



EASTGATE VETERINARY CENTRE

133 Eastgate
Pickering
N. Yorkshire
YO18 7DW

Ticks

Being situated on the North Yorkshire Moors, ticks are a common problem encountered by dog owners visiting and living in the area. The ticks themselves cause local irritation, and can also transmit more serious disease to dog and potentially their owners.

What are ticks?

Ticks are small blood sucking insect-like parasites that live in grasses and undergrowth. They can attach to a wide variety of birds and animals including man. They are often hard to see, being small and pale coloured, however once attached they burrow their heads in to their host's skin and engorge on blood, increasing to several times their original size.

Owners often only notice them on their dogs once they are engorged, and at this point they appear as small grey lumps or warts.

What risks and problems can they cause?

A feeding tick drops off once full, and can often leave a localised point of swelling which may become infected. Certain ticks may also carry a bacterium called *Borrelia burgdorferi*, which causes the potentially serious Lyme disease, which can also infect humans.

How do I remove ticks that I find on my dog?

Removal of ticks should be done very carefully, as it is easy to leave the mouth parts in the skin which can cause a nasty skin infection at the site. If you are unsure of how to remove the tick or think that you have left mouth parts in, always seek veterinary attention.

Ticks should only be removed with a special tick hook, and must be used with a twisting action. These hooks are available at the practice, and we can give advice on how to use them correctly



How do I prevent problems with ticks?

Unfortunately there is now way to stop tick climbing on to your dog, but there are ways of killing them quickly once they attach.

Frontline is a spot on flea treatment that is active against ticks, but must be used every month to be active against ticks, as opposed to every two months for fleas.

Scalibor collars are impregnated with an insecticide which is active against ticks. They are effective for up to 5-6 months.

Ticks can be a common problem in the summer months, but a good inspection of your dog after country walks and use of suitable preventions can reduce their effect to a minimum.