











Pet Owner & Vet Perspectives on Parasite Treatment and Prevention: A Global Survey

2025





Background and objectives

MSD Animal Health commissioned research to explore:

- The gaps in pet owners' knowledge about the threat of fleas/ticks, and the subsequent gaps in preventative care.
- Understand veterinarians' role in flea/tick education.
- Pet owner and veterinarian attitudes, usage, and recommendations of products currently in the market.





Methodology



Respondent Profile



Pet Owners Respondents who own a cat and/or dog



Veterinarians

Veterinarians who work at least 10 hours per week in their practice and treat both dogs and cats.



Sample

4072 pet owners and 582 veterinarians across all markets, recruited via an online panel.



Markets

Australia, New Zealand, UK, France, Germany, Italy, the U.S., Brazil, Mexico, Peru, China, Japan, Spain, Poland, Canada.



Survey length and fieldwork

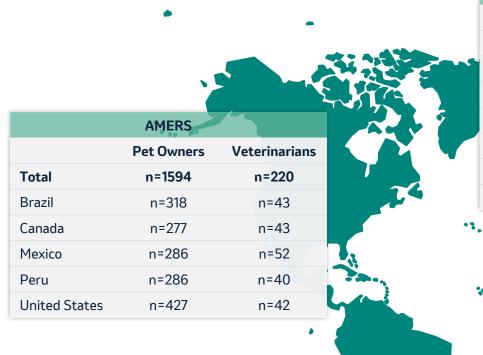
Pet Owners Median: 11 minutes | Dec 23, 2024 - Jan 21, 2025

Veterinarians

Median: 11.5 minutes | Dec 27, 2024 - Jan 28, 2025

Throughout the report, percentages are rounded and may not total exactly 100%.

Methodology: Sample by Country



EMEA						
	Pet Owners	Veterinarians				
Total	n=1665	n=246				
France	n=257	n=41				
Germany	n=259	n=41				
Italy	n=283	n=42				
Poland	n=296	n=38				
Spain	n=294	n=42				
United Kingdom	n=276	n=42				

	APAC	
	Pet Owners	Veterinarians
Total	n=813	n=116
Australia & New Zealand	n=268	n=40
China	n=256	n=52
Japan	n=289	n=24



Methodology: Key subgroups of interest

Throughout the report, we have included callouts to indicate where specific groups of pet owners and veterinarians respond statistically significantly different than their peers. Results were tested at a 95% confidence level.

Below are the specific groups we explored:

Pet Owner Groups of Interest			Veterinarian Groups of Interest				
Experience with flea/ticks			Gender				
Ever experienced	n=1968	Never	n=2104	Male	n=211	Female	n=370
	How define flea/tick season			Years in practice			
Year-round	n=408	Not year-round	n=3664	10 or less years	n=272	Greater than 10 years	n=310
Pet ownership experience			View Rx a	as more effec	tive than OTC treatments		
1 st time owner	n=1039	Experienced owner	n=2999	Rx more effective	n=414	Do not view Rx as more effective	n=166

Animal Health

Executive summary

01

Parasite prevention is commonly discussed during routine check-ups.

Routine check-ups often include discussions and treatments for flea/tick prevention – most often initiated by the veterinarian. EMEA veterinarians are more likely to offer these treatments as part of the routine check-up.

04

Whilst most pet owners feel confident administering flea/tick treatments, veterinarians doubt pet-owner compliance in doing so.

While most pet owners view flea/tick treatment as essential, many admit to difficulties and inconsistencies in following treatment instructions. This validates vet concerns about pet owner consistency and accuracy when administering treatments.

02

The large majority of pet owners see fleas/ticks as a threat to their pet and themselves/family.

82% see fleas/ticks as a threat to their pet and 75% see as a threat to themselves/family, yet vets report a gap where large portions of concerned pet owners are not complying with treatment, saying over half do not administer year-round.

05

Preference for an annual preventative injection is high among pet owners and vets.

More than three-quarters would prefer a vet administered treatment and the same number would be open to a treatment requiring less frequent administration and place trust in yearly injections. And, length of effect is one of the top considerations when picking a treatment.

03

Only a minority of pet owners treat for ticks/fleas year-round.

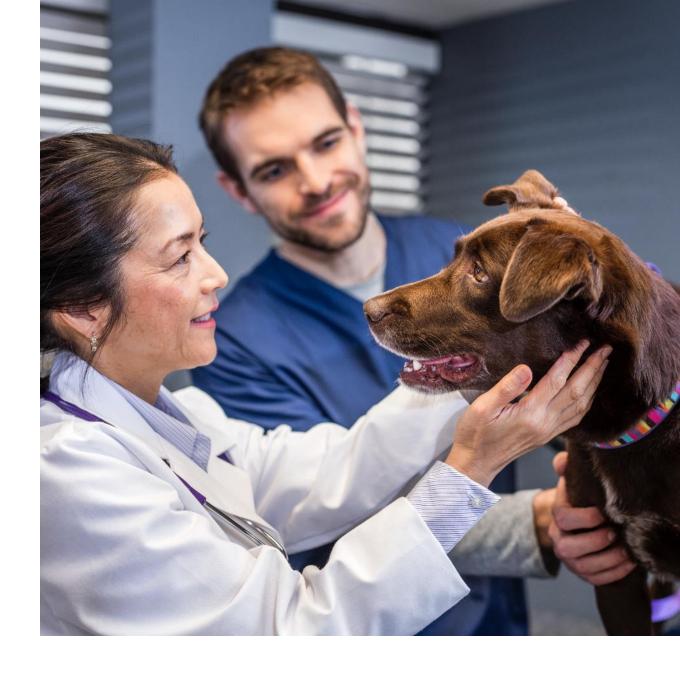
Prescription (Rx) treatments are generally trusted more than over-the-counter, though this is less pronounced in APAC. Oral medications and collars are the most popular solutions among owners, and most recommended among vets.

06

There is openness among pet owners for vetadministered or less frequent treatment options.

Veterinarians prioritize ease of use, minimal side effects, and efficacy in their recommendations. Two-thirds of vets are on board to recommend annual injections if minimal side effects and efficacy can be proven. Those unlikely to recommend a yearly injection worry about side effects.

