

Health tips

# Flea Protection

## The Essential Guide

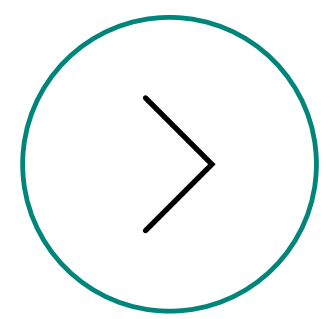


# Index

**03**

Why are fleas  
a danger to our pets?

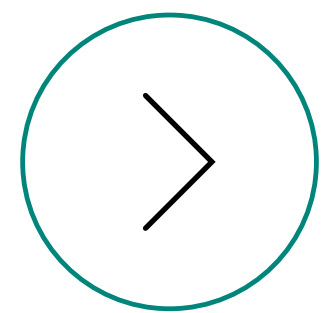
---



**07**

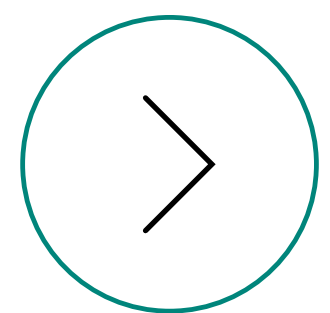
The flea life cycle

---



**10**

Breaking the flea  
life cycle





Why are fleas a  
danger to our pets?

# Fleas

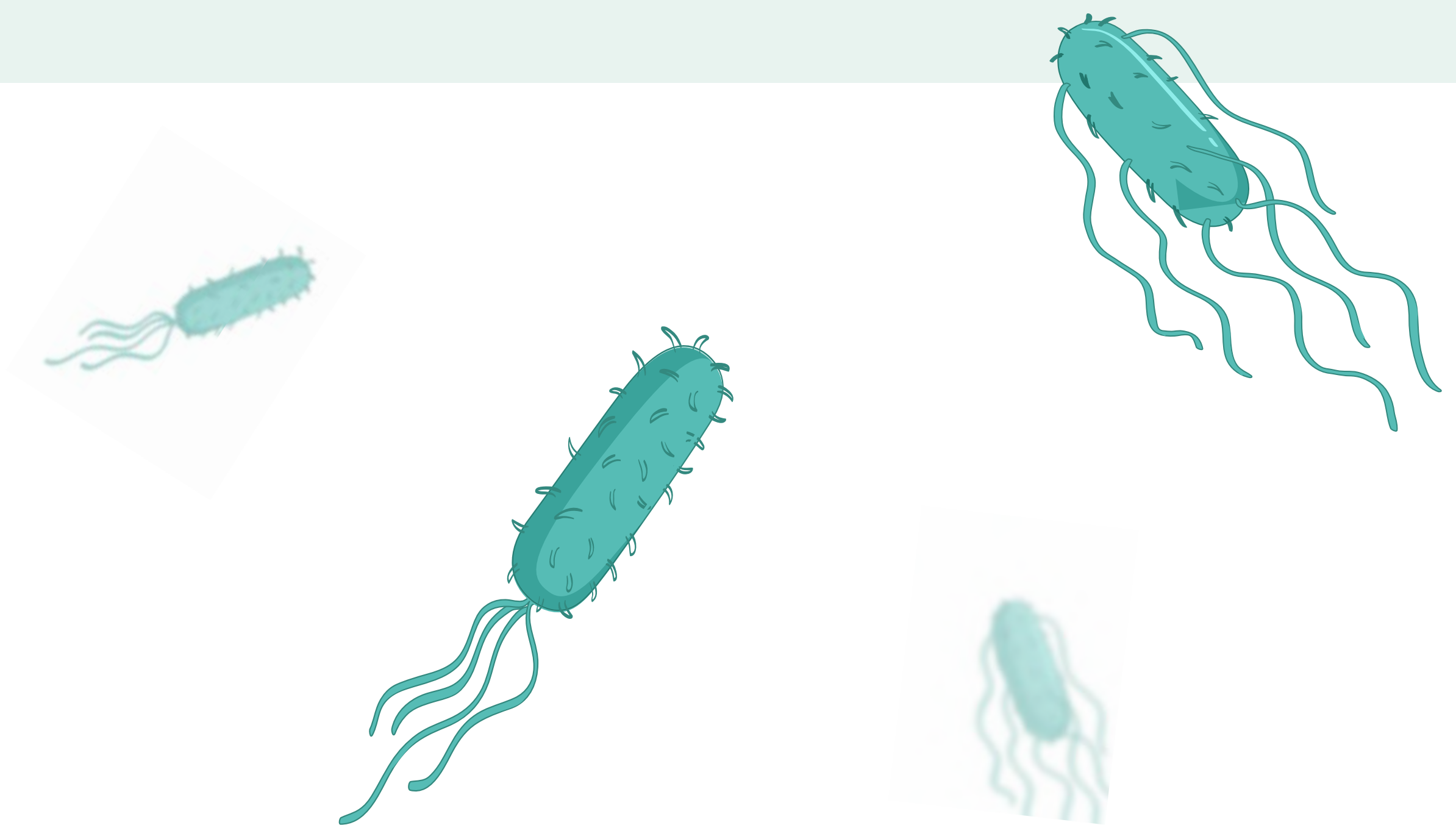
- Fleas are the most common external parasite found on pets.  
They can jump 30 cm vertically in the air and can leap onto your pet, making it easy for dogs and outdoor cats to bring fleas home.
- A flea that jumps onto your pet will start feeding within a few minutes and may suck blood for up to 2 1/2 hours.

