

Abbey Animal Hospital

Caring. Helping. Healing.



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HEARTWORM SEASON

WHAT IS HEARTWORM?

- Heartworms are bloodworms transmitted from dog to dog by mosquitoes.
- Heartworms live in your dog's blood vessels, eventually reaching a length of 15-30 cm.
- All dogs, regardless of age, sex or breed are at risk wherever mosquitoes are present.
- Heartworm disease can be fatal.
- Adult heartworms can block blood flow, damage the lungs and cause other health problems.
- It takes only one infected mosquito to infect your dog.

WELLNESS TESTING

Through a special arrangement with our lab, we will be offering Wellness Testing for your dog when done in conjunction with a heartworm test, please call for prices.

The following are some options:

HEARTWORM TEST ONLY

WELLNESS PROFILE 1:

Recommended for young dogs to profile individual baseline data that your veterinarian can use later as a reference. Includes a heartworm test, 14 biochemistries, and a complete blood cell count.

WELLNESS PROFILE 2:

Recommended for dogs over 8 years of age to monitor vital organ function and detect disease before symptoms appear. Includes a heartworm test, 18 biochemistries, electrolytes, and a complete blood cell count.

HEARTWORM CLINICS

There are special heartworm clinics available by appointment with a technician.

- Heartworm clinics are for heartworm and Wellness Testing only. They do not include a consultation with the veterinarian.
- Our technicians will be looking after your dog, taking a blood sample, and ensuring you have the proper medication while reception will be able to answer any of your questions about heartworm.
- If any abnormalities are discovered, one of our veterinarians will contact you to discuss the problem.

Please call for pricing.

Call us today to see if your dog is due for a heartworm test this year and which preventive medication is best suited for your dog.

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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT HEARTWORM

WHEN IS THE MEDICATION TAKEN?

- During the mosquito season once monthly from June 1st to November 1st. The medication works retroactively. For example; the June 1st dose prevents heartworm disease from developing as a result of mosquito bites during the month of May.

WHEN CAN MY DOG BE TESTED?

- Testing begins after March 15th and continues throughout the heartworm season.

HOW DO I KNOW MY DOG IS DUE FOR A TEST?

- Your dog should have a negative heartworm test for 2 consecutive years before switching to alternate year testing.
- If you have a puppy that was born after September 1st last year he will not need a heartworm test because he has not been exposed to mosquitoes. He will still require preventive medication for the upcoming season.
- If your dog missed a dose of preventive medication last year then he will need a test this year.
- If you have traveled south over the winter to the United States or other heartworm prevalent areas with your dog then he should be tested this year because risk of heartworm exposure is greater in the United States.
- If your dog vomited any of last year's doses then he will need a test this year.
- If you have faithfully given all of your preventive medication last year after doing a test, then you may choose to skip this year's test.

WHY DO YOU OFFER ALTERNATE YEAR TESTING?

- Although heartworm preventive medications are very reliable, no medication is 100% effective. We suggest at least testing every other year as a precaution to ensure your dog has not contracted heartworm disease.

WHAT IF I AM LATE STARTING THE HEARTWORM PREVENTIVE MEDICATION?

- If your dog does not receive the full 6 doses then he will be tested next year even if he was tested this year.
- If you start on June 15th then you should give the medication the 15th of each month.
- Medication does not need to be given after November 15th since mosquitoes do not pose a threat after that date.

WHAT IF I FORGET TO GIVE A DOSE OF THE MEDICATION?

- You should have your dog tested next spring to ensure he wasn't exposed to heartworm.