



Trichuriasis Vulpis **(Whipworm Infection)**

General Information

The whipworm (*Trichuriasis Vulpis*) is a small, thin worm that lives in the large intestine and cecum of dogs. The cecum is a blind pouch located between the small and large intestine; it resembles the human appendix. Dogs are infected by ingesting contaminated food and water.

The whipworm gets its name from its body shape. Its body is very delicate and tail tapers into a narrow whip-like structure. It is difficult to see in the stool because of its very small size.

Whipworms can cause diarrhea, bloody feces and poor general health. Massive rectal bleeding occasionally occurs. Diagnosis is by microscopic examination of the feces. Sometimes several samples must be examined before the worm eggs are found. It takes about 3 to 4 months after infection until eggs are passed in an infected pet's stool.

Important Points in Treatment

- Effective Medication can cure your pet of whipworms. However, good hygiene is required to prevent reinfection. Stools should be properly disposed of daily.
- Make sure you give all medication as directed.
- Keeping your pet on Interceptor for heartworm prevention will help prevent re-infection.
- It is important to have a fecal test repeated after treatment to make sure treatment was successful.

Control

Whipworms can live in the soil for years and be resistant to heat, sunlight and freezing. There are no effective ways of killing the whipworm eggs in the soil.

Zoonotic Potential

Although rare, humans can be infected with *Trichuriasis Vulpis*, but are usually infected with *Trichuriasis Trichiura*. Care should be taken when cleaning – including wearing gloves and hand washing.

Notify the Doctor if Any of the Following Occur

1. Your pet continues to have diarrhea.
2. Your pet's hair coat is dull.
3. Your pet loses weight despite a good appetite.