Cases From Our Clinic: Flea Infestation

Drs. Foster & Smith Educational Staff

This is a true story... one of the interesting cases that Drs. Foster and Smith have encountered. We sincerely hope you enjoy this educational tale.

Fleas can infest in any season...

Jeanne has been to us for over 10 years. Jeanne never had a flea or tick problem in the three years she had her healthy mixed breed dog, Cookie. The year Jeanne moved into her new house, however, she started having a problem with fleas. She always had Cookie on a monthly topical flea preventive, but stopped early that year because the weather was getting cold and she already had to turn on the furnace.

After about a month, Cookie began to scratch. Jeanne looked at her skin in the places fleas usually occupy - the rump and the head - she didn't see any. Her next thought was dry skin, but she already had Cookie on our Premium Plus® Skin & Coat Tablets and her skin wasn't flaking. Cookie was miserable with the itching, and Jeanne was at a loss of what could be causing the problem. Note: this should have helped the itching due to fleas.

Jeanne decided to bring Cookie into our clinic one morning, and we examined her skin. Under the bright lights of the examination room, we saw several fleas and combed out quite a bit of flea dirt. When Jeanne questioned the fact that it was too late in the year for fleas, we told her the warmer temperatures in the house often cause the flea eggs to hatch.

While Cookie was still in the office, we applied K9 Advantix®, a monthly flea preventive which contains ingredients to kill both adult fleas as well as flea eggs and larvae. Jeanne was instructed to continue using K9 Advantix® preventive. We told her it's important to treat every animal in the house, so she also purchased K9 Advantix® for her other dog and Advantage® II for her cat. Armed with an array of indoor flea and tick control products such as Bayer Advantage® Environmental Treatments, she set about taking care of her house. This entailed:

- Finding a place the cats, fish, and birds could stay all day
- Finding a place she, her roommate, and the dogs could stay all day
- Vacuuming thoroughly, especially where her pets sleep, below drapes and under the edges of furniture, where flea eggs and larvae tend to be. This included vacuuming daily in high traffic areas and, weekly elsewhere, and disposing of the vacuum bag each time.
- Spraying a premise spray in common places where fleas hide: in the corners and under the furniture
- Washing the pet beds and the linens on her bed and her roommate's bed in the hottest water possible
- Setting enough foggers to take care of the whole house
- Opening up the windows after the allotted fogging time

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*

- Repeating the process again in 2 weeks

The whole process was such a difficult task that Jeanne was determined that it would never happen to her - or anyone she knew - again. She is unwavering about using a monthly topical, even in the fall, and her house is flea-free.

*Unauthorized use of any images, thumbnails, illustrations, descriptions, article content, or registered trademarks of **Foster & Smith, Inc.** is strictly prohibited under copyright law. Site content, including photography, descriptions, pricing, promotions, and availability are subject to change without notice. These restrictions are necessary in order to protect not only our copyrighted intellectual property, but also the health of pets, since articles or images that are altered or edited after download could result in misinformation that may harm companion animals, aquatic life, or native species.*