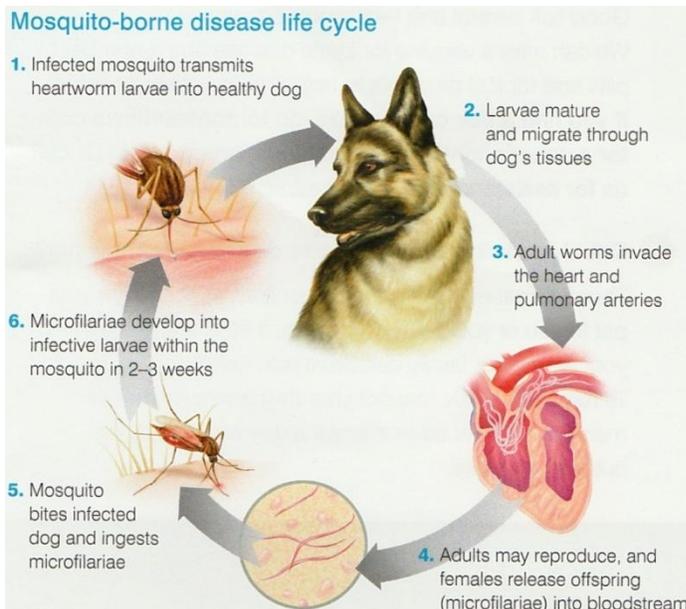


FUN FACTS ABOUT HEARTWORM DISEASE! DID YOU KNOW....

Despite worldwide attention to the dangers of mosquitoes and the diseases that they transmit to humans (i.e. Zika, Malaria), there is little awareness that the same mosquitoes are vectors that transmit heartworms to dogs. From 2010 to 2013, there was over 166% increase in reported positive heartworm cases, and now canine heartworm has been diagnosed in all 50 states. Heartworms are easy to prevent, but difficult to treat – prevention is key to your pet’s health. Get all the facts! Keep reading for more information on heartworm disease and how you can protect your pet:



- Heartworm, or *Dirofilaria immitis*, is transmitted through mosquitoes and it has world-wide distribution. In 2015, one in 78 dogs in the USA tested positive for heartworms.
- Mosquitoes can potentially transfer worm larvae from an infected animal to your dog. Larvae then develop into adult worms.
- The adult worms reside in the heart and the adjacent blood vessels. This parasite can interfere with blood circulation, heart functions and may damage other vital organs.
- Once bitten, it can take up to 6 months for a dog to show any symptoms of heartworm disease.
- Symptoms of heartworm disease can include mild/persistent cough, reluctance to move or exercise, reduced appetite and weight loss.
- HVH strongly recommends giving your dog monthly protection against heartworms **year-round**. Mosquitoes are present almost everywhere in our practice area.
- If you miss giving your dog his or her monthly dose of heartworm prevention, let your veterinarian know, and resume giving it to your dog as soon as you can.
- Ivermectin is one of the key ingredients found in most heartworm preventatives and can be found in products like Heartgard and Iverhart.
- Beware of online retailers that just sell “beef flavored chews” which do not contain the above active ingredients. See our website for an article on phony online retailers that were selling unauthorized products for pets - <http://www.healdsburgvet.com/News.html>
- The Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC), the leading source on parasitic diseases that threaten the health of pets and people, has released its annual parasite forecasts: <https://www.capcvet.org/about-capc/news-events/the-forecasts-are-in-2016-will-be-a-big-year-for-ticks-and-mosquitoes/>



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