

VetterCare
Expert Pet Care. At Home.

A FREE TRACKING KIT FOR DOGS IN HEARTWORM TREATMENT

Rest now, run later.

For most owners, the hardest part of heartworm treatment is the rest. Your dog's activity is limited from the day the diagnosis is confirmed until weeks after the last injection. This kit helps you keep your vet's plan in one place, day by day, and hand it off to anyone who helps.

1. Your vet's treatment dates
2. Daily rest calendar
3. Medication schedule
4. Signs to watch for
5. Care handoff sheet
6. Questions for your vet

SHEET 1 · FILL THIS IN WITH YOUR VET

Your dog's treatment dates

Your vet chooses the treatment and sets every date. This is what to expect with the American Heartworm Society's recommended plan. Your dog's plan may be different.

Diagnosis confirmed with a second, different test, before any treatment starts.	DATE
Stabilizing first, if your dog is showing signs of disease. In severe cases this can take several months.	FROM – TO
About the first month: medicines your vet prescribes. **Rest starts now.** The more signs your dog has, the stricter the rest.	REST STARTS
First injection, after a one-month wait. Injections are given at the veterinary hospital.	DATE
Two more injections, a day apart, about one month later.	DATES
Strict rest after the last injection. Published sources give different lengths, so your vet sets the end date for your dog.	STRICT REST ENDS
Gradual return to normal activity, over about 4 weeks, as your vet instructs.	BACK TO NORMAL
Retest, about 9 months after the last injection, to check the worms are gone.	RETEST DATE

With this plan, treatment takes about 16 to 18 weeks from start to finish, including the rest. Most infected dogs can be treated successfully.

American Heartworm Society: 2024 Canine Guidelines and Summary of Highlights; "Heartworm Positive Dogs"; "Heartworm Basics." Merck Veterinary Manual, "Heartworm Disease in Dogs."

SHEET 2 · ONE LINE A DAY

Daily rest calendar

Strict rest, from _____ to _____

Leash outings: how long, per your vet _____ How many a day _____

Date	Phase strict / gradual	Leash outings tick each one	Rest calm / restless	Anything you noticed cough, breathing, appetite, injection site	Initials
		○ ○ ○ ○ ○			
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During strict rest, the American Heartworm Society describes leash-only trips outside, just to urinate and defecate. Your vet sets the rules for your dog. If your dog can't settle, tell your vet. Two weeks per sheet: print as many copies as the treatment needs.

SHEET 3 · AS PRESCRIBED BY YOUR VETERINARIAN

Medication schedule

Copy each medicine from the label or your vet's written instructions. Give it on your vet's schedule, and write down each dose.

A

Medicine _____

Dose + times _____ *as prescribed*

Start _____ End _____

With food / other notes _____

B

Medicine _____

Dose + times _____ *as prescribed*

Start _____ End _____

With food / other notes _____

C

Medicine _____

Dose + times _____ *as prescribed*

Start _____ End _____

With food / other notes _____

D

Medicine _____

Dose + times _____ *as prescribed*

Start _____ End _____

With food / other notes _____

Date	A time given	B time given	C time given	D time given	Initials	Notes

If a dose is missed or late, my vet says:

_____

The heartworm preventive is part of treatment, and the American Heartworm Society recommends it year-round, for life, afterward. Never change or stop a medicine without talking to your vet.

SHEET 4 · KEEP THIS ON THE FRIDGE

Signs to watch for during treatment

CALL YOUR VET RIGHT AWAY

- Coughing
- Coughing up blood
- Labored or rapid breathing
- Unusual tiredness
- Not eating
- Fever

These can be signs of a complication after treatment. They usually appear 7 to 10 days after an injection, but can come anywhere from several days to about 6 weeks after. Strict rest lowers the risk.

Merck Veterinary Manual; American Heartworm Society Canine Guidelines

CALL YOUR VET OR GO TO AN EMERGENCY HOSPITAL NOW

- Sudden labored breathing
- Pale gums
- Collapse
- Dark, bloody or coffee-colored urine

These can be signs of caval syndrome, a sudden blockage of blood flow in the heart that needs surgery right away.

