

# April 2019

## Keep Your Dog Safe From Fleas and Ticks With These 10 Prevention Tips

It's that time of year again, folks. [Flea and tick season](#) is upon us, and nothing annoys a dog more than those pesky pests. Responsible dog owners know that their canine companion's warm and soft fur is like a personal paradise for these insects. But once they move in — and begin feeding on your pet's blood — they can cause a wide range of health problems, from skin infections to [Lyme disease](#). In honor of Prevent Lyme Disease in Dogs Month, scroll down for 10 flea and tick prevention tips from the American Kennel Club's Chief Veterinary Officer [Dr. Jerry Klein](#).

**1. Prevention is best done with one of the many veterinary-approved [flea \(and tick\) preparations](#) available on the market** — like this [natural flea and tick spray](#) made from a blend of peppermint oil, cedar oil, and other natural oils. Speak to your veterinarian to find the best, most appropriate product for your dog. There are topicals, collars, and shampoos, each made for specific needs. And in extreme conditions, try one of these [sun and bug blocker overalls](#), which provide protection from biting insects and harmful UV rays.

**2. Read the label.** NEVER EVER apply flea medication made for cats to dogs unless it says made for cats *and* dogs on the label.

**3. Regularly inspect your dogs and yourself for ticks after walks through the woods or grassy settings.** On dogs, look especially on the feet (and between toes), on lips, around eyes, ears (and inside ears), near the anus, and under the tail.

**4. The quicker you remove a tick, the less likely your dog will contract a secondary illness related to tick bites.** Learn the proper method of tick removal. Invest in a pair of fine tweezers used for this purpose. If you are unable to do so, consult with a veterinarian.

**5. Keep grass mowed as short as possible.** Refrain from walking into grassy patches in endemic tick areas if you can.

**6. For fleas, [look for them](#) on areas of your dog where the coat is sparse or thin.** Think belly, inner sides of the hind limbs, and armpits.

**7. If you own multiple dogs, treat them all at the SAME time.** This will help prevent cross infestation.

**8. While dogs are being treated, the surrounding environment *must* be treated at the same time.** Wash or get rid of all bedding and completely vacuum the sofas and carpets. When you're done, make sure to empty the vacuum containers.

**9. If flea infestation is extensive in your home, a ["fogger"](#) can be used.** The room must be evacuated of all dogs and humans for 12 to 24 hours (read label directions carefully to determine safety, or ask a veterinarian).

**10. If infestation is bad enough, or in parts of the country where fleas are on the ground, professional exterminators may be needed.** Here's hoping it doesn't come to that!