



# MSD Animal Health Global Survey Reveals Gaps in Flea and Tick Prevention, Highlights Need for Year-Round Care

## Pet owners share challenges in maintaining flea and tick care

Fleas and ticks pose a year-round threat to both pet and human health, potentially transmitting serious infections and diseases like tapeworms and Lyme disease.

The recent Pet Owner & Vet Perspectives on Parasite Treatment and Prevention: A Global Survey from MSD Animal Health, reveals critical gaps in pet owner adherence, knowledge of flea and tick threats, as well as preferences for treatment options. The survey underscores the need for consistent, year-round flea and tick prevention – particularly as recent data links warmer temperatures to the expanding geographic spread of fleas and ticks.



## Flea and Tick Risks Rise with Warmer Temperatures Year-Round, Yet Most Pets Aren't Fully Protected



**Changes in the climate are attributed to the expansion of fleas and ticks in more geographic regions than ever before.**

- Recent data illustrates that the world has experienced the hottest decade in history.<sup>1</sup>
- Data shows that warmer average temperatures can mean longer warm seasons, earlier spring seasons, shorter and milder winters and hotter summers, creating conditions that might become more hospitable for many carriers of vector-borne diseases.<sup>2</sup>
- A vector is any organism – such as fleas, ticks or mosquitoes – that can transmit a pathogen, or infectious agent, from one host to another.<sup>3</sup>

**Fleas and ticks pose serious health risks to both pets and humans, yet many pet owners underestimate the need for consistent, year-round protection.**

**82%** of pet owners see fleas/ticks as a threat to their pet's health and

**75%** see them as a threat to their own health and their family's health

**Pet owners who have had a flea/tick problem:**

**62%** of indoor/outdoor cat owners

**51%** of dog owners

**Pet owner awareness of threats with fleas and ticks:**

**Skin irritation 88%**

**Tapeworms 85%**

**Lyme disease 84%**

**Percentage of pet owners who consider fleas and ticks to be harmful**

**59%** harmful to pets

**53%** harmful to themselves and their family

**55% of veterinarians report more than 50% of pet owners aren't administering year-round flea/tick prevention**

**Despite the possible threat of fleas and ticks, the vast majority of pet owners allow pets on furniture and beds:**

**79%** of indoor/outdoor cat owners

**89%** of dog owners

## Routine Check-Ups are the Ideal Time to Address Flea and Tick Care



Veterinarians are **4x more likely** than pet owners to define flea and tick season as year-round.

**Parasite prevention is a common topic during routine check-ups, usually initiated by the veterinarian.**

**According to about half of pet owners, veterinarians initiate the discussion around treatment**

**57%** of dog owners

**56%** of indoor/outdoor cat owners

**Veterinarians in Europe, the Middle East and Africa are more likely to offer flea/tick treatments as part of routine care.**

(93% dog appointments, 91% cats).

**This is less common compared to veterinarians in North and South America.**

**84%** of dog appointments

**80%** of indoor/outdoor cat appointments

**Veterinarians estimate on average**

**24%** of clients

**don't bring their pets in annually, often due to financial constraints.**



## Veterinarians Express Doubt Over Pet Owner Compliance Despite Pet Owner-Reported Confidence in Administering Treatment

**While most pet owners feel confident administering treatments, veterinarians doubt their compliance.**

**83%** of pet owners feel confident

**74%** of veterinarians worry about consistency of administration

**Many veterinarians feel a majority of their clients:**

**55%** do not administer treatment year-round

**43%** administer treatment late

**41%** miss doses

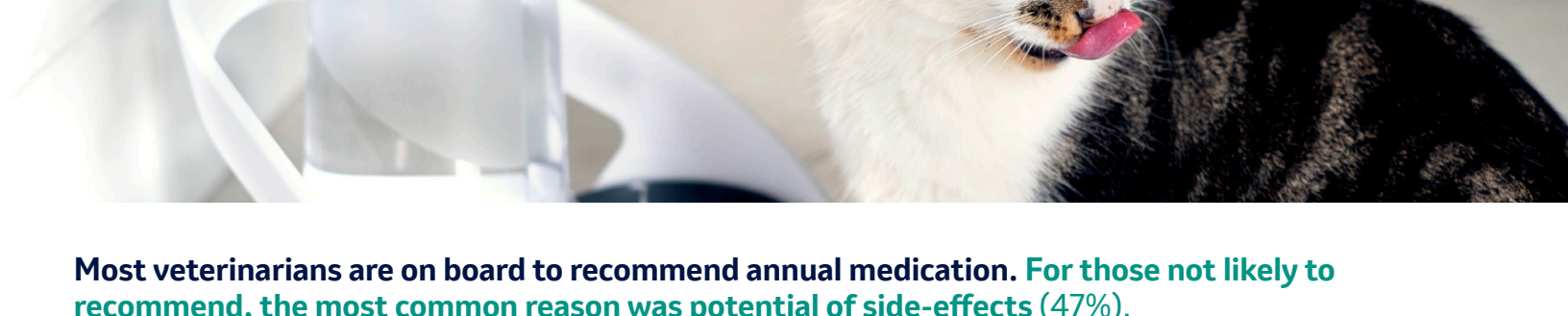
**Veterinarians are right to be concerned.**

