



Fleas: Fleas are a wingless bloodsucking insect that are parasitic upon mammals and birds. Fleas can give your pets intestinal parasites and can cause serious and potentially fatal illnesses. Adult fleas are only 1-5% of any given flea population. For this reason, killing adult fleas on the pet with shampoos, powders or sprays is useless as you are only attacking 1-5% of the problem. Effective flea control involves treating all pets on the premises, the home of pets if they are inside, and the yard.

Options for flea control starting with the **least effective** treatments: (Not Recommended)

- **Flea baths and dips:** Bathing you pet with a flea shampoo kills only the adult fleas present and all flea protection is gone as soon as the shampoo is rinsed off the coat. For bathing to be effective your pet would require bathing every 1-2 days. Fleas shampoo may dry the pet’s coat severely and lead to other skin problems. Adding a flea dip after the bath can help, but the residual effects still only last a few days and some dips can be toxic.
- **Flea collars** are also ineffective as they only control a few inches around the collar and can cause allergic reactions on the pet.
- Most sprays and powders are short lasting and kill only adult fleas.

More effective treatments (Recommended) Topical products applied on the skin or oral tablets that are given with food. These products last longer and continually kill adult fleas, with some also interrupting the life cycle preventing the flea eggs from hatching.

Warning: All of these products are not the same and there are major differences in their effectiveness. The over the counter products that have various trade names are usually permethrin-based and must be very concentrated for effective flea control. Some also contain growth regulators to inhibit flea eggs. These products are not regulated by the FDA and are NOT veterinarian approved.

Permethrin products should not be used on cats as they are very toxic. Even lying next to dogs with the permethrin product is toxic to cats. Also, these products are not waterproof so bathing or swimming will wash them off the coat. Permethrin has been around for over 20 years and there is considerable documented resistance in many flea populations. And most of these products last closer to 2 weeks than the reported 4 weeks.

Products Not Recommended:	Guarded Recommendation	Highly Recommended
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hartz 2. Biospot 3. Sergents 4. Adams 5. Natural Chemistry 6. Synergy products 7. Defend ExSpot 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pet Armor 2. Frontline 3. Advantage 4. Advantix 5. Kiltix 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vectra 3D- topical 2. Bravecto- oral 3. Trifexis- oral 4. Cheristin- topical 5. Revolution- topical

How to rid your home of fleas:

1. Provide all pets in the home with a recommended flea preventative for no less than three consecutive monthly applications.
2. Rigorously clean surfaces where your dog or cat spends the most time. These are the areas where fleas, eggs, larvae and pupae are most likely to be found. This includes cleaning concrete floors in basements and garages.
3. Vacuum carpets thoroughly and often. Move furniture and vacuum inside of closets to make sure all carpeting is being vacuumed. Even if you already have an active infestation, vacuuming can pick up adult fleas as well as pupae. Be sure to empty vacuum canisters in outside waste bin or store vacuums with bags out of the house.
4. Thoroughly wash all pet bedding, blankets, etc. several times a week in the hottest water the fabric can stand with laundry detergent.
5. Exercise caution when using OTC insecticides such as bombs, sprays, and powders in the home as pets can be very sensitive and easily have toxic reactions.
6. Avoid shutting a room off for a period of time in the hope that the fleas inside will die off due to lack of a host. This method is not effective and fleas can become dormant until favorable conditions return.
7. Call a pest control company if your efforts are unsuccessful. Such companies are well equipped to deal with flea infestations.