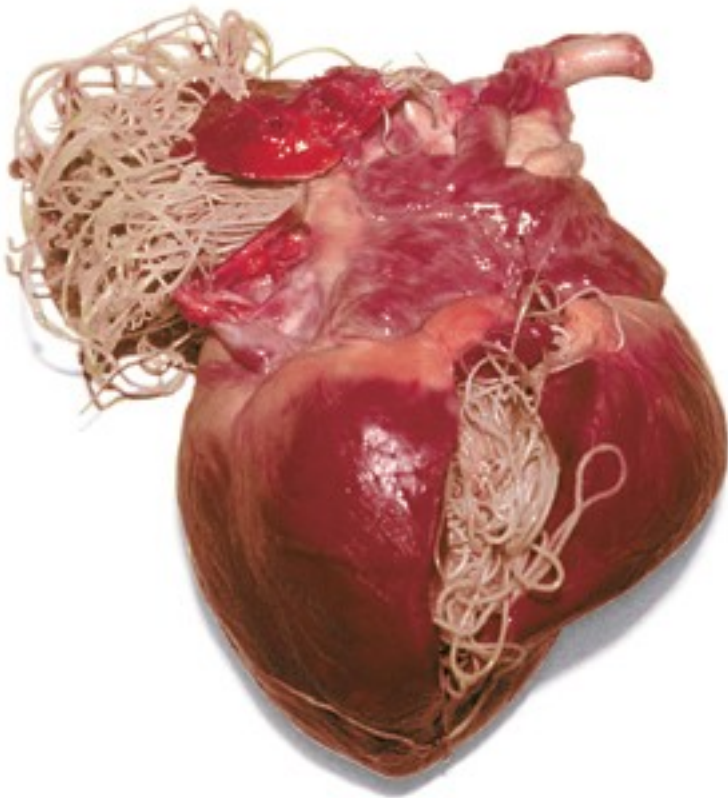


## Your Dog and Heartworms

Posted on Jun 25, Posted by [Trusty Vet](#) Category [Pet Care Tips](#)



Canine heartworm disease is a potentially fatal and totally preventable disease. Dogs contract heartworms by being bitten by an infected mosquito, which there are plenty of around our parts. Within six months, the heartworm larvae migrate to the heart and mature into adult heartworms that create turbulent blood flow (a heart murmur) and changes in the heart's blood pressure. Eventually, congestive heart failure can develop or sudden death can occur.

Treatment for canine heartworm disease is a multi-dimensional process. Further diagnostic testing including a full CBC/Chemistry Panel and chest x-rays help determine the severity of the heartworm disease. A larval killing heartworm preventative is given in the hospital so that your dog can be monitored for any shock-like symptoms which can occur in heartworm positive pets. Antibiotics and antihistamines are also often necessary. Three months later, the adult

killing heartworm treatment begins and pets are required to be strictly rested for 60 days. Treatment costs generally range between \$500-700 at Trusty Vet depending on your dog's weight.

Heartworm preventions work by killing the larval stage of the worm before it can migrate to the heart. Adverse effects of these heartworm preventatives are minimal and the lifesaving benefit makes them worth their expense. If you purchase these products through a veterinarian's office, you can even consider them an insurance policy against heartworm disease since the drug manufacturers' stand behind the effectiveness of their products. There are even reminder email programs that can be used to help you to remember your pet's monthly dose. So if your pet is not on a preventative, have them heartworm tested today and purchase one immediately.

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