Pet owner and veterinarian profiles





Pet owner profile

Gender



e

Female 49%

Dog and cat ownership

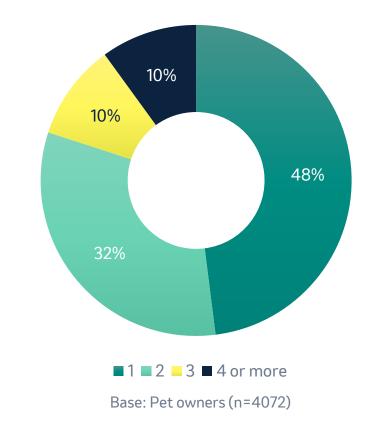


Dogs 77%

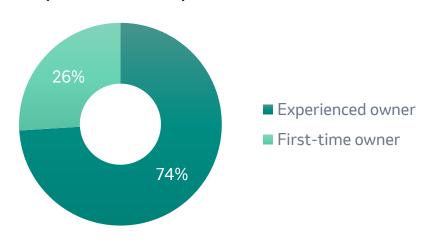


Cats 56%

Number of pets in the household



Experience with pets



Experience with fleas and ticks



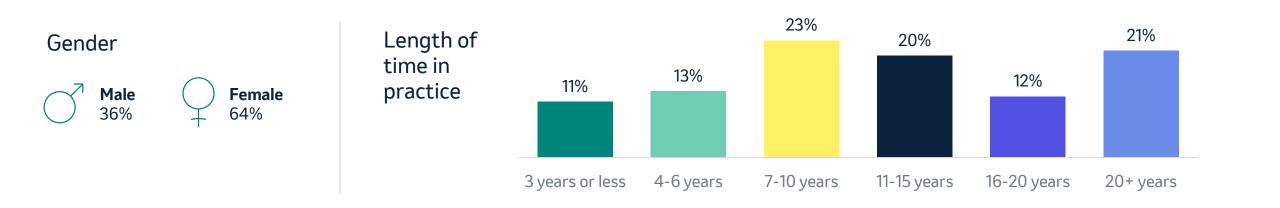
48%

have experienced an issue



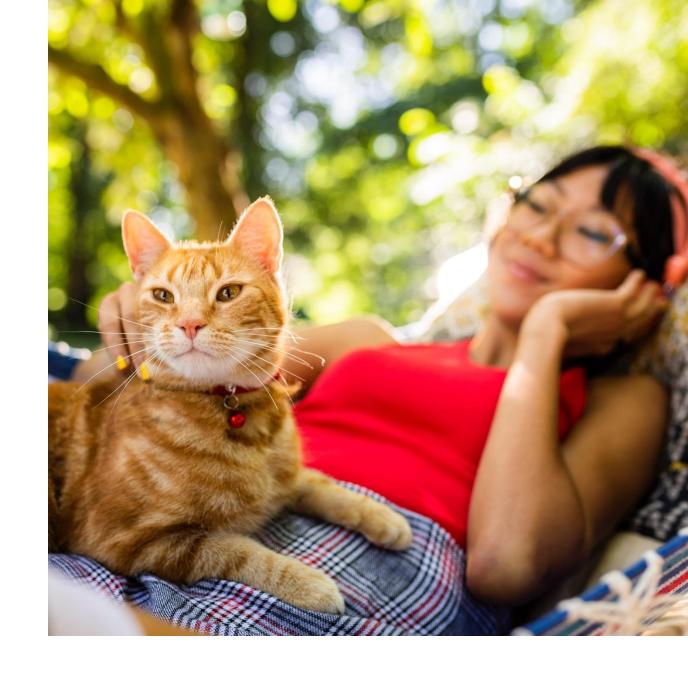


Veterinarian profile





Current pet care practices



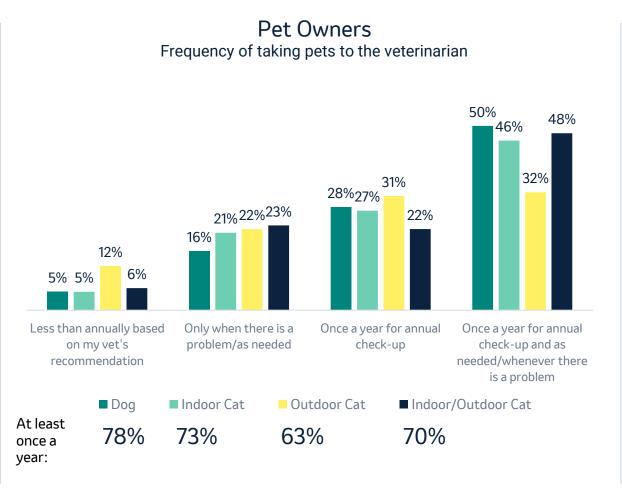


Most pet owners are attending the vet at least annually

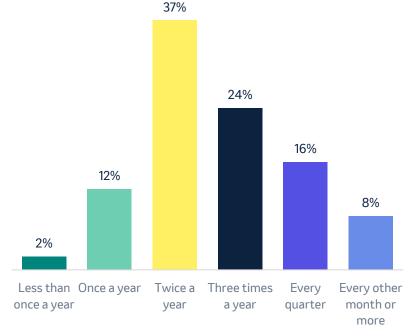


Pet owners who are more likely to go more than annually:

- Experienced pet owners [Dog and indoor cat owners only]
- Define flea/tick season as yearround [Dog owners only]









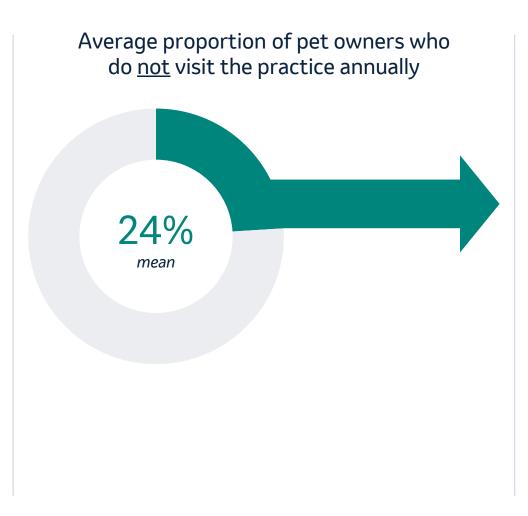


Vets estimate a quarter of their clients do not bring their pet annually, most commonly due to financial constraints

Vets with higher average proportion not visiting annually:

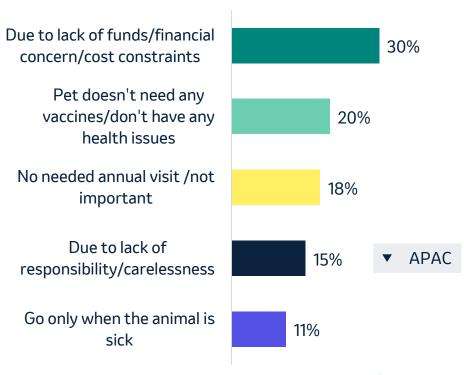
- Fewer years in practice
- Do not view Rx as more effective

Vets in AMERs cite higher proportions of owners not coming in annually (30% mean vs. 20% EMEA, 22% APAC)



Top 5 reasons why pet owners do not come in annually

(based on coded responses)

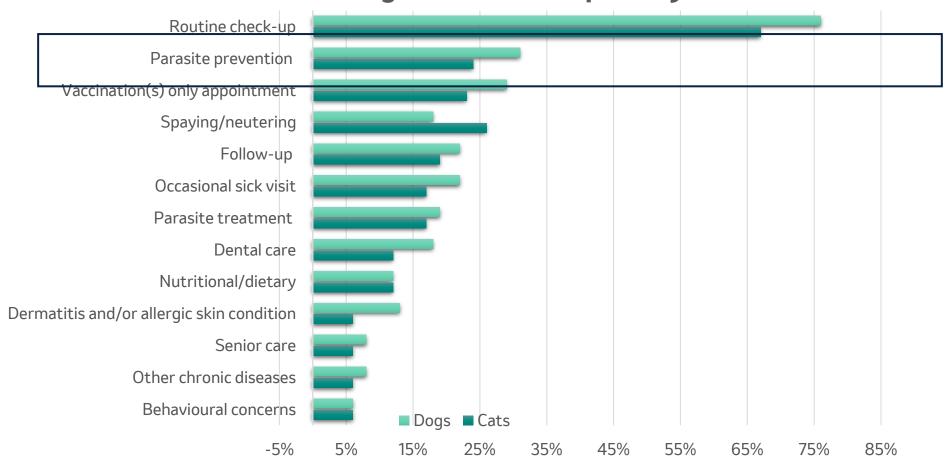






Parasite prevention and vaccinations are among the most common reasons for visiting the veterinarian, particularly among dog owners

Reason for visiting the vet in the past 2 years







During routine appointments, vets most commonly initiate discussions of flea/tick treatments/preventative medications

