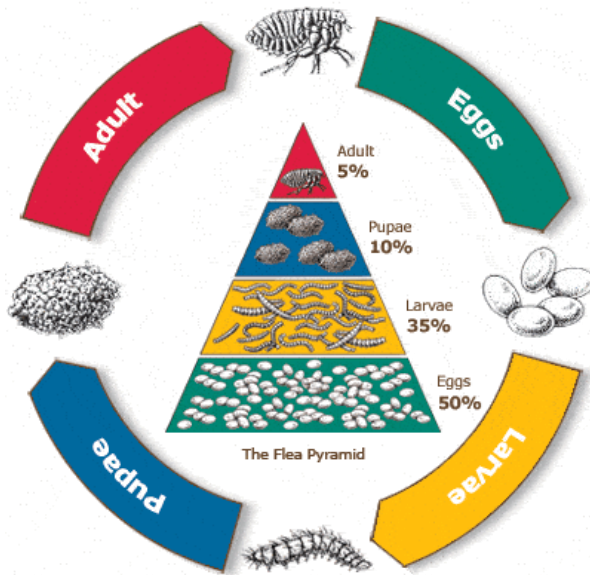


## Fleas: Understanding Their Life Cycle So You Can Stop Them

Fleas are the most common external parasite of companion animals, and flea allergy dermatitis is the most common skin disease of dogs and cats. Veterinarians and pet owners have long struggled to control flea populations effectively. This is because adult fleas cause the clinical signs, but the majority of the flea population (eggs, larvae, pupae) is found off the pet and in and around your home. The ideal flea control program targets all stages of the flea life cycle.

### The Life Cycle of the Flea



#### Egg Stage

A female lays about 2,000 eggs in her lifetime. In one day, a single female flea can lay up to 50 eggs. The eggs aren't sticky – some may quickly fall off your pet and into areas of your home. In 2-5 days, the eggs hatch.

#### Larvae Stage

After hatching, the larvae head toward dark places around the home and feed on the excrement of the partially digested blood of your pet. The larvae molt twice and then spin cocoons, where they grow to pupae.

#### Pupae Stage

Immature fleas spend approximately 8 to 9 days in their cocoon. During this time, they wait for the signals to begin emerging. This stage is very resistant, survives the winter, and can last up to 18 months.

#### Adult Stage

Full-grown adults detect heat and exhaled carbon dioxide from inside their cocoons, telling them a host is nearby. The adults leave their cocoons, hop onto a host, get a blood meal, find a mate, and begin the life cycle all over again.

**NOTE:** The entire cycle can be as short as 21 days in the summer and as long as 18 months depending on conditions and the environment. Less than one percent of the fleas are on your pet at any one time.

## Flea Control Programs for You and Your Four-Legged Family Member

In the past, veterinarians and pet owners had to try to control fleas by treating the environment of the animal for the immature flea stages. This approach was labor-intensive and required frequent applications. Although some older flea control products could be applied to pets, these products did not kill fleas quickly enough or were not long-lasting.

Today, veterinarians have great flea control products in their arsenal. There are now many effective and safe new products to choose from. Please see the following page for flea/tick control products we carry.

## Over-the-Counter Products

Flea preventives come in many forms. While certain products work well together, others counteract one another and should not be used at the same time. Talking to your veterinary staff or veterinarian about the best option for your dogs and cats.

### Vectra

This monthly topical flea and tick control for cats and dogs develops a quick kill.

Vectra for Cats	Vectra 3D for Dogs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kills adult fleas, flea eggs, flea larvae, and pupae that may cause flea allergy dermatitis and anemia</li><li>• Kills fleas within 6 hours</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Repels and kills fleas, ticks, mosquitoes, lice, mites (excluding mange mites), and biting &amp; sand flies</li><li>• Prevents all flea stages from developing</li></ul>

## Prescription Products

### Bravecto for Dogs (**Chewable**) & Bravecto for Cats (**Topical**)

This chewable version for dogs kills adult fleas and is indicated for the treatment and prevention of flea infestations and the control of tick infestations. Bravecto should be administered with food.

Puppies & Dogs (1-Month)	Dogs (3-Month)	Cats (3-Month)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For dogs and puppies 8 weeks of age and older</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For dogs and puppies 6 months of age and older</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For cats and kittens 6 months of age and older.</li></ul>

### Revolution (**Topical**)

Revolution is a topical product that is designed as a once-a-month flea/tick control for cats as young as 6 weeks old.

- Kills fleas before they lay eggs
- Kills ticks for a full month
- Prevents heartworm disease
- Treats & controls ear mites, roundworms, and hookworms

**There are more flea/tick preventatives carried by other pharmacies. Be sure your pet's annual wellness exam is current in order to ensure they receive the prescription flea/tick preventative of your choice.**

## Here are things you can do to remove fleas from your environment:

- **General Vacuuming:**
  - Borax soap flakes kills fleas by acting as an extreme dehydrate and by making tiny cuts in their exoskeleton which results in their eventual death.
  - Suck 5 to 6 crystals into your vacuum each time you change the bag.

**NOTE: don't use if you're allergic to moth crystals!**

- **Rugs and Furniture:** First, decide whether you want to use an exterminator or do it yourself.

### Household Spray: Virbac's Knockout® Household treatment

- vacuum before treating to "excite" and expose more fleas to the spray.
- apply the spray directly to rugs, furniture (under cushions), in closets, under beds, etc.
- you do not need to treat linoleum, tile, or wood floors
- one can treat approximately 2000 square feet
- do not vacuum for 5 or 6 days after treatment
- 21 days later: repeat the process

**NOTE: Do not flea bomb → flea bombs tend to land where you don't have fleas, like your sink, food, counters, etc.**

- **Yard, Dog House, Kennel:** Treat yard, kennel, dog house, beauty bark with any insecticide you would use in your garden (permethrins are the safest). Like your house, treat once and repeat again in three weeks.