

## FLEA CONTROL

There are 4 stages to the flea lifecycle. These are:

- ' Egg
- Larvae
- Pupae
- Adult

95% of a household's flea population is comprised of eggs, larvae and pupae. The adult fleas that you see on your pet are only 5% of the flea population.

In the warm, humid months of the year the flea lifecycle receives a boost and you will notice an increase in the flea population with more adult fleas hatching and jumping onto your dog or cat. Unfortunately, living in Queensland, the mild winters mean that the flea lifecycle never lies dormant so treating your pet year round for fleas is necessary to maintain adequate flea control. The flea lifecycle can also increase during those very cool few weeks of the year when we need to heat our houses.

### Treating the Environment

95% of your flea problem is in the environment, not on your pet. To assist in effective flea control, it is important to treat the environment as well as your pets. Flea eggs, larvae and pupae do not like light, so they are often hiding in dark places. They will tend to be living out of the major traffic areas of your home, away from light and generally at ground level. Treating under all of your furniture is required when tackling the flea infestation in your home. Your dog or cat will generally not pick up fleas from another infested animal, but from an infested environment, so if your friends or family have animals that play together make sure that the environments they play in are flea free. A visiting dog, a neighbourhood cat or wandering wildlife can bring in carrier fleas which will start to breed in your home or garden and use your pet as their host to feed from.

#### Inside

- Vacuum all carpets
- Vacuum and apply flea spray down any crevices between tiles, floor boards and skirting boards
- Vacuum/mop and flea spray under furniture such as beds, cupboards and couches
- Vacuum the seat and floor carpet of your car (if your pet travels)
- Flea bomb rooms in the house where your pet spends time

#### Outside

- Dirt or paved areas underneath houses can often contain a large reservoir of dormant flea eggs and pupae. Try applying garden lime to the dirt or, in many cases, it is advisable to fence off dirt or paved areas underneath the house to prevent access by your pet.
- Wash out any concrete areas underneath the house
- Fence off areas in your garden that your pet sleeps in that are very shady and moist
- Keep your pet away from piles of mulch or garden refuse as this warm moist environment is a haven for fleas
- Thoroughly wash bedding and hang in the sun to dry (sunlight will help to kill eggs and larvae)
- Hose out kennels and sleeping areas
- Have your house and/or yard treated for fleas by a pest controller