

# **They're Back!**

## **Are Your Pets Prepared for Flea and Tick Season?**

Fleas and ticks are back in large numbers. As the weather gets warmer, their population begins to increase. Sometimes as pet owners, we feel that no matter what we do, we cannot get control of these pests in our environment. We watch our pets scratch themselves into a frenzy, and we wonder what we can do. There was a time when all we had available were flea collars and shampoos. But as generations of fleas and ticks continued to multiply, they developed resistance to commonly used flea control products. Ticks are even harder to control because they are larger and hardier than fleas. Some pesticides were found to have terrible effects on some of our pets. They can even prove to be fatal for sensitive animals.

After spending lots of time and money, researchers finally developed a few products that are completely safe for dogs and cats (and people), but are deadly to fleas, and in some cases, ticks. These products are truly a wonderful breakthrough. Once these topical products are applied to your cat or dog, they stay active and potent on the pet's skin for up to a month. Any flea or tick that crawls onto your pet will come into contact with this product which will begin to paralyze its nervous system and eventually lead to its death. Two very safe products which were developed are called "Advantage" and "Frontline Plus." The difference between the two products is that "Advantage" will kill only fleas, and "Frontline Plus" kills both fleas and ticks. The maker of "Advantage" also has another product called "Advantix", that will also kill ticks, but it cannot be used on cats. The truth is, however, that very few cats have a tick problem because they are

constantly licking, cleaning, and grooming themselves, which effectively keeps ticks away.

The products I have mentioned are all effective and safe. Beware of other products that are similarly packaged because there are a number of "copycats" on the market that are actually watered down pesticides that do not work well and can be very dangerous for pets and may even prove to be lethal for sensitive animals. The products I have mentioned here are also fairly water-proof meaning daily swims and regular baths are no problem. These safe and effective products are approved by the manufacturers for sale only through your local veterinarian's office. Beware of cheap advertisements which can be for out-of-date products or even overseas products that have different labeling and safety implications because they have not been approved by either the FDA or EPA for sale in the United States. Veterinarians treat far too many pets that have had a bad reaction to products bought over the internet or from unapproved vendors. So, if you feel your fight against fleas and ticks has become a losing battle, stop by your veterinarian's office to pick up the correct products. Soon all of us will be sleeping soundly with no fear of nests of fleas and ticks in our houses and yards.