Discussions of flea/tick treatments and/or preventative medications at routine appointments in the past 2 years

	Dog (A)	Indoor Cat (B)	Outdoor Cat (C)	Indoor/Outdoor Cat (D)
Flea/tick treatment discussed at routine appointment	82% ^B	76%	90% ^B	83% ^B
Vet brought it up	57% ^B	52%	71 % ^B	56%
Owner brought it up	26%	24%	19%	26%

LETTER INDICATES SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE VS. INDICATED SUBGROUP AT A 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL



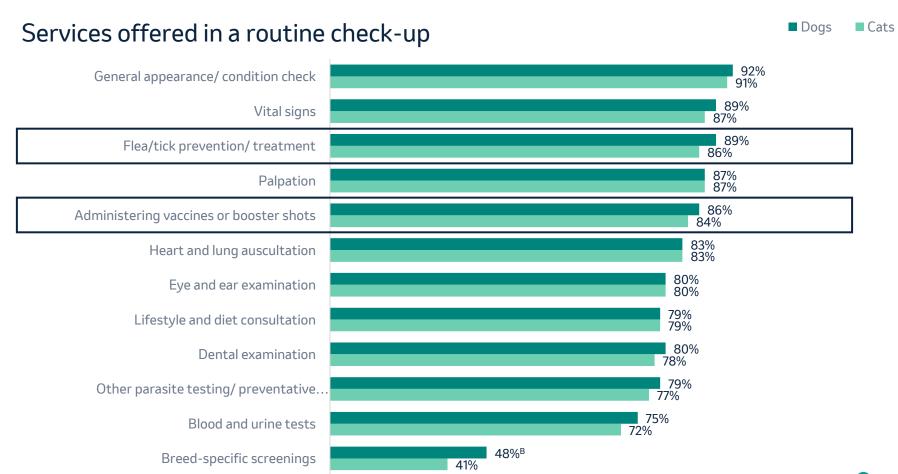


Vets emphasize discussing and providing these preventions/treatments as a part of check-ups

Vets more likely to say they offer flea/tick prevention for both cats and dogs:

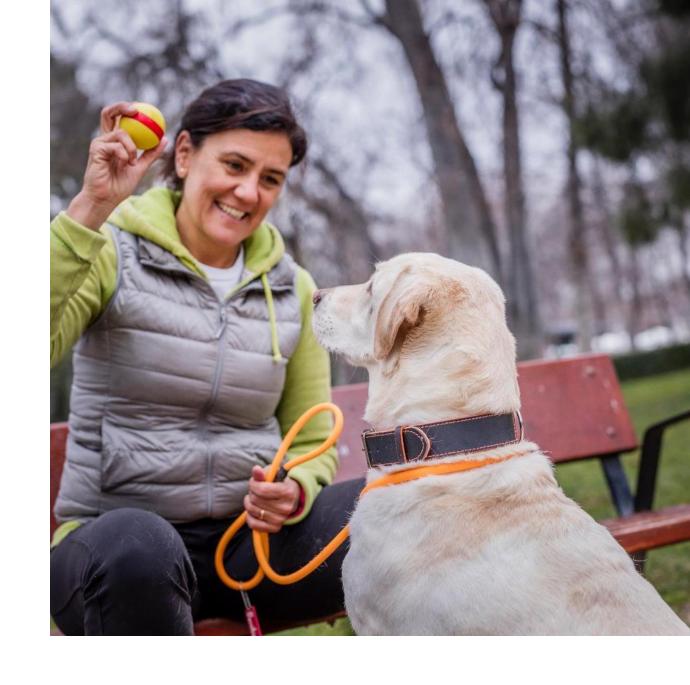
- Female vets
- 10+ years in practice
- View Rx as more effective

Offering flea/tick prevention/treatment as part of a routine check-up is a more common practice among EMEA veterinarians.



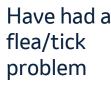


Threat of fleas and ticks

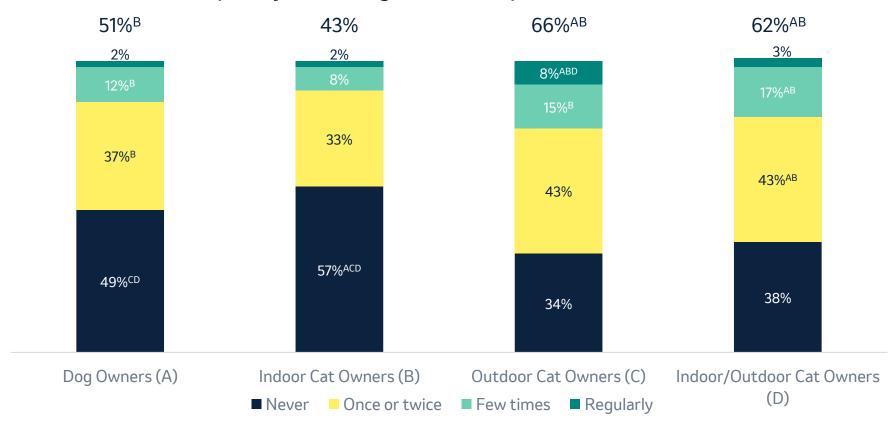




Owners with pets that spend time outdoors are more likely to have had flea/tick problems in their home



Frequency of having a flea/tick problem in the home





While most pet owners are aware of skin irritation, tapeworms, and Lyme disease, knowledge around other conditions is more luke warm, leaving many pet owners uninformed

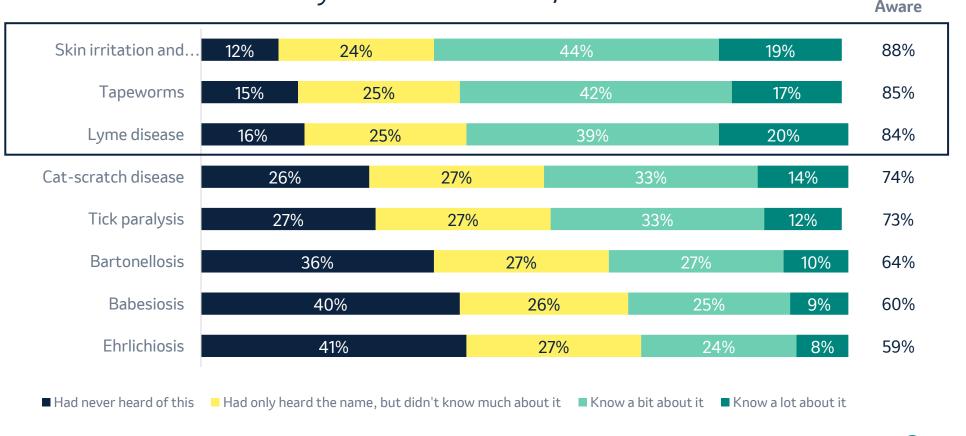


Owners more likely to be aware of threats:

Have flea/tick experience

Pet owners in APAC display greater awareness of Cat-scratch disease, tick paralysis, and babesiosis compared to AMERS and EMEA; Lyme disease awareness is higher in EMEA

Awareness and familiarity with threats of ticks/fleas







Globally, pet owners are highly aware of flea/tick threats to their pet and family's health

Agreement that fleas/ticks are a threat to health is more pronounced among dog owners, and owners of cats that live both outdoors and indoors.

