Merck Animal Health Global Survey Reveals Gaps in Flea and Tick Prevention, Highlights Need for Year-Round Care

Pet owners and veterinarians share perceptions around flea and tick care and management

Fleas and ticks pose a year-round threat to both pet and human health, potentially transmitting serious infections and diseases like tapeworms and Lyme disease.

The recent Pet Owner & Vet Perspectives on Parasite Treatment and Prevention: A Global Survey from Merck Animal Health, reveals critical gaps in pet owner adherence, knowledge of flea and tick threats, as well as preferences for treatment options, alongside veterinarian perspectives on these issues. The survey underscores the need for consistent, year-round flea and tick prevention – particularly as recent data links warmer temperatures to the expanding geographic spread of fleas and ticks.

Temperatures are Changing and so is the Parasite Landscape

Recent data illustrates that the world has experienced the hottest decade in history[i] and changes in the climate are attributed to the expansion of fleas and ticks in more geographic regions than ever before.[ii]

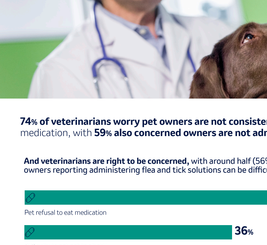
Flea and tick season is lasting longer as the climate is warming, and seasons shift.

Therefore, one way warmer temperatures might affect human health is by increasing the risk of vector-borne diseases.[iii]

While 44% of pet owners emphasize flea and tick season is in the summer months,

Veterinarians are 4x more likely (vets: 47%, pet owners: 11%) **to define flea and tick season as year-round**

55% of veterinarians report **more than 50% of pet owners aren't administering year-round flea/tick prevention**



Pet Owners Agree that Fleas and Ticks Post a Threat to Pets and Humans, but Lack Parasite Education

82% of pet owners see fleas/ticks as a threat to their pet's health and

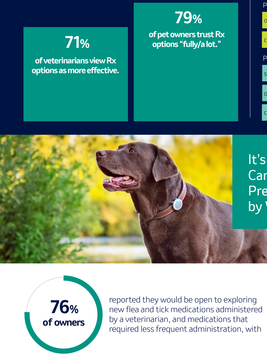
75% see them as a threat to their own health and their family's health

Despite this, when asked about the following conditions, **pet owners either reported they had never heard of them before,** or had only heard the name, but didn't know much about it:

It's important for veterinarians to help pet owners understand the potential harm fleas and ticks can cause to animals and humans and elevate the importance of a comprehensive care plan.

Many veterinarians feel a majority of their clients

which aligns with 51% of dog owners and 66% of indoor/outdoor cat owners reporting to have had a flea/tick problem.



Pet Owners Face Challenges Adhering to Flea and Tick Care, and Veterinarians are Concerned

74% of veterinarians worry pet owners are not consistently administering flea and tick prevention medication, with **59% also concerned owners are not administering the treatments correctly.**

And veterinarians are right to be concerned, with around half (56%) of pet owners reporting administering flea and tick solutions can be difficult, including:

In addition to the difficulties of administration,

46% of dog owners

51% of cat owners

shared they have **forgotten to administer flea and tick treatment in the past year**

Trust in Prescription (Rx) Treatments Remains Strong Globally, but Regional Preferences Vary

Rx treatments are generally trusted more and are viewed as more effective than over-the-counter options.

71% of veterinarians view Rx options as more effective.

79% of pet owners trust Rx options "fully/a lot."

Oral medications and collars are the most popular solutions among owners, and most recommended by veterinarians.

It's Time to Set a New Standard of Care with a Once-Yearly Flea and Tick Prescription Medication Administered by Veterinarians

76% of owners reported they would be open to exploring new flea and tick medications administered by a veterinarian, and medications that required less frequent administration, with

56% of owners agreeing they would prefer the care be handled by their vet.

This demonstrates an opportunity to champion veterinary-administered solutions.

65% of veterinarians are likely to recommend an annual medication option. & **75% of pet owners** are likely to try a once-yearly medication.

highlighting an opportunity to embrace year-round prevention as the standard of care.

For more information, visit https://www.merck-animal-health.com/media/fleaandtick-global-survey/

Survey Methodology:

The Pet Owner & Vet Perspectives on Parasite Treatment and Prevention: A Global Survey was conducted by Savanta on behalf of Merck Animal Health among n=4,072 pet owners and n=582 veterinarians in 15 countries. Pet owners were adults 18+ who own a dog and/or cat. Pet owner sample size by country: Australia & New Zealand n=268, Brazil n=318, Canada n=277, China n=256, France n=257, Germany n=259, Italy n=283, Japan n=289, Mexico n=286, Peru n=286, Poland n=296, Spain n=294, United Kingdom (UK) n=276, United States (U.S.) n=427.

Veterinarians worked at least 10 hours a week in practice and treat both dogs and cats. Veterinarian sample size by country: Australia & New Zealand n=40, Brazil n=43, Canada n=43, China n=52, France n=41, Germany n=41, Italy n=42, Japan n=24, Mexico n=52, Peru n=40, Poland n=38, Spain n=42, United Kingdom (UK) n=42, United States (U.S.) n=42. The research was conducted online between December 23, 2024, and January 28, 2025.

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i Sonnenshine DE. Range Expansion of Tick Disease Vectors in North America: Implications for Spread of Tick-Borne Disease. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2018 Mar 9;15(3):478. doi: 10.3390/ijerph15030478. PMID: 29522469; PMCID: PMC5877023.

ii World Meteorological Organization. State of the Global Climate 2024 (WMO-No. 1368). WMO; 2025. Accessed April 17, 2024. https://library.wmo.int/viewer/69451/?offset=#page=33&viewer=picture&o=bookmark&n=0&q=.

iii Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Climate Effects on Vector-Borne Diseases." CDC. https://www.cdc.gov/climate-health/media/pdfs/VECTOR-BORNE-DISEASE-Final_508_1.pdf. Accessed April 17, 2025.