

Don't use your dog's flea and tick medicine on your cat!

Sharing isn't always caring—especially when it can cause harm to your cat. Learn why dog flea and tick preventives should never be used on cats and what you can do to keep your feline friend safe.



What you know: Flea and tick preventives promote long-term health and wellness

When you give your cat flea and tick preventive medication, you protect its outsides and its insides because fleas and ticks carry bacteria and parasites that can cause serious and even fatal disease in domestic cats.

What you may not know: Dog and cat flea and tick preventives often aren't created equal

Many prescription and over-the-counter flea and tick medications that are labeled for dogs (usually ones you apply topically rather than have your dog swallow) contain a synthetic compound called permethrin, which is safe for dogs but toxic to cats. If a product containing permethrin is mistakenly applied to a cat or eaten by one, it can cause seizures, coma and even death.

Partner with your veterinary team to keep your cat safe (from fleas, ticks and toxic compounds)

Flea and tick products that contain permethrin should always be labeled for use in dogs only. Some of these products also contain warnings to never use on a cat, but these warnings are sometimes small and hard to read.

If you buy flea and tick products from your veterinarian's office or from your veterinarian's online pharmacy (instead of from a big box store), the products should come with a prescription label that clearly states whether the product is safe for cats. You also have the benefit of being able to get direct guidance from your veterinary team on the best products for your cat for total peace of mind.

Safety tips

- 1 Store your dog's flea and tick products separately from the products for your cat. Since they have similar packaging and small print, it's easy to grab the wrong product by mistake. Speaking of keeping things separate, keep your dog away from your cat right after applying flea and tick medicine, as even close contact with permethrin can harm your cat.
- 2 Never split single doses of flea and tick medication between your dog and cat. In addition to toxicity concerns, dosing will be incorrect. Your pets won't get the protection they need, which could cause a flea infestation or tick problem.
- 3 If you ever have a question about your pet's flea and tick products, speak up! Your veterinary team is always ready to help—even if you decide to buy your pet's preventives somewhere else.