

HEARTWORM DISEASE IS HERE IN COLORADO!



What is Heartworm disease?

It is a parasitic infection of the bloodstream that occurs in dogs and occasionally cats. It can be a fatal disease if not treated.

<http://dogsandticks.com/US-map-lyme-disease-dogs/index.html>

How does my dog get heartworms?

Heartworm is transmitted to a dog by a bite from an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become carriers (infected) when they bite a dog that has heartworm. Young heartworms called microfilaria, then circulate through the blood vessels and travel to the heart, where they may grow to 12 inches in length.

http://www.heartwormsociety.org/article_59.html

What are the symptoms of heartworm disease?

The most common symptoms of heartworm disease include chronic coughing, intolerance to exercise, decreased energy, and difficulty breathing.

How do you test for heartworms?

A blood sample is drawn and sent to the lab. The blood sample is examined for microfilaria and heartworm antigens (a substance produced by an adult heartworm). It is important that the heartworm test is negative before administering heartworm prevention medications.

How is heartworm disease prevented?

Heartworm is preventable with medications given monthly. If your dog is on year round medication, a blood test is only needed every two years. If your dog is on heartworm medication for only 6 months, a blood test is needed yearly.

Information courtesy of Louisville Family Animal Hospital and IDEXX Laboratories

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