



Flea and Tick Season

Connie's Weekly Newsletter

Spring has arrived, and with it we enter flea and tick season. The majority of animal welfare organizations focus their efforts during this time on their flea eradication program, and while no one can dispute that fleas are worrisome, public health officials will tell you that ticks are a much greater health care issue. Ticks carry diseases that are devastating to both dogs and humans, and it is prudent to have in place a program to deal with ticks as it can become a community issue with far reaching implications, including increases in claims for worker's compensation. The key is prevention, before an infestation takes place.

Take this month's Veterinary Practice News (April 2013) as an example of the growing concern:

<http://www.veterinarypracticenews.com/vet-cover-stories/tick-populations-to-explode.aspx>

The front page headline is a warning that experts believe that the tick population will explode in many areas of the country this year. According to Dr Susan Little, Veterinary Parasitology expert at Oklahoma State, "It is not just more ticks, it is more ticks in more places." While there are many reasons why tick populations have increased, key drivers include warmer winters, which have caused ticks to spread from the south to the northern states, an increase in white tailed deer, and the preservation of open space.

Following is a quick primer on three of the more common ticks:

Dermacentor variabilis or the **American dog tick** is the most common tick and is found in all the lower 48 States. The dog tick is the largest of the three ticks discussed here. The female has a white shield on the back. The back of the male is mottled gray and dark brown. The adults feed on dogs, cats, and humans and are often seen in late April, May, June, and early July. *Dermacentor variabilis* is the primary vector of Rocky Mountain spotted fever.

Smaller than the American dog tick is the **Lone Star Tick**. The female has a single white spot near the center of the back. Larvae, nymphs and adults will all feed on humans. Lone star ticks have been found in the central and southern America. Adult ticks appear in late March, numbers peak in May and June and decline in July. Nymphs appear in April, peak in May and June, and can be found throughout the summer. Larvae appear in the spring and again in the fall. ***Amblyomma americanum*** is a vector of Ehrlichiosis.

Ixodes scapularis, the blacklegged tick (also known as the **Lyme Disease tick or Deer Tick**), is the smallest tick discussed here. The female is the largest of the stages and is mahogany in color with long mouth parts. The male has shorter mouth parts and is smaller. This tick actually thrives in cold weather.

In some parts of the country Lyme disease has soared over 80 percent and experts say the surge has been caused by an increase in the tiny ticks that spread the illness to humans. The big influx of the deer population is directly related to the increase in numbers of deer ticks on our dogs, and the increase in Lyme disease in people.

In light of the anticipated explosion in tick populations, particular attention should be directed towards the transporting of dogs from facility to facility across the country. As transport increases across the country, so does the need for all shelters and clinics to be using tick prevention. Shelters and clinics that participate in transfer programs have a higher chance of spreading the disease, and as a result areas not common to having ticks are no longer safe from the threat of a serious tick infestation.

Are you prepared? Make sure you're using a product that provides both tick and flea control to protect the pets under your care and in the community. Using a flea preventative on your dogs that also kills ticks is an important and necessary part of your prevention program. PetArmor[®] has the same proven flea and tick ingredient as the leading brand, and kills both fleas and all four species of ticks, at an affordable price.

At your request, we now are offering PetArmor in single dose packs in addition to the traditional multi packs. Your organization can now provide the single dose products at adoption to ensure that newly adopted pets are protected against fleas and ticks. Also, this is a great product to carry in your shelters and clinics for those clients that are on

tight budgets and would not be able to purchase multi packs of products. Reaching these clients will help keep their pets healthy and in the home.

Additionally, based on your feedback, we are offering for a limited time the Canine PetArmor Purchasing Commitment Program. For those animal welfare organizations that commit to purchasing all flea and tick medication for use on shelter dogs exclusively from us in 2013, and meet a purchase a minimum of five cases of PetArmor, we will discount the price of standard microchips to \$6.15 through December 31, 2013.

As an added bonus, for registering in the Purchasing Commitment Program, you also have the opportunity for additional savings with one free case of PetTrust™Plus for every case of PetArmor you purchase from January 1 through June 30, 2013, while supplies last.

Not only will you save up to 25% on the cost of your flea and tick preventatives, but free heartworm medication and decreased pricing on standard size microchip prices will help you achieve additional cost savings.

If you haven't already joined the Canine Purchasing Commitment Program please do so today. [Click Here](#) to view this promotion or call 1.866.597.2424 ext. 365.

Did you know?

You could win a trip for two just for being a PetPoint partner! PetPoint's two contests, *PetPoint 2000* and *24PetWatch in Vitre 2013*, will each grant two lucky people from the winning organization a trip of a lifetime. [Click here](#) for contest updates and how you can participate

Sincerely,

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