Perceived threat of fleas/ticks

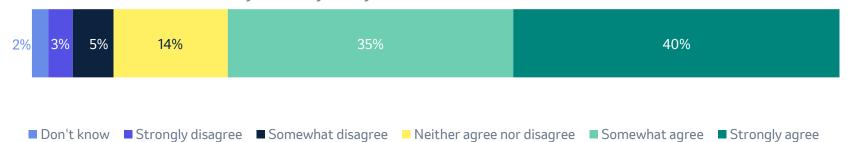
Flea/ticks are a threat to my cat and/or dog's health



Agree

Global	AMERS	EMEA	APAC		
82%	84%	83%	77% ▼		

Fleas/ticks are a threat to my own / my family's health



75%	78%▲	75%	70% ▼
1370	7070	1370	7070





And more than half of pet owners consider this a moderate or severe threat

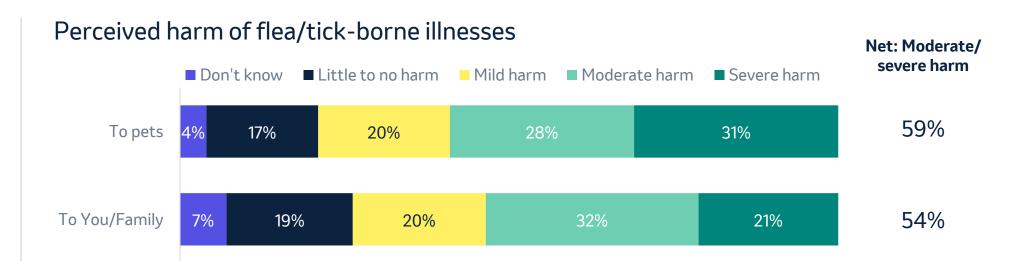
Owners more likely to believe fleas/ticks are harmful to pets:

- · Have flea/tick experience
- Do not define flea/tick as year-round
- 1st time owners

Owners more likely to believe fleas/ticks are harmful to humans:

- Define flea/tick as year-round
- · Experienced owners

However, *flea/tick borne illnesses* are seen as a less serious threat in APAC, compared to AMERS and EMEA regions, despite the generally warmer and humid climates in APAC.



Moderate/severe harm	AMERS	EMEA	APAC
To pets	4 65%	57%	▼ 48%
To you/family	58 %	55%	▼ 43%

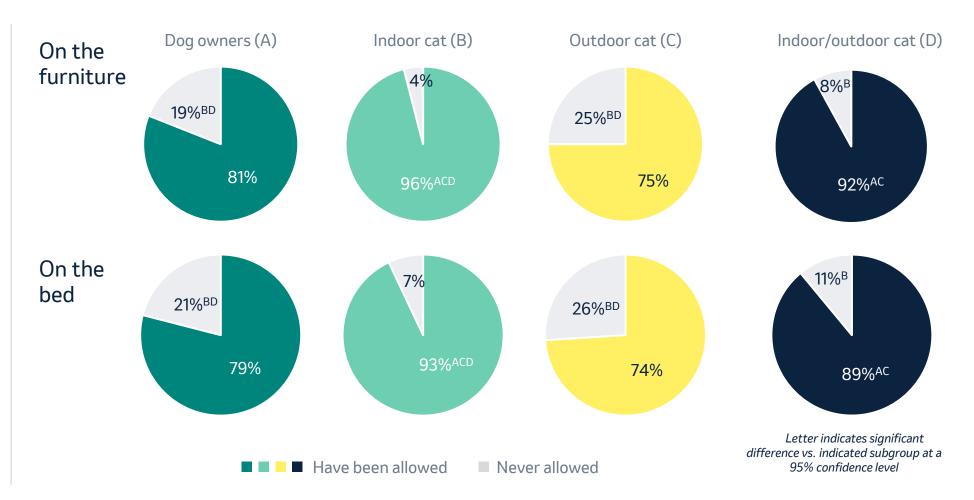






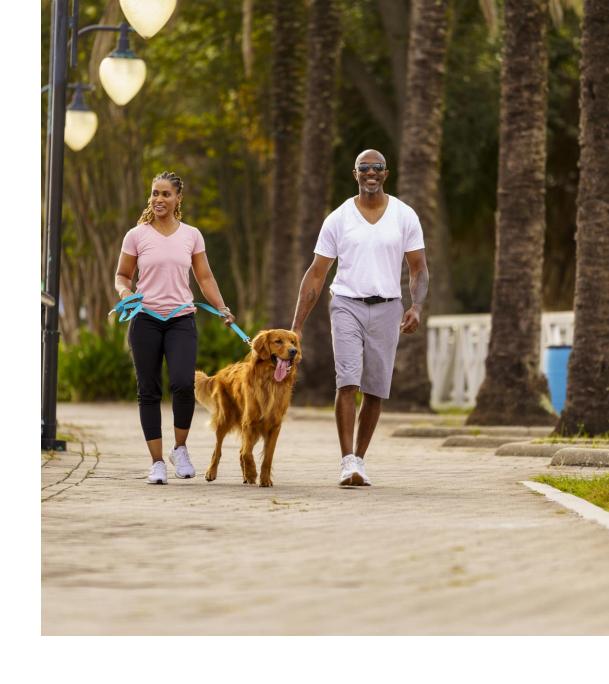
Despite the possible threat of fleas and ticks, the vast majority of pet owners allow pets on furniture and beds

Interestingly, previous issues with fleas and ticks do not have a significant impact on whether the cat or dog is allowed on the furniture, or on the bed.





Usage and recommendation of flea/tick treatments and prevention

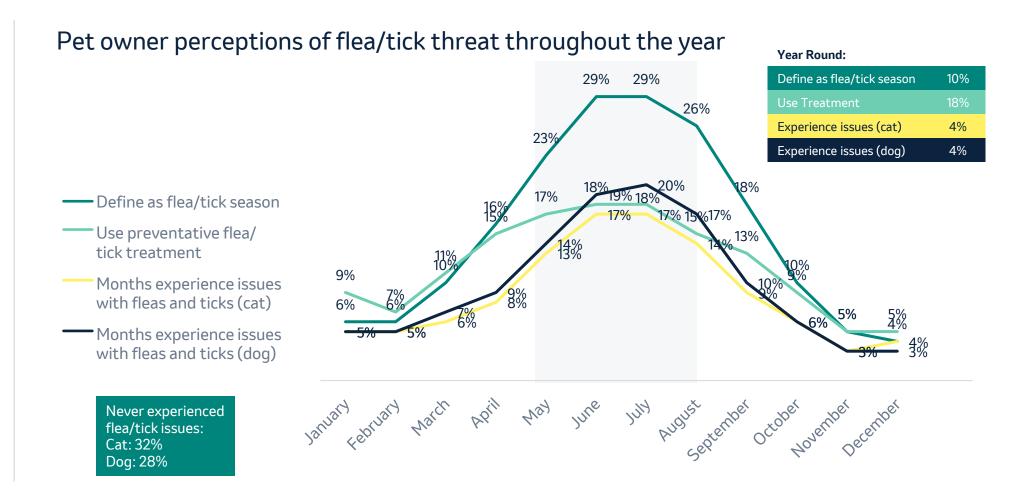


According to pet owners, flea/tick season peaks in the summer, with treatment and experienced issues following the same trend; less than 1 in 5 treat year-round



Owners more likely to define flea/tick season as year-round:

