

Profender® for Cats

- Roundworms, hookworms, and tapeworms are parasites that live in the intestines of cats.
- Profender treats and controls roundworm, hookworm, and tapeworm infections in cats.
- Some intestinal parasites are contagious to humans, so protecting pets also protects family members.

What Are Roundworms, Hookworms, and Tapeworms?

Roundworms, hookworms, and tapeworms are extremely common parasites that spend their adult lives in the intestines of pets. There are several ways for cats and kittens to become infected with these intestinal parasites:

- Kittens can become infected with roundworms during nursing.
- Hookworm and roundworm eggs are shed in the feces of infected cats and can survive in the soil for a long time. Hookworm eggs mature to larvae and remain in the soil, and roundworm eggs become infective a few weeks after being deposited. When cats lie down in a contaminated environment and then groom themselves, sniff or lick the ground, or eat grass and other things outside, they can be infected.
- Cats can become infected with roundworms and hookworms when they kill and eat rodents, birds, and other small animals that can serve as hosts for these parasites.
- Hookworm larvae can infect hosts by penetrating the skin to enter the body.
- Most cats become infected with tapeworms through exposure to fleas. The immature stage of the tapeworm lives inside the flea; when the cat grooms a flea off of its skin or fur, the cat eats the flea (and the tapeworm) and becomes infected.
- In the intestines, tapeworm segments detach from the end of the adult tapeworm and are shed in the pet's feces. Each segment contains numerous tapeworm eggs. Once in the environment, the segments break open, releasing the eggs, which

eventually develop into tapeworm larvae. Pets can become infected with a certain type of tapeworm when they hunt and eat prey, such as birds, rodents, or reptiles that have eaten tapeworm larvae.

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Some cats infected with intestinal parasites develop clinical signs such as weight loss, diarrhea, and vomiting. Adult roundworms resemble spaghetti and can sometimes be seen in feces or vomit. Similarly, tapeworm segments resemble small pieces of rice and can sometimes be seen in feces or around the cat's anal area. However, in many cases there are no clinical signs and adult worms or tapeworm segments are not visible, so the only way to tell if a cat is infected is to test a sample of feces and identify the parasites.

What Is Profender?

Profender is a medication that safely and effectively kills and controls roundworms, hookworms, and tapeworms in cats.

How Is Profender Used?

Profender is very easy for cat owners to administer because it doesn't require giving a pill or other medication by mouth. Profender is a topical liquid medication. Pet owners simply need to part the hair between the cat's shoulder blades and apply a small tube of Profender liquid directly to the skin. A single application is effective, but the medication can be reapplied in 30 days if reinfection occurs.

Is Profender Safe?

Profender is safe for adult cats and can be used in kittens as young as 8 weeks of age and weighing at

least 2.2 pounds. However, owners should be careful to keep pets from eating the product; treated cats should be separated from other pets until the product dries. Profender has not been tested in pregnant or nursing cats and should be used with caution in sick, debilitated, or heartworm-positive cats.

Why Might My Veterinarian Recommend Profender?

In most cats and kittens, roundworm, hookworm, and tapeworm infections are not fatal. However, hookworms attach to the lining of the intestines and drink blood, so the diarrhea that they cause can be bloody and very severe. Some cats and kittens can even develop anemia (an inadequate number of red blood cells) from blood loss secondary to a heavy hookworm infection. Roundworms can also cause significant illness, including severe diarrhea and intestinal blockage. Treating these infections in cats and kittens is an important part of promoting overall health, well-being, and longevity.

Roundworms, hookworms, and tapeworms pose a threat to cats, but they can also infect humans:

- Roundworm eggs can live for a long time in soil. Children are particularly at risk for exposure to roundworms if they play in soil or sandboxes that are contaminated with animal feces. In humans, roundworms are a significant cause of several types of *larva migrans*, an illness caused by migration of young worms through body organs such as the liver, lungs, and nervous system. Young roundworms may also travel to the eye, where they can cause blindness.
- Humans can become infected with hookworms when infective larvae in the environment penetrate the skin. The larvae then migrate under the skin, resulting in a condition called *cutaneous larva migrans*. People with this condition may experience itchy skin lesions with a snakelike pattern. Occasionally, swallowed larvae may migrate to the intestine, causing abdominal pain. However, hookworms do not mature to adults in humans, and the infections usually resolve on their own.

- Human tapeworm infections are relatively rare and usually occur when a person inadvertently consumes an infected flea. Most cases involve children. In isolated cases, people may become infected by accidentally eating certain types of tapeworm eggs. The tapeworm larvae form cysts, which may require drainage, surgical removal, or medication.

Because humans can become infected with roundworms, hookworms, and tapeworms, protecting your pets from these parasites also protects your family members.

How Can I Protect My Pets and Family Members From Intestinal Parasites?

Because parasite eggs and larvae can remain infective in the environment for months to years, pet feces should be removed and disposed of immediately. If possible, cats should be kept indoors to prevent them from hunting infected prey. However, even indoor animals can catch infected mice, so it is important to have fecal samples checked periodically for evidence of parasites.

If there are children in your household, make sure your pets are tested and treated for intestinal parasite infections. Also, make sure children wash their hands after handling pets or going to playgrounds, and keep sandboxes covered when not in use to discourage neighborhood cats from using them as litterboxes.

Any new pet coming into the home should be tested for intestinal parasites before being permitted to share a litterbox with other cats in the home. Veterinarians routinely treat young kittens with an antiparasite medication several times until they can be placed on a monthly heartworm preventive that also controls roundworms and other internal parasites. When cats reach adulthood, routine fecal examinations are recommended, and many veterinarians recommend year-round parasite preventive medication for the life of the pet. Always consult your veterinarian about the best ways to protect your pet—and your family—against internal parasites.