

# Creepy Crawlies

## Worms

Dogs love to roll in smelly stuff. After a bath, the first thing they do is run into the garden to roll in grass, dirt, and even animal droppings. Nobody knows why they do this, but their wild counterparts, wolves and coyotes, do this too. Where there are droppings there can be worms. These spaghetti-like creatures that wriggle around make anyone squirm. Worms that cause illness in our cats and dogs can also cause serious harm to us.

### Roundworm

Roundworms are round, long, and tapered at both ends. They are large white worms that can range in length from 4 to 7 inches (10 to 18 centimeters). When eggs are eaten, they hatch into larvae (baby worms) that travel through the pet's body before ending up in the gut. There in the intestines (part of the body that absorbs nutrients), they feed off nutrients. Pets that have worms are often very hungry, have diarrhea (abnormal runny droppings), and lose weight.

The adult female worms lay eggs in the intestines. Their eggs are oval with a thick shell and are dark brown in color. They can only be seen under the microscope. Thousands of eggs can be passed in the droppings into the environment. Animals can get worms by accidentally eating the eggs in the droppings or in the grass. Some naughty dogs and cats eat their own droppings. This is a very bad behavior.



Roundworms



Roundworm  
eggs

### Did you know?

Roundworms can lay up to 100,000 eggs per day.