- Never experienced flea/tick issue
- · Experienced owners



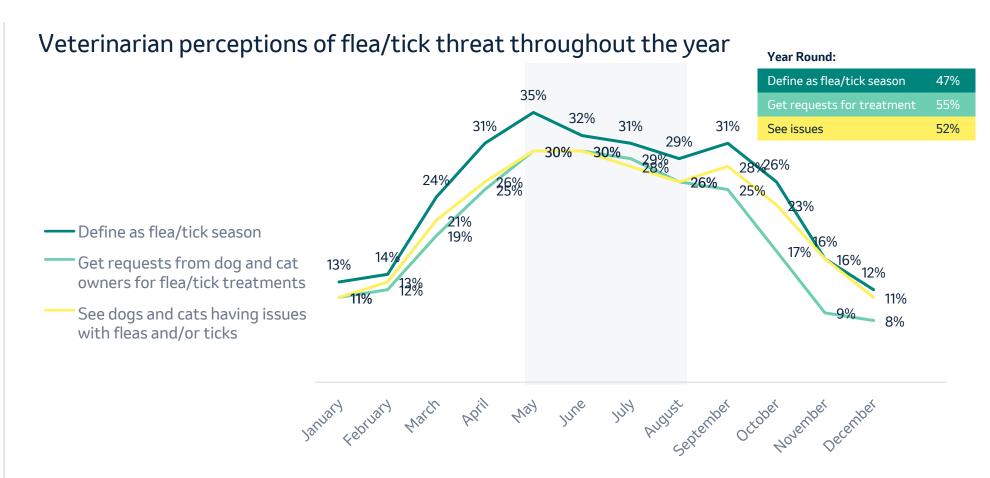




In contrast, around half of veterinarians define the flea/tick season as year-round

Vets more likely to define flea/tick season as year-round:

- Female vets
- View Rx as more effective

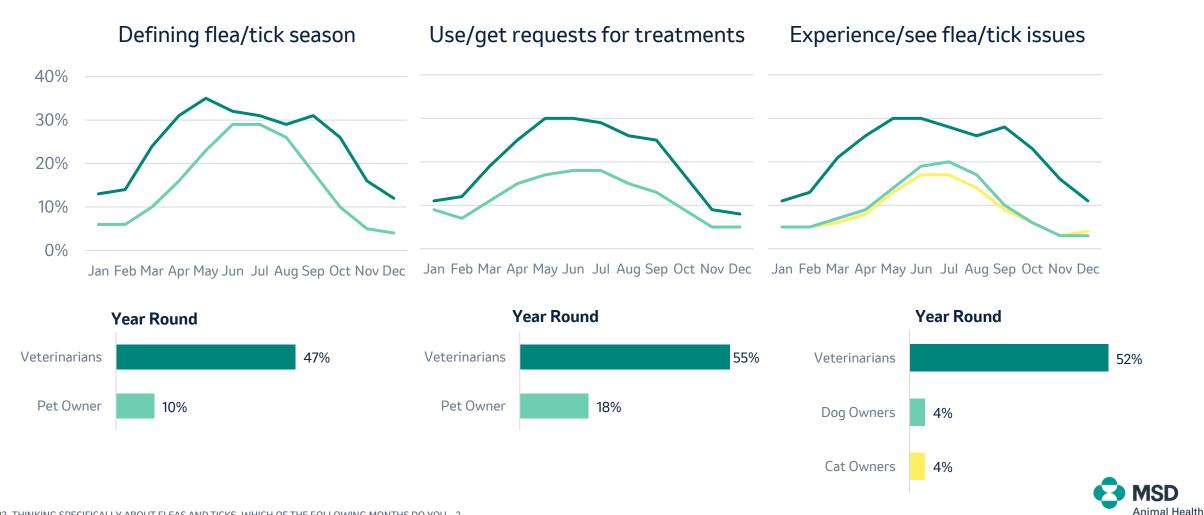






Vets are over four times more likely to define flea/tick season as year-round, while pet owners emphasize the summer months







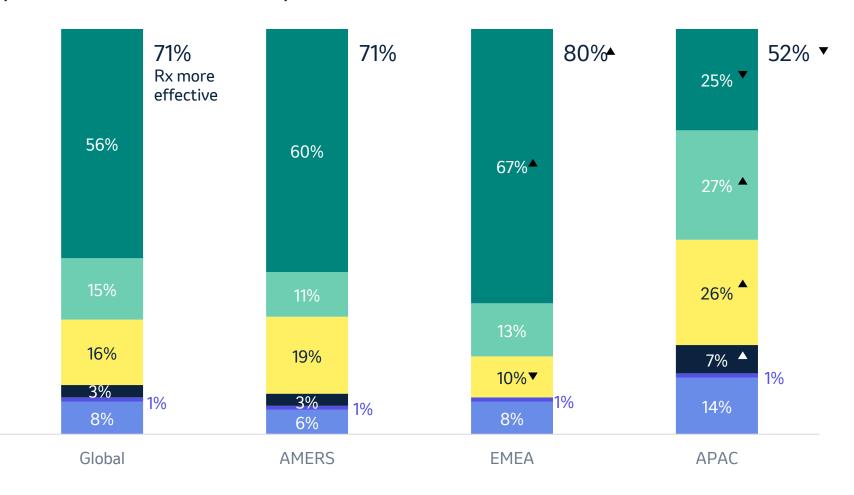
Veterinarians generally consider Rx solutions more effective than OTC, though to a lesser degree in APAC

Veterinarian perceptions of effectiveness of prescribed vs OTC flea/tick medications

- Prescribed solutions are much more effective than OTC solutions
- Prescribed solutions are somewhat more effective than OTC solutions
- Both solutions are equally effective
- OTC solutions are somewhat more effective than prescribed solutions
- OTC solutions are a much more effective than prescribed solutions
- I have no preference, as long as pet owners are using something

▼/ ▲ = SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER/HIGHER VS. GLOBAL AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL

Market Note: Please be aware that in Brazil, Mexico, and Peru, oral treatments are available over the counter. This should be taken into account during the analysis of the results.

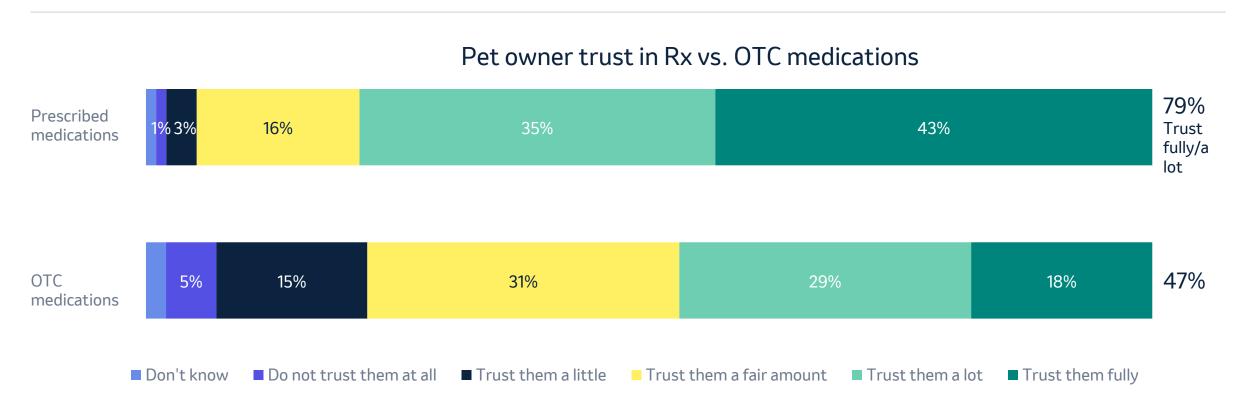




Mirroring vets, nearly 4 in 5 pet owners trust Rx options, while less than half say the same for OTC

