

Flea Myths Debunked

A veterinary dermatologist sets the record straight on popular myths about fleas and your dog.

Posted: July 11, 2007, 5 a.m. EST

All dog owners know that fleas are bad news. However, there are some misconceptions about fleas, how fleas can affect a dog, and how to treat and prevent flea afflictions. Dr. Heather Willis-Goulet, a board certified veterinary dermatologist at Florida Veterinary Specialists, debunks popular myths about fleas.

Myth 1: If you don't see fleas on your pet, there's no need to worry about flea allergies. "Even if you don't see fleas, your pet can have a flea allergy," says Dr. Willis-Goulet.

Myth 2: With fleas, you only need to worry about flea bites. Fleas can transmit tape worms to your dog if your dog eats a flea. If this occurs, the owners will see tiny white worms or rice-like segments on the pet's backside or bedding.

Myth 3: Owners don't need to treat their yards or home for fleas. If the situation is severe, consider treating your yard or home with flea-repelling products. Use these products in the evening – the sun's UV light degrades the products. Remember that fleas like to be in moist, dark areas such as piles of rubbish or thatch in the yard or underneath the couch.

Myth 4: Dog owners use flea products correctly. Owners commonly do not use the entire dose on their dog or they split the dose between two pets. Pet owners should apply products every month, not every three months and remember to apply after your dog is bathed and dried.

Myth 5: All flea products are the same. Some products only kill the adult flea, whereas others kill the adult flea and the eggs. Use the latter.

Myth 6: Cats and dogs can share the same products. According to Dr. Willis-Goulet, some dog flea products are toxic to cats.

To learn more about flea and tick prevention and treatment, [click here](#).