



## ***FLEAS, TICKS, MOSQUITOES AND YOUR PET***

**Fleas:** In downtown Chicago, we start to see fleas in July. All over our environment, fleas begin to breed and thousands of their young will establish residency on our pets. The eggs are laid on the animal, but they fall off into our homes and yards and hatch three weeks later. Imagine how rapidly a flea problem occurs when an adult female can lay up to 18 eggs at a time.

The best way to deal with fleas is to prevent them. Start prevention in June and continue these measures until the temperature falls below 32 degrees F, usually late-November or December. The flea population peaks during October and November.

**Ticks:** In Chicago, we start to see ticks by May 1. If your dog is exposed to local wooded areas, we recommend you use some type of tick preventative to reduce the risk of tick-borne illnesses such as Lyme Disease. If you take your dog routinely to Michigan, Wisconsin, or other heavily-wooded areas please inform your veterinarian, who may recommend the extra precaution of vaccinating your dog against Lyme Disease.

**Mosquitoes:** In Chicago, mosquitoes start to appear around the same time as fleas. Our recommended Heartworm preventative drugs kill the parasite that causes Heartworm Disease, but not the mosquitoes that carry that parasite. Because of the recent potential threat of West Nile Virus, some clients want to use a mosquito repellent on their pets. DO NOT use human mosquito repellent products on your pets! *Ovitrol Plus* (described below) is an effective, safe choice for repelling & killing mosquitoes. *K9 Advantix* (described below) may also be an option for your dog.

***Deciding on the flea, tick, and/or mosquito prevention program that best suits your pet and living situation begins with product education:***

### **PRODUCTS MOST COMMONLY RECOMMENDED BY THE DOCTORS AT FAMILY PET:**

#### **ADVANTAGE**

- Topical **flea** preventive for **Dogs and Cats**
- Applied **once monthly** to the skin along the pet's back
- Remains effective even after swimming or a shampoo treatment (do not over bathe).
- Kills **98-100% OF EXISTING FLEAS ON PETS WITHIN 12 HRS. Reinfesting fleas are killed within 2 hours. Larval flea stages in the pet's surroundings are killed following contact with treated pet.**
- Main active ingredient: *Imidacloprid*, which binds with the oils in the pet's skin and spreads across the whole body, paralyzing any fleas that come in contact with it and killing them before they can lay eggs.
- Age limitations: For **canines** aged **7 weeks** and older, and **felines** aged **8 weeks** and older.
- **Product-of-choice** for dogs or cats who need protection against fleas only. *Advantage is the only product of its kind that's completely non-toxic to mammals.*

#### **FRONTLINE PLUS**

- Topical **flea & tick** preventive for **Dogs and Cats**
- Applied **once monthly** to the skin along the pet's back
- Remains effective even after bathing or swimming
- Kills **ADULT FLEAS, FLEA EGGS AND FLEA LARVAE**
- Kills all stages of **DEER TICKS** (which can carry Lyme Disease), **BROWN DOG TICKS, AMERICAN DOG TICKS, AND LONE STAR TICKS.**
- Main active ingredients: *Fipronil*, and *(s)-methoprene*, an insect growth regulator. *Fipronil* collects in the oils of the skin and hair follicles, and continues to be released from hair follicles onto the skin and coat, resulting in long-lasting activity against fleas and ticks.
- *Age limitations:* For canines and felines **8 weeks** of age or older.
- **Product-of-choice** for medically eligible dogs and cats who need protection against both fleas and ticks.