Owners more likely to trust OTC medications:

· Have flea/tick experience



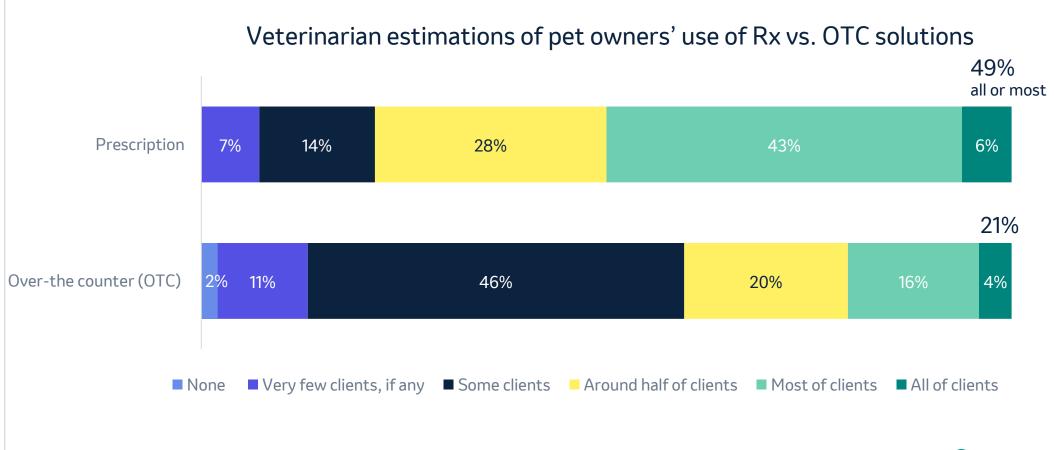




Half of vets believe that all or most of their pet owners use prescription flea/tick treatments/preventative medication

In EMEA, 52% say that all or most of their clients use Rx medications, compared to 40% in APAC.

Conversely, 33% of vets in APAC report that all or most of their clients use OTC medications, compared to 25% in AMERS and 11% in EMEA.





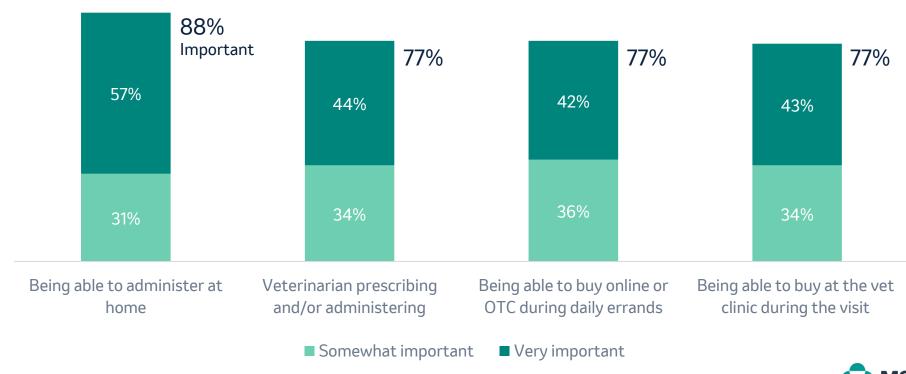


While pet owners place more trust in Rx options, in practice, the ability to buy in-store is just as important to them as purchasing from the vet

Owners more likely to find these considerations important:

Have flea/tick experience

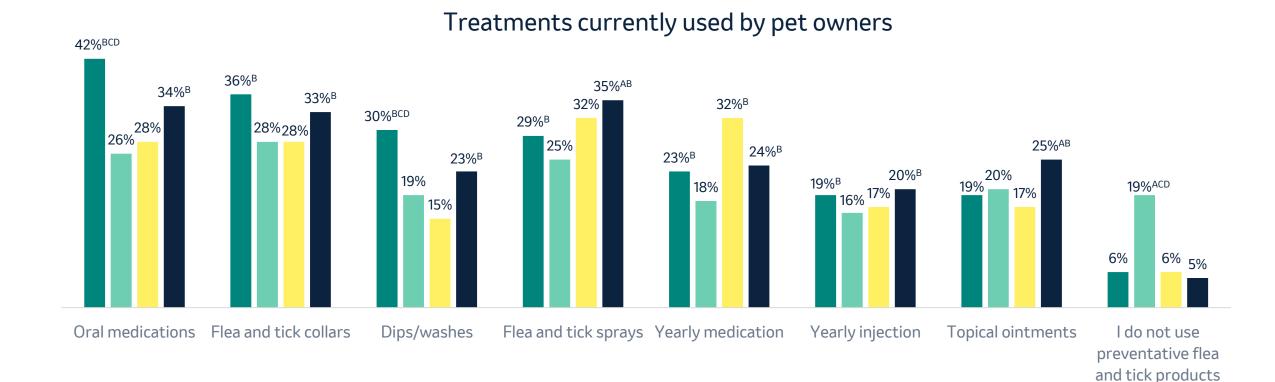
Importance of considerations for flea/tick treatment and preventative medications







Oral medications and flea/tick collars are the most popular solutions among pet owners



■ Dog Owners (A) ■ Indoor Cat Owners (B) ■ Outdoor Cat Owners (C) ■ Indoor/Outdoor Cat Owners (D)



regularly



Flea/tick treatment usage varies by region

Treatments currently used by pet owners: by region

	Dog Owners				Cat Owners			
	Total	AMERs	EMEA	APAC	Total	AMERs	EMEA	APAC
	n=3,145	n=1,307	n=1,242	n=596	n=2,292	n=924	n=946	n=422
Oral medications (pills, chews, and/or tablets)	42%	44%	37% ▼	45%	30%	31%	26% ▼	34%
Flea and tick collars	36%	31% ▼	46% ▲	26% ▼	30%	30%	33%	24% ▼
Dips/washes	30%	36% ▲	22% ▼	30%	21%	23%	15% ▼	29% ▲
Flea and tick sprays	29%	26% ▼	32%	30%	30%	28%	30%	32%
Yearly medication	23%	24%	21%	23%	21%	23%	20%	22%
Topical ointments	19%	19%	14% ▼	27% ▲	22%	22%	17% ▼	35% ▲
Yearly injection (for prevention and treatment, not vaccination)	19%	22% 🔺	21% 🔺	5% ▼	18%	22% 🔺	20%	4% ▼
Other	1%	2%	2%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%
I do not use preventative flea and tick products regularly	6%	7%	5% ▼	8%	12%	11%	13%	14%

^{▼/ ▲ =} SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER/HIGHER VS. GLOBAL AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL





And, are the most recommended or administered solutions among veterinarians, especially in EMEA

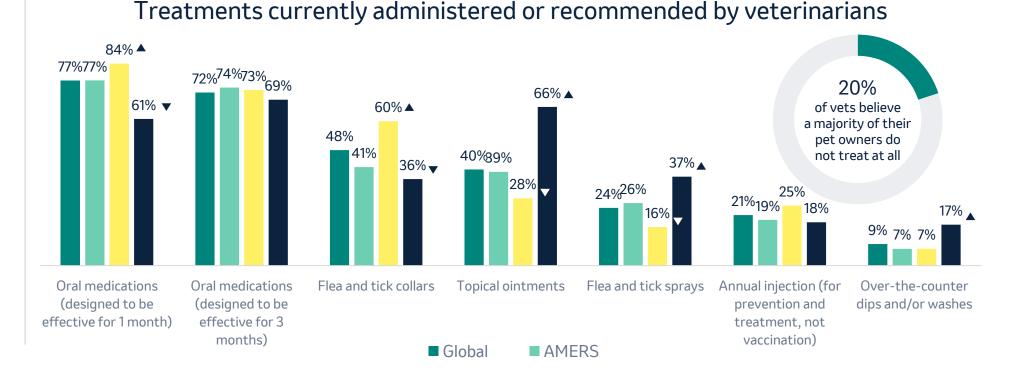
Vets more likely to administer or recommend...

