

# Fleas

## Pest control facts – Fleas

### Flea life cycle

It's important that you understand the life-cycle of a flea to make sure treatment is as effective as possible.

- A female flea will lay up to 50 eggs per day, about 2,000 in her lifetime.
- She will lay them on your pet and they quickly fall off as they are not sticky.
- The eggs hatch in to larvae in between two to five days.
- The larvae head toward dark places around your home and feed on flea dirt – excrement of partially digested blood of your pet.
- The larvae grow, moult twice, and spin cocoons, where they form in to a pupae.
- The pupae stage averages 8 to 9 days depending on weather conditions.
- The adults come out of their cocoons when they detect a host is nearby.
- Once they hop onto a host, the adults mate and begin the life-cycle all over again.
- The entire life cycle can be as short as 3 to 4 weeks.
- There tends to be an increase in fleas 5 to 6 weeks after the weather starts to warm up.

## If you have fleas in a home or workplace without pets



- In the Summer, fleas can survive outside and be carried into buildings.
- Visiting friends or clients who have fleas in their homes can transport fertile fleas into the home or workplace
- If you've visited a public building with fleas, you could bring them home.
- If you move into a new house or flat, you can inherit a flea problem
- Fleas in the pupae stage can remain dormant for up to 9 months and then hatch when you walk into an empty property. This is a common problem for landlords/landladies and estate agents.

# Recognising a flea problem



Flea bites

Because they are so small, fleas are difficult to see.

- Check your feet and legs for flea bites.
- Flea bites are small red bumps that look a lot like mosquito bites but are usually smaller.
- Flea bites are usually itchy
- Look for brown, flat oval bugs that jump onto your body and move very quickly
- Catch a bug and try to squish it between your fingers.
- Fleas are hard bodied and typically cannot be squished. If the bug squishes easily, it is not a flea.

## Treatment of pets



Fleas on pet fur

The main carrier and distributor of fleas in house hold is family pets.

Treatment of pets is essential.

Pet treatment, which contains a growth inhibitor (a product that stops the development of the flea egg), is very important.

You should:

- Always check for signs of fleas and their droppings on your pets.
- Groom and treat pets with flea treatment regularly.
- Animals swallow eggs when they clean themselves, so grooming with a flea comb will help stop this.
- Flea eggs will drop off so groom outside.
- Your vet can give advice about flea treatments.
- Hot wash pet bedding regularly
- Vacuum and clean your home regularly, including furniture.

## What you need to do before we carry out treatment

- All animals must be removed from the treatment room before treatment can be started.
- Animals must be kept out of the room for a minimum of 4-5 hours after the treatment is carried out.
- All loose items need to be removed from the floor, including any items under the bed.
- Wash all bedding (including pet bedding) and keep in an uninfected room until after treatment
- Cover any fish tanks and keep them covered until treatment is dry – very important as we are using a poison in the treatment.
- Vacuum your entire house, including sofas and chairs.
- Throw out the vacuum bag as it may contain flea eggs.
- Clear as much floor space as possible (not the furniture).
- **Start to treat your pets and continue doing so until treatment is complete.**

## What you need to do after we carry out treatment

- Customers and pets **must not** enter any treated rooms for a minimum of 4-5 hours after the treatment has been carried out.
- It's recommended that the customer goes out for this period of time.
- Wash hands or feet if they touched wet or dry treated areas, maintain this routine throughout the treatment period
- Don't consume food or drink in treated areas where possible – very important as we are using a poison in this treatment
- Chemicals are residual up to 3 months depending on level of house cleaning:
  - vacuuming
  - dusting
  - washing of walls
- Cleaning should be avoided for up to 10 days after treatment.
- We cannot guarantee against re-infestation from outside forces, any cross contamination. If you see fleas 10 days following the treatment, please contact the pest control service.
- You must treat all pets for fleas to ensure that the treatment is effective.
- By signing the pest control job sheet, you agreeing that you've read and understood these instructions.