

## Environmental Flea Control

Treating the house is essentially treating the carpeting. Anywhere your pet goes in the house potentially has fleas. There are three ways we recommend to treat the house:

- **Powders**: Most commonly known by the trade name Flea Busters, carpet powders can be extremely effective in the war on fleas. Fleas require moisture to survive, application of the powder dries the environment killing off the larvae as well as the emerging adults. The powder is economical and safe for pets, people and your carpet.
- **Room Foggers**: Foggers can be very effective if used properly. A quick starting point for battling severe infestations, a fogger must be used according to label directions to be safe and effective. Take recommended precautions for pets and people. Use one fogger per room in conjunction with a carpet spray such as Si-photrol Area Treatment to treat carpeting underneath your furniture where the fogger cannot reach.
- **Professional Extermination**: Having your home and yard treated professionally is an excellent way to begin your pet's flea treatment. Following up with topical and oral flea control for your pet will help to prevent future infestation and keep your pet and family comfortable. For environmental infestations, our doctors recommend **Fleabusters**. They can be reached at :  
**(800) 765-FLEA or fleabusters.com**

## Helpful Hints

- Frequent vacuuming is essential in keeping flea populations as low as possible.
- Wash your pet's bedding on a weekly basis and bathe your pet regularly with a flea control shampoo such as Vet Kem Triple Action Shampoo. This is a safe, yet effective shampoo containing lanolin to help moisturize your pet's skin and coat.
- Remember to dose your pets on a monthly basis with their flea control medications. Mark your calendar to help remind you that it's time.
- Winter weather is no guarantee that fleas are not present. Our doctors recommend both topical and oral flea control year-round in Southern California.
- Our office staff and doctors are happy to answer any questions you may have about flea control. Feel free to call our office at any time for advice.

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# Flea Control In Your Home

Flea infestation of our pets and homes remains a frustrating problem facing pet owners and veterinarians. Fleas can infest our pets at any time and during any part of the year depending upon the environmental conditions. A successful flea program depends upon a thorough understanding of the flea life cycle and the judicious use of flea control products.

## Flea Life Cycle

An adult female flea lays eggs either directly on the pet or, more commonly, in an area that has moisture such as floor cracks, crevices, floor base boards, carpeting, and damp ground. An individual adult flea may lay several hundred eggs during its lifetime.

After incubating for 2-12 days, flea eggs hatch into larvae which grow and molt twice over a period of 9-200 days. During this molting period the larvae feed on organic debris such as dried blood, and fecal material from the pet. The larvae then spin a cocoon and pupate for 7 days to as long as 1 year. When appropriately stimulated, the flea larvae emerges from pupation as an adult flea. An adult flea can survive 125 days without feeding or up to 2 years on an animal. The entire life cycle from egg to adult can be as short as 18 days or as long as one year.

## Flea Facts

- In just 4 weeks a single pair of fleas can produce an infestation of more than 6,000 eggs, larvae and adults.
- Fleas spend most of their time hiding in the yard and house and do not stay on your pet for very long. Pets are only a source of food.
- For every flea found on a pet, 10 fleas are laying eggs in the yard or house.
- Flea eggs hatch weeks to months after being laid and, thus, provide a constant supply of maturing fleas to infest your pets and home.
- Flea eggs are resistant to all insecticides and pesticide products. Fleas may be killed only as adults or pre-adults (larvae). Most conventional pesticides are ineffective against flea larvae.
- Flea activity increases according to temperature and humidity conditions. Fleas are most active in temperatures greater than 65 degrees and humidity greater than 70%. In general, flea problems are most noticeable from May to November

## Golden Rules Of Flea Control

Flea control can present several problems for the pet owner. Success depends upon the ability of the pet owner to recognize the fact that for each flea seen on the pet, there can still be several hundred in the environment in different stages of growth and maturity. Insecticides often will kill only the adult stage of the flea leaving the pupae and larvae behind to mature and re-infest your pet. These golden rules of flea control will help the pet owner to understand what must be done to successfully give your pet and family some relief this flea season.

- All areas of the environment must be treated. This includes the house, the yard and all pets being treated simultaneously.
- A product that is efficacious must be used for a long enough period of time so that the life cycle is disrupted.
- Application must be thorough, it must include rooms, hallways, underneath furniture, all backyard areas and the garage. Anywhere your pet is allowed to go is potentially infested.
- The pet owner must understand that if one pet in the household is infested, all pets in the household will require treatment.