

What You Should Know About Heartworms

Why Heartworms matter:

- A dog outside for two years off heartworm prevention will absolutely have heartworm disease, statistically.
- A dog indoors for two years without preventative has a 30% (or greater) chance of heartworm disease.
- A dog that misses a month of prevention has a 1 in 5,000 chance of contracting heartworm disease. I saw that ONE time in all my years, she missed ONE pill.
- Cats can get heartworm disease and I can win the lottery. Odds are the same.

I have never seen a Chow Chow (breed of dog) with heartworm disease on or off preventative. I think it's their coat.

What is It?



Heartworms represents a disease where these WORMS grow up inside the heart and wreck it. I mean they FILL the heart chambers up and that's just "it" for the dog.

The heartworms get around (from dog to dog) by mosquitos. So you kind of get the idea that if a mosquito bites your dog, it can get heartworms. That's why when people say "My dog lives indoors, I don't need heartworm prevention" we see there's a thought-error there. But what are ya gonna do?

How long does it take for heartworms to kill a dog? Two years, usually. With coughing and weakness cropping up to signal the impending crash.

Once a dog is 'symptomatic' with heart failure, there's nothing reasonable to do. They can go in and do open heart surgery (actually through a blood vessel into the heart) and pull out a mess of the worms and give the dog a chance. Lung damage can't be resolved surgically and a lot of those dogs die anyway.

If the dog is POSITIVE but not showing signs you have a decent chance of saving her.

You can give some injections of medicine to kill off the adult heartworms. Works really well. Stops damage right away. If you've bought BRAND NAME heartworm pills from a VETERINARIAN, they pay for the treatment if the pills failed (which they do in 1-2 out of a 100 dogs).

If you bought the heartworm pills from an online thing, too bad.

Sometimes people just give heartworm pills, hope the pet doesn't have a stroke, and let the heartworms die of old age. Most of the time that works if the dog doesn't die. It takes 18-24 months to clear, meanwhile heart and lung damage is happening. Meh.

If it was Ajax, I'd treat the heartworms. And since I give him a brand name heartworm pill every month all year round, it'd be paid for by the company. Ha ha ha ha!