

All Puppies Need Deworming

Don't wait for diagnosis to start deworming uncomfortable dog.

By Jon Geller, DVM

Q. My puppy is 13 weeks old is adapting wonderful to his new surroundings. However, his stool is very loose, and he's scooting across the floor. His anus appears to be swollen or irritated. Is there something that I can do make him more comfortable?

A. Like all other puppies, your dog needs to be dewormed. Parasites are by far the leading cause of diarrhea in puppies and young dogs. Scooting is a tell-tale sign of intestinal worms.

All puppies should be dewormed with an oral dewormer. These deworming doses should start at 3 weeks of age, and be repeated every two weeks until 16 weeks of age. At that point, all dogs should be started on a monthly heartworm preventative that also prevents roundworms and hookworms.

This deworming plan is now endorsed by most veterinary professionals as being the best way to prevent intestinal parasites in puppies and older dogs. Dogs should receive this monthly dewormer year-round, regardless of where they live.

Submitting a stool sample to your veterinarian would be a way to confirm the diagnosis, but starting a deworming protocol for your puppy should be your first priority.

Roundworms and hookworms are also a health risk to infants, who may inadvertently ingest infective eggs if they are playing on the ground where dogs have defecated. These parasites can survive in the environment for several years, so minimizing their occurrence through regular deworming of dogs is important for dog and human health alike.