

Tick Information Sheet

Tick facts

- Ticks are active all year round, but their activity peaks during the warmer months.
- Ticks can't jump or fly. They simply attach themselves to cats and dogs that brush past.
- A female tick's weight can increase up to 200 times after feeding.
- Ticks are more common in heathland, woodland, moorland and long grass so dogs exercising in these areas increases the risk of exposure.
- Ticks are not insects but belong to the spider family (aracnids).

What is a tick?

Ticks, like fleas, are among the most common and important parasites which live and feed on dogs and cats. The most common tick in the UK is *Ixodes ricinus*, also known as the sheep tick.

Why are they a problem?

Ticks are second only to mosquitoes in transmitting infectious disease to humans and animals. Ticks which are attached to your pet's body frequently cause irritation and discomfort but can also transmit Lyme's Disease, Babesiosis and Ehrlichiosis. These diseases are not common in the UK but they are potentially life threatening and are a danger to pets which travel abroad.

Ticks which are not removed completely cause further problems, see below.

How should I remove ticks?

Ticks should **never** be pulled from an animal's body. This causes the tick's head parts to remain under the pet's skin which typically causes irritation, pain and infection. We stock specialised '**O'Tom tick twisters**' which have a v-shaped base in which the tick is placed, the hook is then twisted which removes the whole of the tick, meaning it is no longer a problem.

What is the best tick treatment for my pet?

It is vital to use a product which kills ticks within 48 hours of attachment as this vastly reduces their risk of disease transmission. Dogs which are commonly bitten by ticks can be treated by **Advantix**, a flea and tick treatment which also has a *repellent effect* on ticks so that they no longer attach on to the pet's body, removing the risk of tick-borne disease. However, **Advantix** is only for use in dogs.

For dogs and cats which only occasionally incur tick bites they will be protected by regular, routine flea treatments. However, **Frontline Combo** which we usually recommend as flea treatment will need to be applied monthly during the summer months when ticks are more common.