**This flea may live on your dog or cat for almost 2 months!**

- Flea infestations quickly get out of control because fleas produce a lot of eggs. One female flea can produce 40 to 50 eggs per day for over 50 days, and over 2,000 eggs in her lifetime.

- Some pets develop severe allergies to flea saliva, called flea allergy dermatitis, and develop signs such as itching, that may last long after the fleas have gone and may occur even when no fleas can be seen on your pet.
- Fleas also transmit the tapeworm, *Dipylidium caninum*, to dogs, cats, and even humans.

**Fleas can spread potentially fatal bacterial and viral diseases.<sup>3,6</sup>**



The blood feeding activities of multiple fleas and ticks can cause blood loss and anaemia.

Cats and dogs aren't the only ones who suffer once a flea hitches a ride. They can propel themselves onto humans, landing in our hair or bedding, carpets, and furniture cushions, and infesting our home. Fleas reproduce abundantly and quickly, and just two fleas can quickly cause an infestation. The key to stopping fleas is to stop the flea life cycle. nimum, to dogs, cats, and even humans.

**The key to stopping fleas is to stop the flea life cycle.**



# The flea life cycle



**Understanding the flea life cycle is important when you are trying to eliminate them from your pet and the environment and also to prevent flea-associated diseases.**



# Adult fleas:

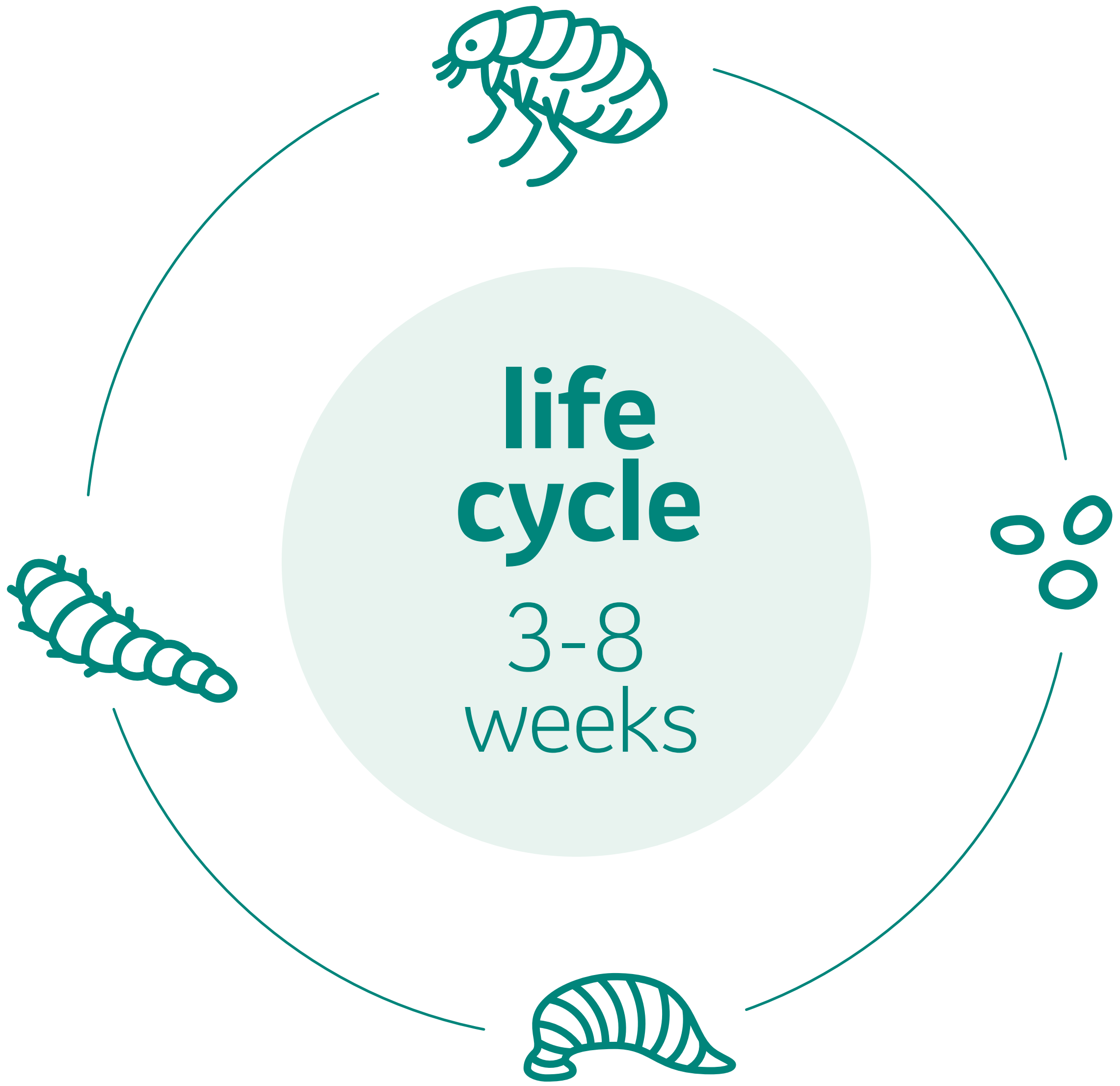
Adult fleas feeding within minutes of jumping on your pet. Female fleas ingest up to 15 times their body weight in blood and adult fleas can stay on their host animal for life!