American Heartworm Society; Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine

EXPECTED, NOT AN EMERGENCY

- Mild swelling where the injection was given
- Some soreness there for a few days

Pain at the injection site is the most common side effect. Your vet usually gives pain control with each injection. Ask your vet what's normal for your dog.

American Heartworm Society; Cornell Riney Canine Health Center

If you can't reach your vet, or your pet is experiencing an emergency, go to the nearest emergency animal hospital right away.

Our vet	_____	Phone	_____
After hours, call	_____	Phone	_____
Emergency hospital	_____	Phone	_____

SHEET 5 · FOR ANYONE CARING FOR YOUR DOG

Care handoff sheet

Dog's name _____ **Weight** _____ **Age** _____

My phone _____ **Backup contact** _____

Our vet _____ **Phone** _____

Emergency hospital _____ **Phone** _____

Right now my dog is ☐ before the injections ☐ between injections ☐ after the last injection

Last injection _____ **Strict rest ends** _____

REST RULES, AS OUR VET INSTRUCTS

- ☐ Indoors, in a crate or a quiet room, most of the time. Where: _____
- ☐ Outside on a leash only, just to urinate and defecate. How long: _____ Times a day: _____
- ☐ No running, jogging, long walks, free time in the yard or excited play.
- ☐ Calm and cool: exercise, excitement and overheating all raise the risk of complications.
- ☐ Safely confined whenever no one is watching.
- ☐ What gets my dog excited, and how we avoid it: _____
- ☐ Calm things my dog likes: ☐ chew toy ☐ puzzle toy or snuffle mat (part of the usual meal, not extra food) ☐ short training games ☐ music or audiobooks ☐ other _____

Food, how much + when _____ **Medicine schedule is kept** _____

If my dog can't settle, our vet says:

_____

If you see any sign on the fridge card, our vet wants you to:

_____

Heartworm doesn't spread from dog to dog; it spreads only through mosquito bites (FDA). Rest rules from the American Heartworm Society and Dr. U. Donnett, DVM (Veterinary Practice News, 2026). Your vet's instructions come first.

SHEET 6 · BRING THIS TO YOUR NEXT VISIT

Questions for your vet

Write your vet's answers here, so everyone caring for your dog has them.

1 **What are my dog's rest rules right now, and do they change after each injection?**

2 **Can my dog go on leash walks, and for how long?**

3 **What should I do if my dog can't settle in the crate?**

4 **Which signs after an injection mean I should call you, and who do I call after hours?**

5 **On what date does strict rest end, and how do we return to normal activity?**

6 **Is daycare or boarding safe for my dog during treatment? Can someone care for my dog at home?**

7 **When is the retest?**

8 **What heartworm prevention should my dog take after treatment?**

SOURCES

American Heartworm Society: Canine Guidelines (revised 2024), Summary of Highlights of the 2024 Canine Guidelines, "Heartworm Basics," "Heartworm Positive Dogs," and its shelter treatment FAQ. Merck Veterinary Manual, "Heartworm Disease in Dogs" (Dog Owners edition). Cornell University Riney Canine Health Center, "Heartworm disease." US Food and Drug Administration, "Keep the Worms Out of Your Pet's Heart!" Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine, Pet Talk, "Heartworm Disease in Dogs." Donnett U, "Delivering holistic care for heartworm patients," Veterinary Practice News, 2026.



GOING AWAY DURING TREATMENT?

A veterinary professional can keep the rest plan going.

VetterCare's veterinary professionals care for your dog in your home while you're away, following your veterinarian's written instructions for rest and medication.

- Leash-only outings and a calm, quiet routine, the way your vet set it
- Medicines given as prescribed, and written down
- Photo updates while you're away
- Meet your veterinary professional in person before you leave

vettercare.com

CALL US
(844) 697-3871

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VetterCare gathers this information from published veterinary sources. It is general information, not veterinary advice, and doesn't replace an exam by your veterinarian. VetterCare veterinary professionals follow your veterinarian's instructions. If your pet is experiencing an emergency, contact your veterinarian or the nearest emergency animal hospital right away.

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