**My pet has fleas! How can I get rid of them?**

There are 3 steps to getting rid of fleas on your animals:

1. **Kill the adult fleas:**
	* Apply a good quality flea medication (see below). This will kill the adult fleas living on your animals over the next 12-24 hours.
	* Make sure you treat every dog and cat in the house, even those that don’t seem itchy.
	* If you have animals that cannot be treated (such as very young kittens or puppies), bathe in Dawn dish soap.
2. **Kill the immature fleas:**
	* Flea eggs and larvae live in the house (floors, linens, furniture) not on the pet.
	* Vacuum as often as possible for the next 3 months, and throw out or empty the vacuum bag frequently.
	* Wash all linens, sheets, towels, and pet beds in hot water and dry on full heat.
	* Frontline spray can be used in problem areas around the house.
	* If you have a severe infestation, consider hiring an exterminator.
3. **Break the cycle:**
	* Fleas have a long life cycle and can lie dormant in carpets or other fabric for several months.
	* Continue flea treatments on all animals every month for at least 3 months! It typically takes 3 monthly treatments to completely eliminate fleas from the home.
	* Continue using monthly preventative to avoid reinfestation.

****

**What flea products should I use?**

* **General info:**
	+ There are many different types of preventatives: topicals, collars, and edible medications. We recommend buying from your vet’s office to get the best product.
	+ If you are not buying prevention from your local vet’s office, be careful what you buy: there is very little regulation of over the counter flea products and many don’t work or are harmful to the pet.
	+ **Avoid Hartz products,** as many are extremely toxic to pets.
* **Topical products:**
	+ Topical products are liquids that are applied to the pet’s skin once monthly.
	+ Don’t bathe the pet 48 hours before or after treating with a topical -- it needs the skin’s natural oils to be absorbed properly.
	+ Reliable products include **K9 Advantix II (dogs only!), Advantage II, Revolution, Bravecto Topical (**only topical treatment which lasts THREE months per dose - only 4 doses needed a year!**), and Activyl.**
* **Collars:**
	+ Most flea collars are toxic or don’t work. We frequently see flea-infested pets wearing flea collars!
	+ The only collar proven to be safe and effective is the **Seresto** brand. It is effective for 8 months; you can buy it here as well as in pet stores such as Petco or PetSmart.
* **Edibles:**
	+ Edibles are a great option for pets that dislike receiving topical treatments.
	+ Typically come as a flavored chewable tablet.
	+ Reliable products include **Nexgard** (monthly treatment) and **Bravecto** (each treatment lasts for **three** months - only 4 tablets needed in a year!)

**What if it’s winter? What if my pet never goes outside?**

* Even in cold months, fleas can live year round indoors.
* It only takes one warm day for fleas to come out of hibernation and jump on you or your animal.
* Indoor animals get fleas, too. They can enter the home from nearby wildlife or stray animals. They can come in through doors, windows, and screens, or can hitch a ride on your shoes.
* The best way to avoid fleas is to use a preventative as directed year round on every pet in the home.

**The best way to treat fleas is to prevent them from**

 **ever happening!**