

UNDER THE WEATHER Hitting it Spot-on

It is incredible how technology has made our lives easier. This includes technology of drug delivery system in medicine.

We have grown up knowing standard drug delivery systems – taking medicines orally or by injections. There are several other ways medicines are delivered to the point of use. One of these is the application of spot-on drops.

What are spot-on drops? These are little tubes containing an oily suspension. This liquid is applied onto your pet's skin on 2-3 spots at the nape of the neck (where they cannot reach to lick it). The medicine then gets absorbed through the skin (percutaneously), and then gets distributed throughout the skin.

With just one dose, spot-on flea and tick treatments for pets provide month-long protection against potentially harmful parasites. Sounds like magic? It's not, it's modern medicine! Within twelve hours of application, nearly one hundred percent of all present fleas and ticks will be killed, as will any new parasites.

Spot-on treatments are convenient because they're easy to use and because they immediately repel harmful fleas and ticks. Ticks and fleas are deadly. A parasite-infested pet may show signs of fever, fatigue, a loss of appetite, and biting/scratching their skin. Ticks transmit Ehrlichia, Anaplasma, Babesia, Hepatozoon and other infections causing tick fever. A pet that eats a flea could even contract intestinal tapeworms, a dangerous parasite.

Spot-on flea and tick protection kills fleas at all life stages, which eliminates the risk of both internal and external parasites. Since many parasites can transmit disease with just one bite, it is important that your pet is protected without any gaps. Several pet parents make the mistake of using spot-on treatment every month for 2-3 months and



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discontinue when ticks/fleas are under control. This can lead to two things – if an infected tick bites the dog and falls off, your dog will still get tick fever without you realising that the problem is due to a tick bite. Also it needs just a single mother tick to climb on to your pet. Once it gets enough blood, it drops off and starts breeding in your house, laying hundreds of eggs. Which is why one needs to be regular with spot-on treatment.

How do spot-on treatments work? Spot-ons contain ingredients that are neurotoxins specific to adult parasites. Some products also contain ingredients to prevent larvae from developing. The oily liquid in which the medication is dissolved helps spread the product

over the surface of the skin to the sebaceous glands. These ingredients kill as well as repel parasites.

There are herbal spot-on treatments available, however, I have seen they are not as effective as the standard products from reputed companies. If used correctly according to body weight, spot-on drops are extremely safe to use once in a month, lifelong.

Your pet should not be bathed for two to three days after spot-on application in order to allow it to be fully absorbed. If you have more than one pet, they should all be treated together at the same time, even if you don't see ticks or fleas on all of them.

There is an overwhelming array of spot-on drops available in India today – *Fiprofort*, *Protektor*, *Advantage*, *Advantix* – which one can choose depending on whether your pet has ticks, fleas, skin mites or a combination of the above.

Whichever product you use, make sure you use it regularly and indefinitely to protect your pet from infections. In this busy city life, you have a lot of things to worry about, ticks and fleas on your furry one shouldn't be one of them. 🐾

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