Injections:

• Fewer years in practice

Sprays:

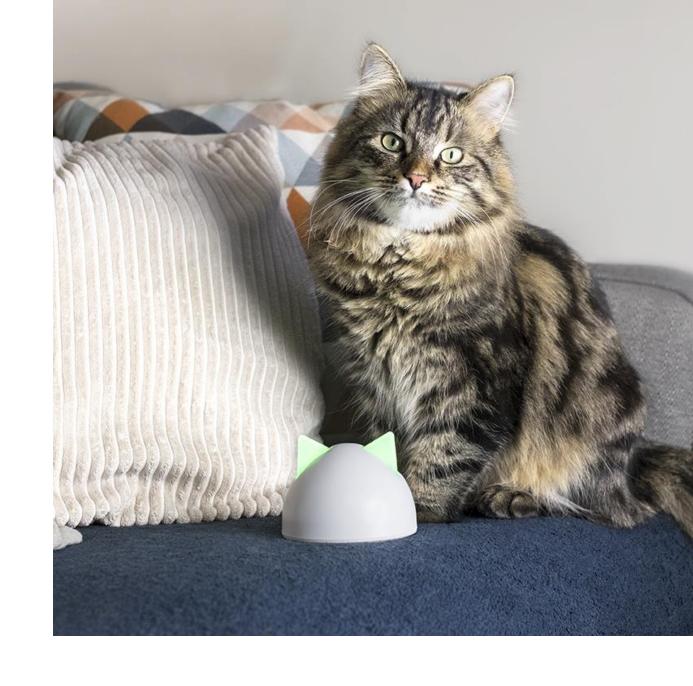
 Do not view Rx as more effective



▼/ ▲ = SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER/HIGHER VS. GLOBAL AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL



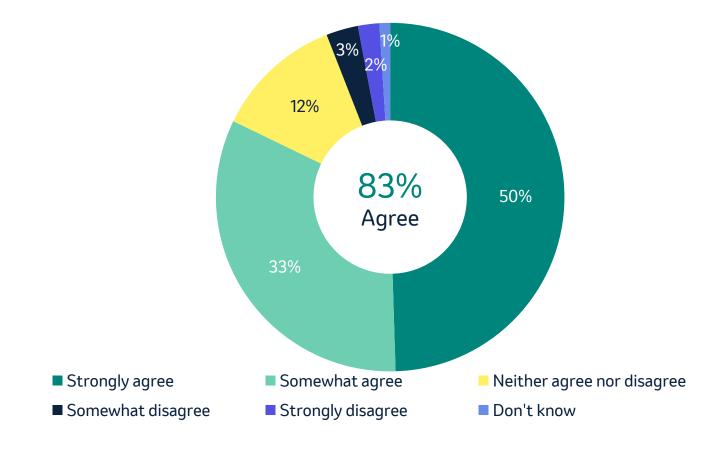
Compliance with flea/tick treatments and prevention





8 in 10 pet owners consider flea/tick treatment a crucial part of pet care

"Flea/tick treatment is a crucial part of my cat and/or dog's health care"

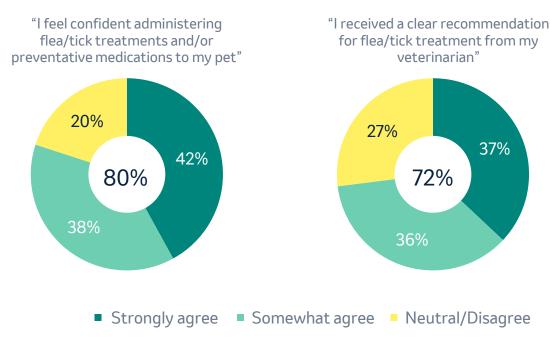






Pet owners display high confidence in administering treatment and highlight the importance of vet recommendations and instructions

Agreement with confidence and clarity in treatment



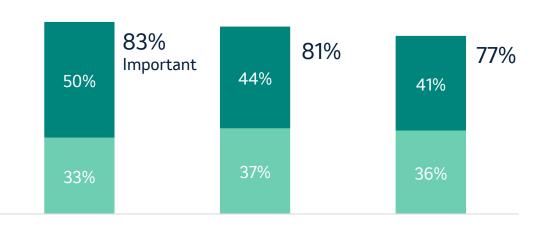
Owners more likely to agree:

- Experienced pet owners
- · Define flea/tick season as year-round
- Have flea/tick experience

Owners more likely to agree:

Have flea/tick experience

Importance of considerations for flea/tick treatment and preventative medications



Vet instructions on the Vet recommendation of Vet reminding you to best way to administer the best brand treat/ use

- Somewhat important
- Very important

Owners more likely to find this consideration important:

- 1st time owners
- · Define flea/tick season as year-round
- Have flea/tick experience [more likely to find all important]





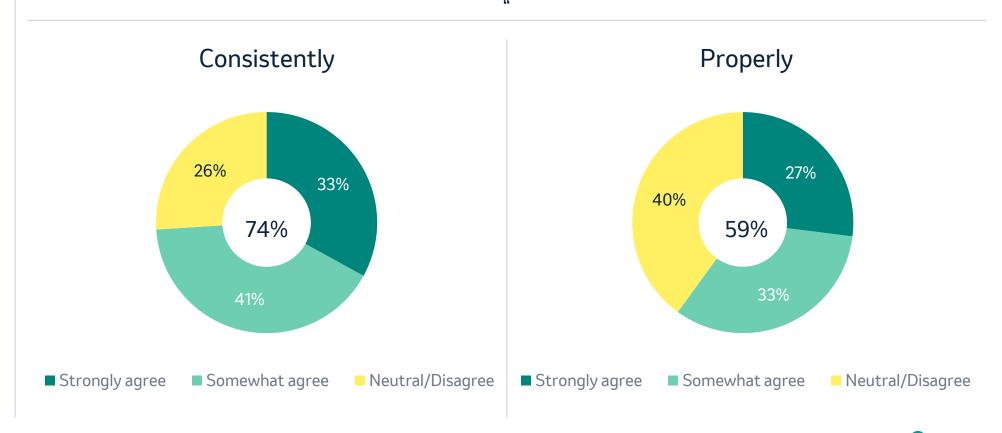
However, veterinarians are worried about the consistency and accuracy of flea/tick prevention administration among pet owners

Vets more likely to agree:

• Fewer years in practice

Agreement with

"I am worried pet owners who come into my practice are not administering flea/tick prevention...





"Some vets believe that a majority of their clients exhibit specific aspects of non-adherence, including not treating year-round, administering late, or missing treatment all together



Vets more likely to feel a majority of their clients...

