



Disease Control Measures for travelling abroad with your dog

If you are travelling abroad with your dog under the Pet Travel Scheme (PETS) you will already have to comply with the treatment for *Echinococcus Multilocularis* (a Tapeworm that we do not have in the UK). This is the only parasite that is currently controlled under PETS but there are many other disease carrying parasites that you should be aware of when taking your pet abroad.

For this reason we recommend a strict parasite control program for animals travelling outside the UK. This will protect your pet against all the major vectors they will encounter (Ticks, mosquitos and sandflies). This is not to comply with any regulation but for their own health and safety. Please consult your vet for more information on the appropriate products for your pet. You should also keep your dog indoors during periods of increased insect activity (dusk and dawn) and perform a daily check for new ticks, removing any that are found. (No tick prevention is 100% effective).

What diseases will my Dog be at risk from?

There are a number of protozoal and bacterial diseases found in continental Europe that can be transmitted to your dog via infected insects (vectors). These diseases include Babesiosis, Leishmaniasis, Hepatozoonosis Lyme Disease and Ehrlichiosis. These diseases are rarely seen in the UK and consequently, British dogs are unlikely to have developed any protective immunity to them. Your dog may also be exposed to a number of parasitic worms including the heartworm *Dirofilaria* and the tapeworm *Echinococcus Granulosus*. There also exists the small possibility of your dog being exposed to rabies (despite being vaccinated).

How will my dog be exposed to these diseases?

All the protozoa that cause the diseases mentioned above are transmitted by insects. Babesia, Hepatozoon and Ehrlichia are carried by ticks and Leishmania by a small biting fly called the sandfly. The heartworm is transmitted by biting mosquitoes. Echinococcus can be caught by eating the tape worm egg, usually in uncooked meat. Rabies is most commonly transmitted following a bite from a rabid dog or other animal.

How dangerous are they?

All of these diseases, with the exception of *Echinococcus*, are potentially life threatening. British dogs are unlikely to have any natural resistance to these diseases and may therefore be particularly badly affected.

Does the disease risk change in different areas and at different times of the year?

The areas where these diseases may be found are constantly enlarging. Some of these diseases are more common in certain places, or at particular times of the year depending on the distribution and feeding activity of the vectors (ticks and biting flies).

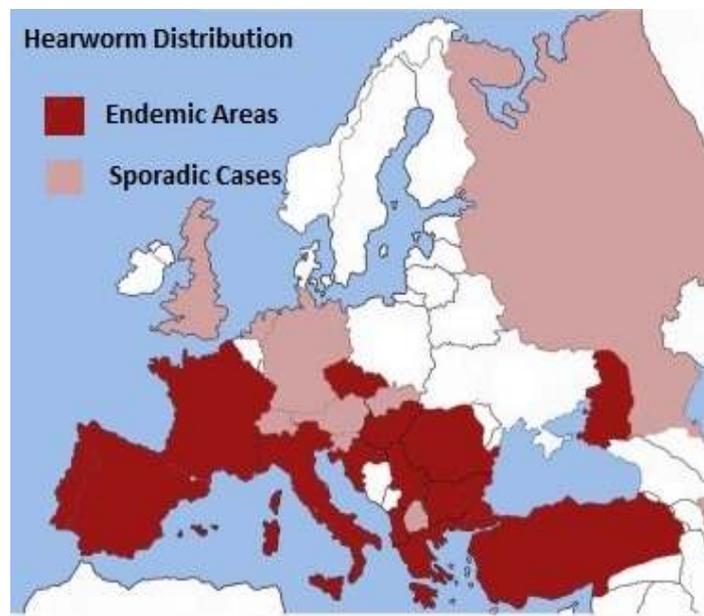
Sandflies carrying *Leishmania* are most common in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean basin, including Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain. The sandfly season stretches from May/June to September/October. They are most active at dusk and dawn so it is advisable to keep your pet indoors at these times.

Babesiosis (tick borne) is widespread in France and constantly evolving; it has been reported both in the South West and more recently, in Normandy and Paris. There is a peak of disease both in the Autumn and Spring, with the condition almost disappearing during the months of July and August. If you are travelling regularly you may want to have your dog vaccinated against Babesiosis. A vaccine is available in France for this purpose.

Ehrlichiosis (tick borne) is an important disease of dogs in Southern Europe and other areas of the Mediterranean basin.

Hepatozoonosis (tick borne) is seen in Southern Europe, Africa, Asia and South America. For more information on the distribution of ticks please visit www.fleatickrisk.com where you can enter your destination city.

Heartworm (transmitted by mosquito's) is endemic in some areas of Southern and Central Europe. This must be prevented as treatment once the disease is contracted can have life threatening consequences.



When will I need to start treating my pet?

Depending on your destination, month of travel and the parasites you are aiming to control, you may be advised to start treatment 1 month before you go and continue to treat for a month after you return. Please ensure that you leave enough time to get your treatment protocol in place, we recommend you discuss this with your vet at least 6 weeks before your intended travel date.

What do I do if my dog is unwell?

If your dog is unwell, lame, off its food or otherwise ill whilst you are abroad you should seek advice from a local vet. If on your return to the UK your dog develops a fever or other symptoms, including skin problems, you should seek advice from your vet and mention the fact that your dog has travelled abroad and may have been exposed to ticks and biting flies.

Whilst tick bites are usually required for transmission of Babesia, the possibility of other forms of transmission should not be overlooked. This should be borne in mind should your dog require a blood transfusion whilst abroad. The transmission of other protozoal parasites following a blood transfusion is also possible. The blood donor should be tested for these diseases before donating blood.

Is my pet insurance valid for travel?

Please check with your insurer to make sure that you will be covered while you are abroad.

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