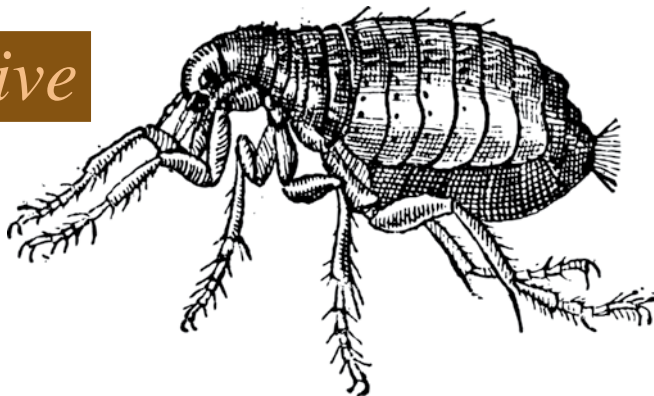


Fleas

An informative guide for residents...



Adults fleas are normally 1-4mm long, brownish in colour, without wings, but with powerful legs adapted for jumping. Female fleas can live up to two years, during which time they can lay up to 1000 eggs.

Where do they live?

Adult fleas live exclusively as parasites of warm-blooded animals. The females lay their eggs after feeding on the infested animal. The eggs drop onto the floor and the animal's bedding. After several days the eggs will develop into larvae. After two to three weeks the larvae will be fully developed. The larvae will then spin a cocoon where it will spend a further two to three weeks before emerging as an adult flea.

Are fleas a health hazard?

Flea bites can cause skin irritation and distress. If in doubt, contact your GP for advice.

What are the signs of infestations?

You will probably first become alerted to the fact that your pet may have fleas by its constant scratching. Your suspicion can then be confirmed either by seeing fleas or flea droppings in the coat. Flea droppings are small black specks mainly composed of dried blood, and they are usually seen in clusters lying next to the skin. They are easy to spot in light coloured animals by brushing back the hair. In dark coated breeds it may be better to comb the animal over a sheet of paper onto which any flea droppings will then fall. The identity of the black specks may be confirmed by adding a few drops of water— if they turn red, your pet has fleas.

Bites on you or family members– in humans, flea bites can produce an allergic reaction. The typical symptom of a flea bite is a small red spot 5mm or so in diameter. In sensitive individuals, however, the response can be worse and the bite intensely itchy.

How can I prevent flea infestation?

In order to treat an infestation successfully the type and source of the flea needs to be determined. This may require professional identification. First, clear as much floor space as possible, to ensure that treatment is as thorough as possible.

Vacuuming all areas helps to remove any debris, egg, larvae and adult fleas. The vibration of the vacuum cleaner also helps to stimulate adults to hatch from their cocoon stage. Pay particular attention to areas where your pets may sleep.

Remember to remove the waste collection bag, from the vacuum cleaner, and to dispose of it in an outside bin as you may have collected eggs, larvae and adult fleas while vacuuming.

The standard treatment for infested premises is the application of a residual insecticide, either as a powder or a liquid spray. The residual insecticide is applied to all floors surfaces and these areas must not be vacuumed or washed for at least 10-14 days after treatment.

Although new adult fleas may still be emerging from cocoons up to a month after treatment, there should still be sufficient insecticide present to kill them off.

In order to achieve effective control, pets must also be treated with a product approved for veterinary use. Pets bedding should be thoroughly washed at a high enough temperature 50°C or more to kill off all stages of the fleas development.

Happy to help

We are available to offer advice or to deal with your pest problem.



Swift, confidential and professional service.

All our staff are RSPH level 2 qualified and are members of Basis Prompt, the Professional Pest Controllers Register with more than 50 years experience.



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for more information**