



Feline Heartworm Disease (Heartworm Associated Respiratory Disease, HARD)

Heartworm Disease in cats is a serious disease. Heartworms affect cats differently than they affects dogs. The signs of Feline Heartworm Disease are often vague and may be intermittent. Signs include:

- trouble breathing
- coughing
- wheezing
- anorexia
- vomiting
- lethargy
- weight loss
- sudden death

As you can see, these symptoms could suggest any number of diseases making the diagnosis of feline heartworm disease difficult and lengthy. The prevalence of heartworm in cats in the Kentucky/Indiana area is believed to be approaching 14%. A quarter of these cats are housecats.

The facts:

1. Cats in our area are being exposed and infected with heartworms.
2. Heartworm disease can be a life-threatening for cats.
3. There is no safe and effective treatment for feline heartworm disease, although we can help manage the symptoms. (Dogs can be cured.)
4. Cats suffer permanent lung/blood vessel damage.
5. Prevention is safe, effective and inexpensive.

Fortunately, testing for heartworms is not needed in order to start prevention for cats. (Testing is required for dogs.) The product we currently recommend is Revolution®. This is a once a month topical medication that prevents heartworm disease as well as controlling fleas, ear mites, roundworms and hookworms.

Based on the incidence and potential problems associated with this disease, it is our recommendation that you use Revolution® for your cat.