# Eggs:

Fleas start laying eggs just 24 hours after feeding, and produce up to 50 eggs in one day. As your pet moves around the house, flea eggs off the pet's hair and end up on your sofa, bed, and floor.



# Breaking the flea life cycle



**Under most household conditions, fleas can complete their entire life cycle in 3 to 8 weeks.**

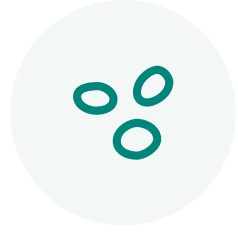
Only about 5% of the total flea population in a house is found as adults on your pet, while the other 95% are found in furniture and floors as eggs, larvae or pupae.

**5%**

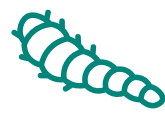


**adults**

**95%**



**eggs**



**pupae**

**For every flea you see on your dog or cat, there are at least nine more hidden in your home.**

You may think you have eliminated fleas with a short-term treatment, only to find a new generation emerging in a few weeks!

To eliminate flea infestations, you need to break the flea life cycle and kill all the fleas in your house!

**Choosing the best treatment for you and your pet is a decision that is best made in a discussion with your veterinarian.**

The entire flea life cycle can take up to 8 weeks, while many flea treatments last only 4-5 weeks and offer limited protection. Therefore, using effective long-lasting flea treatments on a regular basis is the best way to make sure your pet stays protected against fleas and that your home is kept free of these pests!

# Collars:

These can kill adult fleas and some also repel and kill ticks. They can provide prolonged protection for a few months. Different flea collars use different active ingredients. Watch for collars that break off and get lost. They may not remain as effective if your pet gets wet outside or has a bath.

# Oral medications:

They are administered directly into your pet's mouth or mixed into food daily, monthly or every 3 months, depending on the product. These flea treatments kill adult fleas when they try to feed and can break the flea life cycle if their duration of protection is long enough.

# Powders and sprays:

These provide protection for a few days. They are less commonly used now because more convenient and effective products are available.

# Shampoos:

Some medicated shampoos kill adult fleas, but they do not provide protection after the bath is finished and new fleas from the carpets and furniture will quickly jump back on.

# Spot-ons:

They can eliminate both adult and immature fleas, depending on the type of product used.

Different spot-on flea treatments contain different active ingredients. Older spot-on flea treatments offered 1-month protection against fleas, however, you can now find new spot-on treatments that will offer your pet a longer-lasting protection for up to 12 weeks or longer.

# Dips:

These products have a similar duration of protection to shampoos.

# References

---

Rothschild M, Schlein Y, Parker K, et al. The flying leap of the flea. *Sci Am*. 1973;229:92–101.

Blagburn BL, Dryden MW. Biology, treatment, and control of flea and tick infestations. *Vet Clin N Am Small Anim Pract*. 2009;39:1173–1200.

Dryden MW, Rust MK. The cat flea: biology, ecology and control. *Vet Parasitol*. 1994;52:1–19.

Popkin M. PetCareRx. What diseases do fleas cause? More than just an itchy nuisance. Available from: [https:// www.petcarerx.com/article/what-diseases-do-fleas-cause/163](https://www.petcarerx.com/article/what-diseases-do-fleas-cause/163)



