



CANINE HEARTWORM PREVENTION & TESTING

According to the American Heartworm Society, "Heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal condition caused by parasitic worms living in the arteries of the lungs and occasionally in the right side of the heart of dogs, cats and other species of mammals."

Heartworm infected dogs suffer from cardiovascular, respiratory, kidney, and liver disease and serve as a reservoir of infection to other dogs. Early detection is the key to successful treatment. Infected pets that receive preventive medication are at risk of experiencing an anaphylactic-like shock reaction. A standard heartworm test requires less than 1 ml of blood and can be run in less than ten minutes.

OUR POLICY

- We advocate the administration of a once-a-month heartworm preventive each and every month for every year of your dog's life.
- We will only dispense medication to dogs current on testing since infected dogs can have a serious reaction when given preventive medication. We require blood testing of dogs over 7 months of age on either a yearly or every-other-year schedule.
 - If you are certain that your dog received preventive each and every month for twenty-four consecutive months without missing a dose and without vomiting within ten hours of administration, then your pet is eligible for every-other-year testing.
- If your pet misses one or more doses of preventive or if a dose is more than 2 weeks late you should consult with our staff. You likely will be scheduled to test prior to administering preventive and/or scheduled to re-test six months following the last missed dose.
- We can only dispense prescription medications, including heartworm preventative, to pets that have been examined by a Middletown Animal Hospital veterinarian within the past year. It is illegal and unethical for your veterinarian to dispense or prescribe medications or recommend treatment without recently examining your pet.

This policy is in place because we care about your pet and we realize that circumstances, sometimes beyond your control or recognition, can result in prevention failure. It is important to understand that infected dogs receiving preventive can have adverse reactions. Please don't let this happen to your pet!