

Natural Treatment Solutions to Take the Scare Out of Heartworm

The signs of heartworm depend on the number of worms and on the size of the dog. Dogs with only a few worms might test positive but remain asymptomatic. In dogs with larger heartworm loads, the first signs typically surface after the infection is well established and some damage has already been done to the heart and organs. These symptoms include exercise intolerance, a mild cough and, as the disease progresses, weight loss and lethargy. If your dog tests positive for heartworm, you will need to decide whether to pursue conventional treatment or alternative options.

Conventional Treatment

One of the reasons veterinarians are so intent on preventing heartworms is because the treatment for them is dangerous and toxic. The compound used can be damaging to the internal organs such as the kidneys and liver and the dead heartworms that are released from the heart into the lungs can cause clots and damage to various organs.

The product that kills mature heartworms in dogs contains the active ingredient melarsomine dihydrochloride (immiticide). This medication is injected in either two or three doses. A three dose treatment works best, as it prevents too many adult worms from dying at once and causing circulatory shock. In a three dose treatment, the dog is injected once, followed by two more injections a month later.

While undergoing treatment, dogs should be kept indoors for a month and any physical activity that will increase the heart rate must be strictly avoided. The reason for this is to minimize the above risk of circulatory embolism.

Ivermectin can be used in mildly affected dogs. While it doesn't kill adult heartworms, it will reduce their lifespan and sterilize them and prevent new infections. If you choose to give your dog conventional heartworm treatment, I recommend giving *Arsenicum album* 6C twice a day for at least a month following conventional heartworm treatment. This will help the body to detox from the toxins.

After this, consider using milk thistle seed to cleanse and tone the liver. Dandelion also reduces congestion in the liver and can even help with jaundice. The leaves work as a liver tonic and the root will cleanse and detoxify the liver.

Dandelion is also an excellent herb for kidney health. You can make dandelion tea by placing two tablespoons of dried dandelion or several plants into two cups of boiling water. Steep for 15 to 20 minutes then refrigerate and give your dog two tablespoons per day.

Alternative Treatment

Many years ago I came upon a combination alternative heartworm treatment using the herb black walnut along with the homeopathic remedy *Arsenicum album* 6C twice a day for a few months. This combination sometimes worked and sometimes didn't.

In my experience, the following combination of homeopathic remedies, all mixed together and given twice a day over a period of a few months has proven to be much more successful.

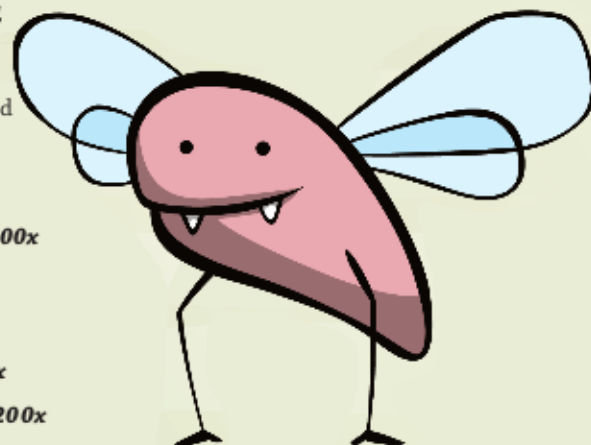
***Croton tiglium* 9x, 20x, 30x, 200x**

***Lycopersicum es.* 9x, 20x, 30x**

***Tanacetum* 9x, 20x, 30x**

***Allium cepa* 9x, 20x, 30x, 200x**

***Allium sativum* 9x, 20x, 30x, 200x**



Mix all of these remedies together in these potencies and give a few drops orally, twice a day for three months. Combining these different potencies of the same remedy produces what is called a potency chord. These work on a number of different healing levels in the body at the same time, and can be faster acting and more effective than other methods.

After two months, ask your vet to run an Occult heartworm test twice a month to monitor your dog's progress. It may take two to five months for testing to show as negative but I've had great success with it.

If Your Dog Is Very Ill

If the heartworms have caused serious damage to your dog's heart, or if he is older or has a kidney or liver problem, you may want to use the above treatment concurrently with *Crataegus* (hawthorn) tincture to strengthen the heart; give a few drops three to four times a day, along with CoQ10 (30 to 100 mg twice a day) to boost the metabolism in the heart muscle and detoxify the body.

If you opt for conventional treatment, remedies and herbs to help with existing kidney or liver problems can also be used before and after treatment if needed.

Homeopathy and herbs can be used to safely treat heartworm in dogs or to protect and detoxify the liver and kidneys after conventional treatment. Please remember that heartworm can be a serious disease and it is very important to find a holistic veterinarian who will work with you if you decide to use alternative treatment options. Heartworm can be treated with less collateral damage to the other organs. 🐾

Since beginning her holistically oriented veterinary practice over 25 years ago, Dr Khalsa has been incorporating homeopathy, acupuncture, Chinese herbs, nutritional advice, allergy elimination techniques such as NAET and also JMT into her approach. Dr Khalsa is a Fellow and Professor of the British Institute of Homeopathy.