

# HEARTWORM DISEASE IN DOGS



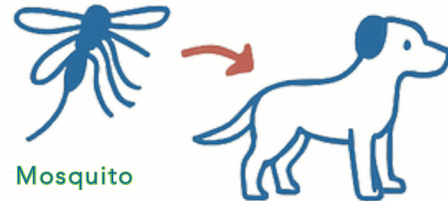
## What are Heartworms?

Heartworms are foot-long parasites that infect a dog's heart, lungs, and blood vessels, causing serious illness or death if left untreated. They spread through mosquito bites, which transmit larvae from one animal to another. Early signs include coughing or tiredness after activity, while advanced cases may cause persistent coughing and severe exhaustion. A simple blood test from your vet can confirm infection, and while treatments exist, early detection is crucial to prevent lasting damage.

## Signs of Infection

- ✓ An occasional cough or tiredness
- ✓ General sickly appearance
- ✓ Profound exhaustion after light activity
- ✓ Advanced infection might cause a persistent cough

## Transmission of Heartworms



## Protecting Your Pet from Heartworms

Heartworm prevention may feel overwhelming especially in mosquito-heavy areas like North Texas but it's entirely manageable with proper care. Monthly pills, chewables, or long-lasting injections (6 to 12 months) from your vet or an online pharmacy can effectively protect your pet. Sticking to a strict schedule is vital, as these medications break the parasite's life cycle before it can take hold. While humans aren't at risk, both indoor and outdoor cats can be infected, though it's rarer and often less severe. Still, prevention is crucial in cats, as treatments for dogs don't work for them.

## Heartworm Prevention

- Give preventive medication
- Available as a pill, chew, or injection
- Treat cats, too (though less common)

## Heartworm Risk Level

