

ROUNDWORM

ZONOSSES FACTSHEET

Diseases that spread from animals to people

WHAT IS IT?

Roundworms are a common intestinal worms in dogs and cats. They are relatively large and can sometimes be seen as long, yellow-ish worms in dog poo.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

Roundworm eggs must be in the environment for 1 month before they become infective.

Human roundworm eye disease is called **ocular larval migrans**

Adult roundworms live in the intestine of dogs and cats. Female roundworms lay eggs which are passed in the animal's poo. Eggs in poo hatch into larvae (baby worms) in the environment. Larvae **are eaten** by animals or humans through poo contamination in the environment.

Once in the body, roundworms can go to the intestines and grow into adults, or they may move into the liver, brain and eyes becoming cysts and causing problems. An infected animal could spread roundworm for a long time.

Cysts which have formed in the meat of other animals (e.g. kangaroo) can infect animals and humans when eaten, if it is under-cooked. Dogs and cats can be infected with roundworms if eating animals such as birds, rats and mice.

WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

If you are feeling sick, call the health clinic.

In animals: We might see skinny animals with round, pot bellies.

In people: Worms moving through the body can make people very sick. People can have a fever, stomach pain, wheezing, skin rash or headaches. If worms move into the eye, people may have trouble seeing. Children can go blind.



Image 1



Image 2



Image 3

HOW DO YOU TREAT IT?



Image 4



In animals:

- Use all-wormers every 3 months in adult dogs and cats
- De-worm puppies and kittens every every 2 weeks of age until 12 weeks (3 months) old, then every month until 6 months old, then every 3 months ongoing
- Worms can be passed from a mother dog to the puppies through the milk. It is important to de-worm the mother dogs as well

Prevention of transmission to people:

- Practice good hygiene and wash hands with soap often
- Cook meat properly before eating, especially if it has been not bought at the shop. Try to stop dogs and cats eating animals such as birds, rats and mice.
- Wear gloves to pick up dog poo and put it in the bin
- Keep yards clean and dry

For more information: please contact AMRRIC on (08) 8948 1768, email us at info@amrric.org or visit our website: www.amrric.org

REFERENCES

Brooks, W., 2019, Roundworms in humans, Veterinary Partner <https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=19239&id=4951386>.
Phelan, S., 2010, Dog Health Programs in Indigenous Communities – an Environmental Health Practitioner's Guide, AMRRIC. <https://www.amrric.org/resources/ehp-manual/>.

Image 1: Ocular larval migrans in right eye caused by roundworm infestation in a person, photo courtesy of American Academy of Ophthalmology <https://www.aao.org/topic-detail/ocular-toxocariasis-sub-saharan-africa#figure13>; Image 2: Pot bellied appearance of a wormy dog, photo courtesy of AMRRIC; Image 3: Roundworm visible in dog faeces, photo courtesy of Best Pet Care Hub <https://www.bestpetcarehub.com/dog-roundworms-roundworms-in-puppies/>; Image 4: Paragard <https://www.petstock.com.au/product/dog/paragard-allwormer-for-large-dogs/54337>.
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