoat to provide complete flea and tick protection. Water-safe topicals such as Frontline Plus, Advantage II, Sentry FiproGuard™ MAX, and K9 Advantix II are perfect for dogs that swim, and offer long-lasting protection that won't easily wash off. Economical Bio Spot® ACTIVE CARE SPOT ON® for Dogs also provides protection against mosquitoes (carriers of West Nile virus). Finally, unlike our other monthly flea and tick control products, Capstar® is an easily dispensed **oral flea tablet** that starts killing adult fleas on the pet within 30 minutes.

Flea & Tick Collars

Selection Guide

- **Flea and Tick Collars** provide long-lasting protection against fleas and ticks, and they can be fitted with no mess and no fuss. Keep ticks under control for 3 months with the easy-to-fit Preventic Tick Collar. The Scalibor Protector Band and the Sentry Dual Action Collar kill both fleas and ticks - in their adult forms, for up to 6 months. Some brands also provide

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protection against the juvenile forms of fleas. This is important for overall control. Any juvenile forms on your pet can continue to grow into biting, breeding adults. The Sentry Pro Flea & Tick Collar is an economical option that kills adult fleas, ticks, flea eggs and flea larvae - up to 6 full months. For even longer protection, the Seresto Flea & Tick Collar protects your pet against fleas and ticks, including flea larvae, for 8 months - great for pet owners that desire less-frequent application of flea and tick control.

Flea & Tick Shampoos and Sprays

- **Flea & Tick Shampoos and Sprays** are ideal anytime you find fleas and ticks on your pet, even if he is wearing topical protection. Your goal is to remove any of these parasites before they can have the chance to bite your pet, cause flea allergy dermatitis, pass on tick-borne diseases, or breed and multiply. Shampoos such as Bio-Groom, Adams Plus, Bayer Advantage, and Virbac Ecto-Soothe 3X kill fleas and ticks while also leaving your dog's coat soft and fresh. You can also use sprays for quick killing of these pests, and the advantage to a spray is that it can provide a residual effect that can last up to 30 days. These sprays include Bio Spot® ACTIVE CARE, Bayer Advantage®, Frontline® and Adams Plus.

Anti-Itch Treatments

Selection Guide Comparison Chart

- **Itch Relief Products.** Itching from flea or tick bites can make your dog miserable and may lead to skin problems or infections caused by excessive scratching or licking. The best solution is to alleviate your pet's discomfort as soon as possible, while at the same time dealing with the ticks or fleas. As veterinarians, we have found that Drs Foster & Smith Itch Stop products provide immediate non-stinging relief from the pain and itch of flea and tick bites. Itch Stop is available as a shampoo, salve, lotion, spray, or pads, depending on your need. We also offer several other sprays and rubs to deal with itching from fleas and ticks. For dogs that need all-over relief, a soothing shampoo can be just what the doctor ordered. Drs. Foster & Smith Advanced Formula Oatmeal Shampoo soothes irritated skin and can help to calm the inflammation of flea allergy dermatitis.

Household Sprays, Powders, and Room Foggers

- **Indoor Flea & Tick Control Products.** One of the most effective ways to protect your dog and your home from an infestation of fleas and ticks is by treating your dog's environment. For example, adult fleas spend most of their time on an animal, but flea eggs, larvae and pupae are found in abundance in the environment, especially in carpeting and rugs and under the edges of furniture. For automatic convenience, the Adams™ Plus Flea & Tick Room Fogger treats up to 3,000 cubic feet for 7 months. Don't forget your dog's bedding and any other area he frequents. Bayer Advantage® Household Spot & Crevice Spray works well for these areas. You can treat carpets and rugs with Bio Spot® ACTIVE CARE Carpet & Upholstery Powder. Note: Outdoors, your dog is at risk from the many wild animals that carry ticks and fleas - including coyotes, deer, raccoons, skunks, and rabbits. Even if your dog does not come into direct contact with these animals, he can pick up ticks and fleas they've recently left behind. Bio Spot® ACTIVE CARE Yard & Garden Spray treats up to 5,000 square feet and kills fleas and ticks.

Flea and tick problems can differ depending on the season, your location, your pet, and your family. Since no two dogs or families are alike, it makes sense for you to thoroughly review your options and choose the flea and tick control products that best suit your needs.

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