

## Fact Sheet

### Heartworm Testing 1-2-3

#### 1. Why should I have my pet tested for heartworm?

- Heartworm disease is a serious, progressive disease. The earlier it's detected, the easier it is to treat.
- There are often few, if any, signs of disease when a dog or cat is infected with heartworms, so detecting their presence with a heartworm test is important.



#### 2. What is a heartworm test?

- A heartworm test is simple and only requires a small blood sample from your pet.
- A heartworm test works by detecting the presence of heartworm proteins.
- The test may be read right at the clinic or sent out to a laboratory.
- If a pet tests positive, further tests may be ordered.

#### 3. When will my pet be tested for heartworm?

- Yearly testing is the standard of care and is recommended by the American Heartworm Society.
- If a pet is showing signs of heartworm disease, such as coughing or stress during exercise, your veterinarian may order a test.
- A heartworm test may be part of screening before surgery to help reduce the risk of complications.
- Your veterinarian may test your pet before giving heartworm medication for the first time.

Ask your veterinarian if you have additional questions about heartworm testing or the important role it plays in managing the health of your pet. And in addition to thinking about the 1-2-3 of testing, remember to “Think 12.”

- Test for heartworm every 12 months.
- Give heartworm preventive 12 months a year.

#### Further Reading

Heartworm Disease in Dogs. ©Heska  
[www.heska.com/Documents/SoloStep/SSCH-CB\\_005-1009-DFT.aspx](http://www.heska.com/Documents/SoloStep/SSCH-CB_005-1009-DFT.aspx)

Heartworm Disease in Cats. ©Heska  
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