



FECAL EXAMS AND YOUR PET

WHY DOES MY VETERINARIAN WANT A STOOL SAMPLE?

Your veterinarian may ask you to provide a stool sample (yes, stool sample - and no, it's not as bad as it sounds). This is important because your pet's feces can be a window into their body. It can tell a lot about the state of their gastrointestinal (GI) tract, which helps your vet understand what might be causing symptoms or illness.

Also known as fecal analysis, this test can be an essential tool in preventing, diagnosing, and treating many issues such as parasites and other digestive issues like colitis or infectious diarrhea.

Intestinal parasites are a major cause of infection in pets and also a concern for people. **Roughly 34% of dogs in the United States have some kind of intestinal parasite**, and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) says that 14% of people in the U.S. have been exposed to roundworm. Fecal exams are a vital tool to ensure that your pet and your household are not infected and exposed to intestinal parasites.



PARASITES THAT FECAL EXAMS TEST FOR:

- Roundworms
- Hookworms
- Whipworms
- Coccidia
- Giardia



Unlike external parasites like fleas and ticks, most intestinal parasites are never seen because they hide in your pet's intestinal track. The only way to detect the presence of intestinal parasites and identify them is by doing a fecal exam. By collecting the sample, your vet can send it to a lab for analysis to check for infection or illness.

HOW TO PROVIDE A PROPER FECAL SAMPLE?

Fresh is best! Fresher stool samples give more accurate and sensitive results. Eggs and larvae from some types of parasites, as well as protozoa and protozoan cysts, can become altered and unrecognizable the longer they sit out. For the best results, collect no more than 2 tablespoons of fresh stool and bring it to your veterinarian the same day. If this is not possible, you can **seal the fecal sample in a sealed bag and refrigerate it for up to 24 hours**.

HOW OFTEN DOES YOUR PET NEED A FECAL EXAM?

Pets should be tested at least annually. Speak with your veterinarian at your next visit to find out how frequently you should bring in your pet's stool sample.