



## Fleas

### What do they look like?

There are many different types of flea each one specific to the animal that it lives on. The most frequent fleas found in domestic properties are 1-Cat flea – 2- Dog flea. The adult flea is approximately 2.6mm long brown coloured with long muscular back legs (see photo above)

### The flea lifecycle

- A female flea will lay up to 50 eggs per day, about 2,000 in her lifetime. She will lay them on your pet and they quickly fall off as they are not sticky.
- The eggs hatch to larvae in between two to five days.
- The larvae head toward dark places around your home and feed on flea dirt excrement of partially digested blood of your pet. The larvae grow, moult twice, and spin cocoons, where they form in to pupae.
- The pupae stage averages 8 to 9 days depending on weather conditions.
- The adults come out of their cocoons when they detect a host is nearby. Once they hop onto a host, the adults mate and begin the life-cycle all over again.
- The entire life cycle can be as short as 3 to 4 weeks but the eggs can lay dormant for many months if they do not detect a host to feed on.

### Why have I got fleas in my home/workplace when there are no pets?

- In the summer fleas can survive outside and be carried into buildings.
- Visiting friends or clients who have fleas in their homes can transport fertile fleas into the home or workplace
- If you move into a previously occupied house or flat you can sometimes inherit a flea problem (if the previous occupier has had pets) and these will be activated by the presence of a host to feed on.

## **Treatment of pets**

- It is essential to treat pets in an infested property otherwise re-infestation will occur.
- It is best to seek treatment for the pets from your vet.
- Grooming your pet using a flea comb will help to remove them
- Fitting a flea collar will also help.
- Hot wash pet bedding regularly
- Hoover and clean your home regularly, including furniture.

## **How can the Council help.**

- Highly trained officers from the Pest Control section can undertake a treatment for you, there is a charge for this service (See the web link for prices).
- If you decide you would like our pest control officers to provide treatment, please make sure you have read and followed the advice below:

## **What you need to do before the pest control officer visits:**

- Vacuum your entire house, including sofas and chairs. If possible sprinkle an insecticidal powder on to the carpet and vacuum up so that any fleas picked up will be killed in the bag.
- Throw out the vacuum bag as it may contain flea eggs.
- Pick up all items in order to clear as much floor space as possible (not the furniture) This will provide the best means of applying the insecticide over as wide an area as possible and give the best results.
- Start to treat your pets.

## **After the pest control officer has provided treatment:**

- He will leave you a safety sheet which contains information about the treatment he has provided and what you should do afterwards.
- Small children and animals should not enter the treated area until the liquid has dried.
- Do not vacuum for 10 days, the longer you leave the treatment down the better.

- You may see fleas for some weeks. The adults will die, but eggs will be developing at different times and the emerging adults will die off as they come into contact with the treatment.
- The insecticide we use works for approximately six weeks, depending on house management. Fleas will still be developing after treatment so we cannot guarantee that treatment will completely eradicate the flea infestation. We know that the insecticides work, but treatment is not a total solution.

**How to contact us**

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