

KITTENS AND WORMS

What are worms?

Cats can become infected with up to 8 different intestinal parasites, generally known as worms. Roundworm and tapeworm infections are most common in UK cats with lungworm and toxoplasma infections less frequent. Worms spend their adult life inside the intestines of your cat, some feeding off their blood and some from the food the cat eats.

Should I worry about worms infecting my cat?

Worms stop cats from absorbing all the nutrients in their food and can even damage the internal lining of the gut. Serious infections can cause diarrhoea, bleeding into the gut, weight loss, vomiting and general ill-health. Kittens can become infected with worms while in the womb or from their mother's milk and are especially susceptible to the problems worms can cause.

What are the symptoms of worm infection?

Evidence of roundworms and tapeworms may be seen in stools and vomit, but this can be easily missed. Your cat can be infested with worms without any external signs.

How do I treat my cat for worms?

To tackle worm infections and prevent future build-ups, it's best to treat your cat regularly with a reputable wormer. Worming every three months is the rule of thumb, or every month for cats that hunt. The vet should advise a worming routine to meet the specific needs of your cat, based on its state of health and home circumstances.

Kittens should be wormed once a fortnight from 2 weeks old until 12 weeks old. Then once a month until 6 months old, after 6 months worm as an adult cat.

Below is a table of recommended products for kittens and the recommended ages and frequencies of use.

Product Name	Age recommendation	Weight recommendation:
Panacur Granules	Weaned kittens under 6 months	1 sachet per 4kg weight (1.8g sachet) over 3 consecutive days
Advocate	From 9 weeks	Over 1kg
Drontal Cat Tablets	From 6 weeks	Half tablet per 2kg weight
Profender	Over 8 weeks	Weighing over 0.5kg

Not all wormers are effective against all worms. The following table shows which wormers effectively treat which worms.

* Toxocara cati only ** Ancylostoma tubaeforme only	Roundworms	Flea Tapeworms	Taenia Tapeworms	E. granulosus tapeworms	Lungworms	Hookworms	Toxoplasma
Panacur/Granofen -powder, syringe, liquid (fenbendazole)	✓	✗	✓	✗	✓	✓	✗
Drontal Cat -tablet (febantel/praziquantel/pyrantel)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Profender -spot on (praziquantel/emodepside)	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓	✗
Stronghold -spot on (selamectin)	✓*	✗	✗	✗	✗	✓**	✗
Milbemax -tablet (milbemycin/praziquantel)	✓*	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓**	✗
Droncit -spot on, injection, tablet (praziquantel)	✗	✓	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