

Cats and Fleas

Contents

Chapter 1. An Overview of Fleas.....	1
Chapter 2. Applying Flea Medication.....	4
Chapter 3. Ten Common Flea Medications.....	5

Chapter 1. An Overview of Fleas

Fleas are one of the most common parasites of domestic cats, and can cause a number of problems such as biting, itching, tapeworms, allergies, and house infestations.

Introduction

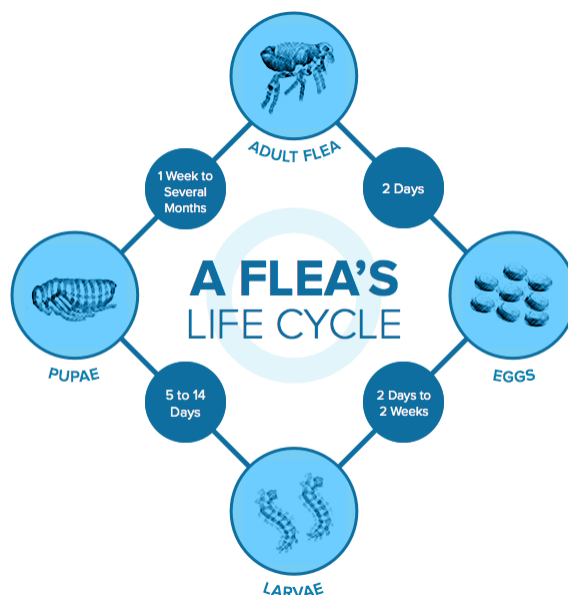
Fleas are the most common external parasite in indoor and outdoor cats. There are thousands of species of fleas; the main type infecting cats is *C. felis felis*, the cat flea. Cats, and therefore your home, can quickly become infested, as one flea can lay up to fifty eggs per day. It can take up to 3 months of treatment to completely clear a single animal of these pesky parasites.

Fleas do not appear out of nowhere. They usually appear from the environment, from wild animals, and from the crevices of your home. They can jump up to 19 inches in one hop, transferring hosts easily, and they can even snack on you. And what's worse - adult fleas only account for about five percent of the total population.

The Flea's Life Cycle

One adult flea can lay up to fifty eggs per day. The eggs hatch and become larvae, then pupae, then adult fleas. While they are still in the first 3 stages, they spend that time off your cat, down in the floorboards, cracks, carpets, and lawns. The length of time between each stage can vary widely based on conditions and how many hosts are available. A cat flea with a host can live up to a year.

Figure 1. Flea's Life Cycle



Flea Problems

Flea infestations can lead to all sorts of problems:

- Anemia (too few blood cells)
- Skin allergies from flea saliva
- Self-inflicted scarring
- Tapeworms from ingesting fleas
- Human diseases such as toxoplasmosis, tapeworm infections
- Death

Remember, fleas can be fatal.



What Can I Do If I Think My Cat Has Fleas?

1. Take your cat to the veterinarian and have them prescribe flea medication. This is important as part of your pet's wellness, even if they've never seemed itchy.
2. Apply flea medication as often as instructed, year round.
3. Vacuum your home regularly.
4. Wash your bedding.
5. Wash your pet's bedding (or anything they use as bedding, like rugs, pillows, that folded blanket you haven't moved in months...)
6. If the infestation is very bad, consult an exterminator.

WARNING: DO NOT APPLY PRODUCTS WITH PERMETHRIN TO CATS. Always consult a veterinarian before using a new flea medication.

Chapter 2. Applying Flea Medication

Apply flea medication as often as instructed to your cat's skin in an area where they cannot lick it off. Refrain from petting for two hours.

Use to treat and prevent the infestation of fleas. See your veterinarian yearly to keep your cat's prescription.

WARNING: AT RISK OF DEATH, DO NOT APPLY PRODUCTS WITH PERMETHRIN TO CATS. DO NOT LET THEM LICK IT OFF A DOG.

1. Read the label directions and open medication.
2. Gently restrain your cat on your lap or in front of you so you can reach the back of their neck.
3. Find a place where the fur separates naturally and a line of skin can be seen (red arrow).



4. Apply the liquid medication to the skin in a roughly straight line.
5. Avoid petting for about two hours.
6. The natural skin oils will spread the medication over your cat's body.
7. Apply as often as instructed to treat and prevent fleas.

Make sure to see your veterinarian at least yearly to keep a valid flea medication prescription, and enjoy a flea-free existence!

Chapter 3. Ten Common Flea Medications

Flea medication is made to kill off adult fleas when they feed, and must be applied regularly to prevent recurrence of infestations. This is not an exhaustive list, so always consult your veterinarian for an appropriate medication.

1. Advantage II



Active Ingredient	Imidacloprid, pyriproxyfen
Age of Cat	Over 8 weeks
Frequency	Monthly
Effects	Kills adult and larval fleas, lice

2. Advantage Multi



Active Ingredient	Imidacloprid, Moxidectin
Age of Cat	Over 9 weeks
Frequency	Monthly
Effects	Kills adult and larval fleas, heartworms, internal parasites

3. Bravecto



Active Ingredient	Fluralaner
Age of Cat	Over 6 months
Frequency	Every 12 weeks
Effects	Kills adult fleas, ticks

4. Cheristin



Active Ingredient	Spinetoram
Age of Cat	Over 8 weeks
Frequency	Monthly

Active Ingredient	Spinetoram
Effects	Kills adult fleas

5. Combiva II



Active Ingredient	Imidacloprid, Pyriproxyfen
Age of Cat	Over 8 weeks
Frequency	Monthly
Effects	Kills adult fleas

6. Frontline Gold



Active Ingredient	Fipronil, Pyriproxyfen
Age of Cat	Over 8 weeks
Frequency	Monthly
Effects	Kills adult fleas, ticks, lice

7. Frontline Plus



Active Ingredient	Fipronil, Methoprene
Age of Cat	Over 8 weeks
Frequency	Monthly
Effects	Kills all stages of fleas, ticks, lice, mites

8. Revolution



Active Ingredient	Selamectin
Age of Cat	Over 8 weeks
Frequency	Monthly
Effects	Kills adult fleas, ear mites, internal parasites, prevents heartworms

9. Revolution Plus



Active Ingredient	Selamectin, Sarolaner
Age of Cat	Over 8 weeks
Frequency	Monthly
Effects	Kills adult fleas, ear mites, internal parasites, ticks, prevents heartworms

10. Seresto (Collar)



Active Ingredient	Flumethrin, Imidacloprid
Age of Cat	Over 10 weeks
Frequency	8 months
Effects	Kills adult fleas and ticks, lice, mites