



FLEA CONTROL

FLEA CONTROL IN THE HOUSE

In general, I recommend that you:

- Vacuum the carpet and furniture regularly (empty the vacuum bag afterwards).
- Steam-clean the carpets to kill larvae and eggs.
- Wash the bedding every 4-7 days. Dry on high setting or hang bedding in the sun.

In addition, consider:

- Borax (call *Flea Busters*® or purchase a “do-it-yourself” equivalent)
This salt kills eggs and larvae in the carpet via desiccation or borax toxicity.
Apply to the base of the carpet once a year (under the bed, in the closets, in the car.)

FLEA CONTROL IN THE YARD

- Remove organic debris (where fleas hide) by mowing and raking.
- Nematodes (microscopic worms)
These special microscopic worms eat flea eggs, larvae, and pupae (in 24-48 hrs.) They do not ingest “good” bugs and so can be used in gardens. The worms require moist soil to survive.
Spray shaded soil where animals tend to lay (i.e. under trees, bushes, decks). Follow instructions on the canister and spray every 2 months (March through Sept.).
Order from: Gardens Alive (812) 537-8650 or Harmony Farms (Sebastopol) or arbico-organics.com

ORAL FLEA CONTROL

- *Program*® (Lufenuron) for cats and dogs. Purchase on-line (no prescription required).
This is an insect growth regulator that is given orally once a month. Adult fleas ingest the chemical when they bite the animal and then lay non-viable eggs. The adult flea is unaffected but eggs and larvae do not develop. It must be given to all dogs & cats in the household to be effective.
- *Capstar* (dogs & cats) or *Comfortis* (dogs only) are oral insecticides. Adult fleas are killed upon ingesting the chemical from blood of the dog or cat. They are safer than the topical insecticides and are available on-line.

TOPICAL FLEA CONTROL

(All animals in the household must be treated!)

- **Flea comb:** Use a comb with very close tines and comb for at least a few minutes to catch and kill adult fleas. On dogs, fleas are most commonly found on the back half of the body. With cats, you will need to comb the whole body, but especially the neck, rump and tail.
- **Neem shampoo & spray:** Neem oil is a natural insecticide derived from the Neem tree. It repels and deters fleas and other biting insects (ticks, flies, mosquitoes, biting lice) on people and animals. For heavy infestations, spray your dog with *Neem “Protect” Spray*®, wait 2 hours, then bathe with Neem shampoo (available from Holistic Animal Care). Thereafter, or for less severe infestations, use *Neem “Protect” Spray* every 2-5 days. Begin at the neck and work your way back to the tail, abdomen, and legs. Avoid spraying the face. Neem spray is water-soluble: reapply after bathing or swimming.
- **Insecticides:** Avoid the use of neurotoxins such as *Advantage*® and *Frontline*®. The FDA reports increasing numbers of adverse reactions to topical insecticides. They are also suspected carcinogens.

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