

Brelades Veterinary Surgeons Summary

The responsible use of parasiticides for cats and dogs.

The British Veterinary Association (BVA), British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) and the British Veterinary Zoological Society (BVZS) have issued a Policy Statement about the responsible use of parasiticides for cats and dogs.

Concerns have been raised about some medicines that could be contaminating the environment, but this report highlights that more research is needed in this area.

It explores some key areas and the *'potential conflict that exists between the needs of animal health, human health and the health of the wider ecosystem'*.

Parasite threats- *'These parasites can cause direct animal health and welfare issues, including clinical disease, as well as acting as disease vectors. They can also spread to humans – a zoonotic risk'*

Example:

- Our local area is a hot-spot for the lungworm parasite. Dogs can pick it up from eating slugs and snails and it can make them very unwell.

https://mypetandi.elanco.com/en_qb/parasites/lungworm/act-against-lungworm-in-dogs?utm_source=myelanco&utm_medium=referral&utm_campaign=self_cert_cta&utm_term=pet_owner_traffic

- Ticks can carry Lyme's disease as an example of a *'disease vector'*.

<https://www.zoetis.sg/simparica-trio/>

- Zoonotic risk- means some parasites can infect humans and cause health problems.

<https://www.esccapuk.org.uk/page/Zoonoses/9/>

More information on parasites: <https://www.esccapuk.org.uk/page/Pet+Owners/1/>

Parasiticides (medications that treat (therapeutic)/ prevent (prophylactic) parasite infestations)

- Current products do not discriminate between target and non-target invertebrates
- Some products can be dispersed via shedding of pet hair and skin into the environment.
- Some products can be excreted in the faeces or urine.
- *'Some spread of chemicals can be controlled through the correct usage'*
 - Correct dosage
 - Applied correctly
 - Avoid hand contamination and spillage

- Refrain from washing animal or allowing them to swim for the time after application stated on the products datasheet
- Dispose of unused products, packaging responsibly
- Care with faeces and urination disposal
- There are concerns for use of over-the-counter products with reduced efficacy and no guidance on application/ disposal.

*‘Veterinary professionals should always take a **risk-based approach** to prescribing medicines’.*

This means that they will consider *‘the needs of animal health, human health and the health of the wider ecosystem’* and only prescribe the medicine needed.

For example, a young puppy that live in our local area is high risk for lungworm. This can have a significant clinical risk to this puppy. The vet would likely advice a product that prevents lungworm infection.

For example, a young puppy that lives with young children or a vulnerable adult is high risk for a worm infestation and this can be a zoonotic risk to human health. The vet would likely advise regular flea and worm treatment.

For example, an indoor cat is low risk for flea and worm infestation. The vet would discuss a less frequent flea and worm treatment regime.

‘Vets have a duty to responsibly recommend and prescribe appropriate parasiticides to clients, to protect animal health and welfare and ensure public health is protected from zoonotic parasites. Balancing human and animal health with that of the environment is challenging, especially given the many gaps in the knowledge base outlined throughout this position, but it is important.’

Environmental Impact

- Current products do not discriminate between target and non-target invertebrates
- The report highlights that more research is needed to fill the *‘knowledge gaps relating to source, prevalence and impacts of veterinary parasiticide products in the natural environment.’*

If you would like to read more, please see the full policy statement here:

<https://www.bva.co.uk/media/6627/bva-bsava-and-bvzs-policy-position-on-responsible-use-of-parasiticides-for-cats-and-dogs.pdf>

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