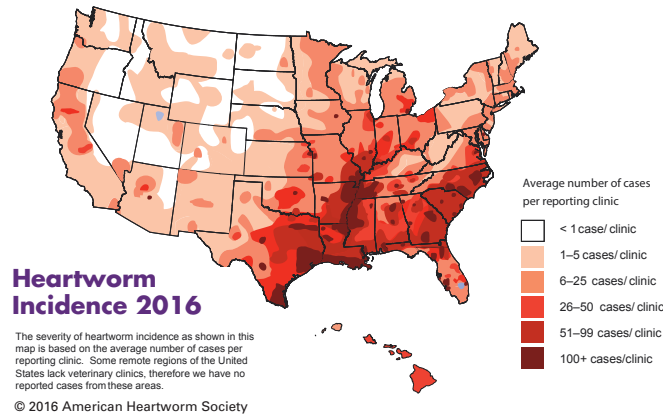


## Did you know?

- **Heartworms are spread by mosquitoes**—if there are mosquitoes in your area, your dog is at risk!
- **In addition to dogs, wildlife in your area can be a source of infection.** Mosquitoes that bite an infected fox, wolf, or coyote can then transmit the infection to unprotected dogs.
- **Even dogs that look healthy can be infected with heartworms**, so annual testing for heartworm disease is recommended.
- **Annual testing is critical** to avoid a delay in detecting early infection and starting life-saving therapy, as heartworms cause significant damage to your dog's heart and lungs.
- **Heartworm preventive medications are very effective** when given properly on the prescribed schedule. Combining prevention with a mosquito repellent is an even more effective strategy.
- **The best way to reduce the risk of heartworm infection in your dog is to give the preventive medication year-round.** Mosquitoes can survive 12 months a year, even in parts of the country where there is a cold winter, so all dogs are at risk.
- **While heartworm disease can be treated, prevention is always safer and more affordable** than treating adult heartworm infections.



## Heartworm disease is found in all 50 states.



**The cornerstone of heartworm management is prevention.**

The American Heartworm Society recommends year-round administration of a heartworm preventive medication and annual testing for heartworm disease for all dogs.



To learn more about the increasing threat of heartworm disease, talk to your veterinarian and visit the American Heartworm Society website at [www.heartwormsociety.org](http://www.heartwormsociety.org).

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## Are You Adopting a Dog from Another Area of the Country?



**Keep Them Safe. Love Them Always.**

Prepared by the American Heartworm Society and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians

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## Thank you for adopting a dog from another geographic area!

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The dog you are considering for adoption was transported to our shelter from a different area of the country, an area where heartworm infections may be more common than they are here.

Many animals that we transport to our shelter may be at a higher risk of euthanasia in their home state, so we are grateful that you are helping to save a life!

Your dog was recently tested for heartworm disease, and no signs of heartworm infection were detected. The dog you are considering may still be at risk for developing heartworm disease, even though the tests did not detect any signs of infection.

### What is heartworm disease?

Heartworm disease is a serious and potentially fatal disease in pets, spread by mosquitoes. The disease is caused by worms that can grow up to a foot long that live in the heart, lungs, and blood vessels of affected pets, causing severe lung disease, heart failure, and damage to other organs in the body. Heartworm disease is easy to prevent with regular use of preventive medication available through your veterinarian. Treating heartworm disease is more complicated.

The dog you are considering for adoption was transported to our shelter from a different area of the country, an area where heartworm infections may be more common than they are here.



### How could my dog be positive for heartworm after negative tests?

There are a number of reasons that dogs test negative but can become positive later. The most common reason is that they have an immature stage of the heartworm living in their body that cannot yet be detected. This can happen when you adopt a young dog, because it takes six months for the heartworm to mature after the dog is bitten by an infected mosquito. There may be no adult heartworms in your dog's body right now, but once an immature worm develops into an adult, tests are more likely to detect them.

We recommend you speak with your veterinarian and develop a plan to repeat the heartworm testing. After that, your veterinarian will help you with treatment options should your dog test positive for heartworm disease.

### What will my veterinarian recommend?

Your veterinarian may want to repeat the same diagnostic tests recently performed in a few months to ensure that your new pet is not infected with heartworms. This wait time will give any immature heartworms the chance to mature and be detected by conventional testing methods. Alternatively, they may recommend different types of tests to look for other signs of heartworm disease. In the meantime, it is very important to keep your dog on monthly heartworm preventive medication to prevent a new infection.

Testing and treatment (if needed) will help not only this dog, it will also prevent him or her from passing the infection along through mosquitoes to other dogs in your neighborhood!

**The American Heartworm Society has a convenient app to plan a heartworm treatment schedule:**  
[www.HeartwormToolkit.com](http://www.HeartwormToolkit.com)

### If my dog tests positive later, what will heartworm treatment be like for my dog?

Dogs with heartworm disease can live high quality lives as long as they are given appropriate care. Without treatment, however, heartworm disease will worsen and can lead to more serious illness in your dog's heart and lungs including heart failure.

While heartworm treatment is very effective, it requires patience as treatment takes place in stages over several months. Cage rest is a very important part of heartworm treatment, so you will have to plan to keep your dog quiet but entertained throughout the treatment period. One method of entertainment is to slow down feeding time by using a food-dispensing toy. Visit [www.heartwormsociety.org/battlingboredom](http://www.heartwormsociety.org/battlingboredom) for more ideas. Walking on a leash is necessary when your new dog goes outside and will enhance bonding with the new family.

### Will you pay for the dog's heartworm treatment?

As much as we would like to treat our shelter animals for all of their conditions, we simply cannot afford to do so. We are grateful to you for partnering with us to save this dog's life! Please speak to a member of our staff for information on our post-adoption medical expense policies.

**The veterinarians listed below understand the reasons for our testing policy, and are happy to see recently adopted dogs.  
Please make an appointment today.**