**(OVER →)**

## **OVITROL PLUS SPRAY**

- Topical **flea, tick, & mosquito** preventative for **Dogs and Cats**
  - Lightly mist pet's entire body, using gloves when applying. Apply **every 10 days** as mosquito repellent. Apply **directly to each individual tick** for tick treatment. Apply **once every two months** for flea treatment/prevention.
  - **LOSES EFFICACY AFTER BATHING OR SWIMMING.**
  - Kills & repels **ADULT FLEAS, HATCHLINGS, FLEA EGGS, MOSQUITOES, GNATS, and TICKS** (if individually wet with spray)
  - Main active ingredients: *(S)-Methoprene, Pyrethrins, Piperonyl Butoxide, N-octyl Bicycloheptene Dicarboximide.*
  - **Age limitations:** For **canines** and **felines** **12 weeks** of age or older.
  - **Product-of-choice** *only for clients highly concerned about mosquito prevention.*
- IMPORTANT NOTES:** If using as *occasional* mosquito repellent while using Frontline, wait 24-48 hours after Frontline application. **For clients desiring seasonal protection from mosquitoes**, we recommend using Ovitrol Plus ONLY. Do not use other flea/tick products (such as Frontline) in addition, as combining their active ingredients constitutes an unnecessary and undesirable chemical "overkill". When used as directed, Ovitrol Plus is sufficient on its own to protect against fleas, ticks, and mosquitoes.

## **K9 ADVANTIX:**

- Topical **flea, tick, & mosquito** preventive for **DOGS ONLY**. K9 Advantix is **FATAL TO CATS IF INGESTED. DO NOT ALLOW CONTACT BETWEEN DOG AND CATS UNTIL APPLIED PRODUCT HAS DRIED!**
- Applied **once monthly** to the skin along the dog's back
- Remains effective even after bathing or swimming
- Main active ingredients: *Imidacloprid*, which binds with the oils in the pet's skin and spreads across the whole body, paralyzing any fleas that come in contact with it and killing them before they can lay eggs; and *permethrin*, an insect repellent that can be **fatal to cats**.
- Repels and kills **ADULT FLEAS before they lay eggs, and kills FLEA LARVAE in the dog's surroundings**
- Repels and kills **DEER TICKS** (which can carry Lyme Disease), **BROWN DOG TICKS, AMERICAN DOG TICKS, and LONE STAR TICKS**
- Repels and kills **MOSQUITOES** before they can bite.
- **Age limitations:** For canines **7 weeks** and older.

**SHAMPOOS:** Cleans the skin and kills the adult fleas on the pet with a ONE DAY residual effect. Ask your veterinarian which specific shampoo s/he recommends for your pet.

**HOUSE SPRAY:** When using the new generation of flea treatments, house (premise) sprays are recommended only in cases of heavy flea infestation. Ask your veterinarian what type of spray we currently carry, or if s/he recommends you call an exterminator to assist you with flea control.

## **PRODUCTS NOT RECOMMENDED BY THE DOCTORS AT FAMILY PET:**

**FLEA COLLARS:** Given the number and variety of safe, effective alternatives, our doctors cannot in good medical conscience recommend any commercially available flea collars to our clients.

**FOGGERS/BOMBS:** If the flea infestation is so great that it requires more than topical animal treatment plus a premise spray, we recommend calling an exterminator as a safer and more effective alternative to any commercially available flea fogger or bomb.

**FLEA DIPS:** Not only are these extremely toxic to your pet, they are entirely unnecessary given the modern alternatives available.

**GARLIC:** No evidence, experimental or otherwise, exists as to the efficacy of garlic in flea treatment/prevention.

## ***IN CONCLUSION:***

When your pet actually has fleas you must choose a type of control for the animal and the home. Additional measures are vacuuming weekly (throw away the bag), washing hard floors with a pine cleaner weekly, and washing linens weekly

The safety and efficacy of the products carried by our hospital has improved greatly over the past few years, while those products available at pet and grocery stores may be outdated. Please choose wisely when it's time to treat your pet for fleas & ticks, which are a nuisance to all of us. Besides causing skin rashes and discomfort, fleas can transmit tapeworms and ticks can transmit diseases. Ask us how to outline the safest and most practical prevention program to start prior to flea & tick season.