**51%** of cat owners

**46%** of dog owners

**Reported they have forgotten to administer treatment to their pets in the past year.**

## Veterinarians and Owners are Open to Less Frequent Parasite Treatment, Pending Safety Data



**Most veterinarians are on board to recommend annual medication. For those not likely to recommend, the most common reason was potential of side-effects (47%).**

**65% of veterinarians** are likely to recommend an annual medication option

**55% agree** they would prefer to treat less frequently

**76% are open** to less frequent administration



## Trust in Prescription (Rx) Treatments Remains Strong Globally, But Regional Preferences Vary

**Rx treatments are generally trusted more and are viewed as more effective than over-the-counter options.**

**79%** of pet owners trust Rx options "fully/a lot."

**71%** of veterinarians view Rx options as more effective.

**Oral medications and collars are the most popular solutions among owners.**

Percent dog owners who use:

**oral medications 42%**

**collars 36%**

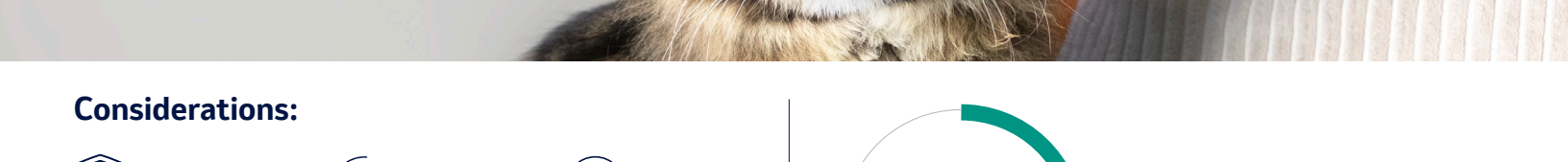
Percent indoor/outdoor cat owners who use:

**sprays 35%**

**oral medications 34%**

**collars 33%**

## Length of Effect & Safety of Treatment are Pet Owner's Top Priorities



**Considerations:**

**Safety is the most important consideration overall (37%)**

**Duration of effect (31%)**

**Minimal side effects (30%)**

**75%** of pet owners are likely to try a once-yearly flea/tick medication.

**The most important criteria for vets when recommending flea/tick treatment is:**

**Ease of administration (65%)**

**Minimal side effects (65%)**

**Broad-spectrum efficacy (64%)**

**Veterinarians play a big role in making treatment recommendations for pet owners and prioritize ease of use and duration of effect.**

Ninety percent (90%) of veterinarians agree that cat/dog owners rely on them to provide recommendations about flea/tick prevention.



## Stay Educated on Flea/Tick Diseases & Discuss Prevention with Your Veterinarian



**Flea and tick risks can vary widely by region.**

Stay informed by speaking with your veterinarian about local threats, key symptoms to watch for, and treatment options that support year-round prevention.

**For more information, visit**

**[www.msd-animal-health.com/fleaandtick-global-survey](http://www.msd-animal-health.com/fleaandtick-global-survey)**

### Survey Methodology:

The Pet Owner & Vet Perspectives on Parasite Treatment and Prevention: A Global Survey was conducted by Savanta on behalf of MSD Animal Health among n=4,072 pet owners and n=582 veterinarians in 15 countries. Pet owners were adults 18+ who own a dog and/or cat. Pet owner sample size by country: Australia & New Zealand n=268, Brazil n=318, Canada n=277, China n=256, France n=257, Germany n=259, Italy n=283, Japan n=289, Mexico n=286, Peru n=286, Poland n=296, Spain n=294, United Kingdom (UK) n=276, United States (U.S.) n=427.

Veterinarians worked at least 10 hours a week in practice and treat both dogs and cats. Veterinarian sample size by country: Australia & New Zealand n=40, Brazil n=43, Canada n=43, China n=52, France n=41, Germany n=41, Italy n=42, Japan n=24, Mexico n=52, Peru n=40, Poland n=38, Spain n=42, United Kingdom (UK) n=42, United States (U.S.) n=42. The research was conducted online between December 23, 2024 and January 28, 2025.

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<sup>1</sup> Sonenshine DE. Range Expansion of Tick-Disease Vectors in North America: Implications for Spread of Tick-Borne Disease. Int J Environ Res Public Health. 2018 Mar 9;15(3):478. doi: 10.3390/ijerph15030478. PMID: 29522469; PMCID: PMC5877023.

<sup>2</sup> World Meteorological Organization. State of the Global Climate 2024 (WMO-No. 1368). WMO; 2025. Accessed April 17, 2024. <https://library.wmo.int/viewer/69455/7offset-#page=32&viewer=picture&picture=bookmark&n=0&q=>.

<sup>3</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. "Climate Effects on Vector-Borne Diseases." CDC. [https://www.cdc.gov/climate-health/media/pdfs/VECTOR-BORNE-DISEASE-Final\\_508\\_1.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/climate-health/media/pdfs/VECTOR-BORNE-DISEASE-Final_508_1.pdf). Accessed April 17, 2025.