

Chippewa Veterinary Clinic
14961 81st Ave
Chippewa Falls, Wi 54729
715-723-3655
Website: chippewavet.com
Check us out on Facebook!

Springtime and warmer weather is upon us and now is the time to think about protecting your pet against both heartworm disease and tick-borne illnesses.



Heartworm disease is a concern in the spring because it is spread by the mosquito. The mosquito injects small immature worms into the dog which then grow into large white worms and lodge in the pet's heart and pulmonary vessels. Their presence in the heart causes symptoms of heart failure like cough, weight loss, lethargy, and ultimately death. Heartworm disease occurs most commonly in dogs but can occur in cats, ferrets, foxes, and wolves.

Heartworm disease is very treatable if detected early and it is also easily preventable. A simple blood test is done to determine the status of your pet. Once the dog is tested negative, he or she can be given a monthly heartworm prevention medicine which is safe and effective. It is dangerous to treat a dog which has heartworms with a prevention medication, so a heartworm test is required before starting a heartworm prevention like Heartgard Plus. Heartgard Plus chewable tablets are then given once a month from May thru November. Some people may choose to use Heartgard Plus for their pets all year long to prevent intestinal parasites. In these pets we recommend every other year heartworm testing.

Ticks can also be very problematic for pets in the spring. Ticks spread two diseases which we are worried about in dogs, Lyme disease and anaplasmosis. Our area of Wisconsin has a very high incidence of both of these diseases and these are among the most common infectious diseases our clinic treats throughout the year. Lameness, joint pain, poor appetite, and lethargy are the symptoms we see in both of these diseases. Currently there is a very effective vaccine available for Lyme disease but no vaccine is available for anaplasmosis. Early diagnosis and treatment of these diseases are important to reach positive outcomes. The Chippewa Veterinary Clinic recommends running a simple blood test that screens your pet for heartworm disease and both tick-borne illnesses at one time. If your dog has a positive test, a treatment plan will be implemented to avoid the dog showing clinical symptoms.