Administer late:

 Do not view Rx as more effective

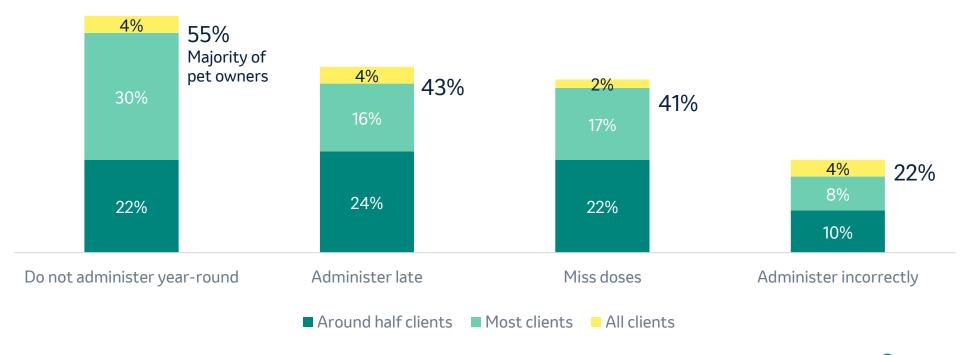
Miss doses:

 Do not view Rx as more effective

Administer incorrectly

- Male vets
- Do not view Rx as more effective

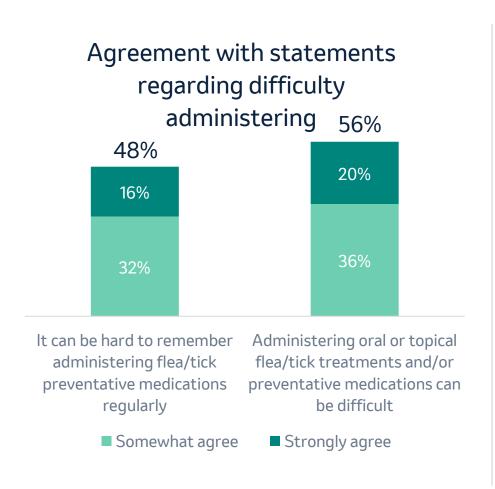
Estimations of pet owners' compliance with specific aspects of treatment

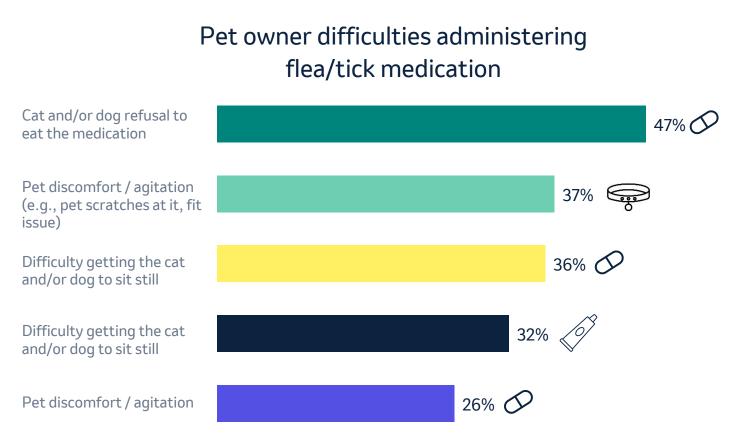






Veterinarians may be justified, as around half of pet owners admit that administering flea/tick solutions can be difficult







Q29. TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE OR DISAGREE WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS?
FULL SCALE: STRONGLY AGREE, SOMEWHAT AGREE, NEITHER AGREE NOR DISAGREE, SOMEWHAT DISAGREE, STRONGLY DISAGREE, DON'T KNOW
BASE: PET OWNERS (N=4075)

Q30. WHAT ARE THE DIFFICULTIES HAVE YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED WHEN ADMINISTERING ORAL OR TOPICAL FLEA AND TICK TREATMENTS AND/OR PREVENTATIVE MEDICATIONS?

BASE: PET OWNERS WHO FIND IT DIFFICULT TO ADMINISTER ORAL/TOPICAL FLEA AND TICK TREATMENTS/PREVENTATIVE MEDICATIONS (N=2288)



Many pet owners admit to less than adherent approaches to administering flea/tick treatments

Treatment administration frequency

	Oral Medications		Topical Ointments		Flea/Tick Collars		Flea/Tick Sprays	
	Dog owners (A)	Cat Owners (B)						
Monthly	32%	30%	32%	34%	24%	23%	27%	25%
Once per year	19%	23% ^A	16%	15%	20%	25% ^A	14%	15%
Only during flea/ tick season	21%	22%	26%	22%	29%	25%	33%	36%
When I remember to	3%	3%	6%	6%	5%	6%	7%	5%
When see a flea/ tick on them	4%	5%	7%	6%	4%	5%	10%	9%
As indicated on the label	21% ^B	16%	14%	16%	17%	16%	10%	9%

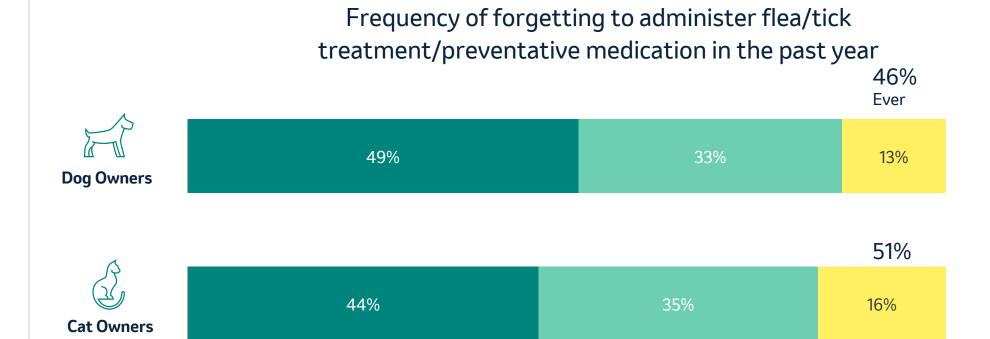




And over the past year, about half of pet owners admit to occasionally forgetting to administer treatment

Dog owners more likely to have forgotten treatments in the past year:

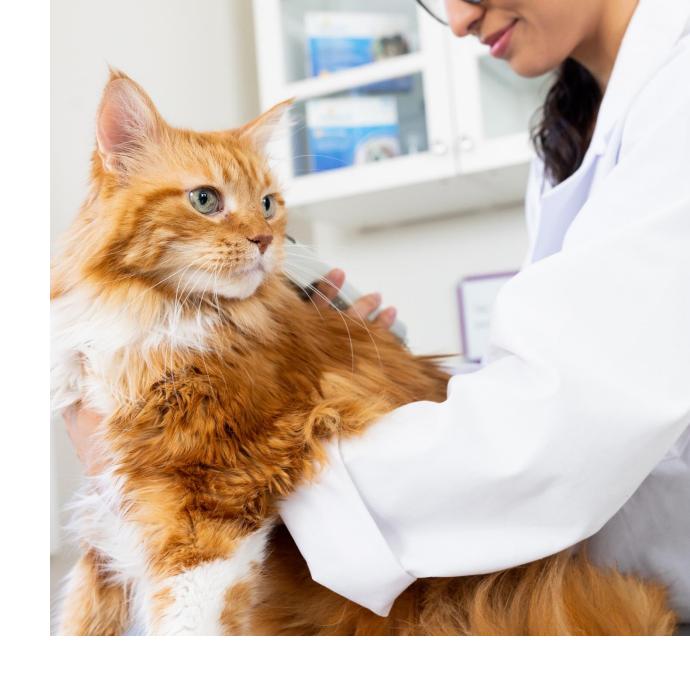
- Have flea/tick experience
- Do not define flea/tick season as year-round





■ Never ■ Once or twice ■ Three or more times

Perceptions towards a yearly medication





Animal Health

Openness exists for vet-administered or less frequent treatment options, and half would even prefer it

Owners more likely to be open to a treatment administrated less frequently:

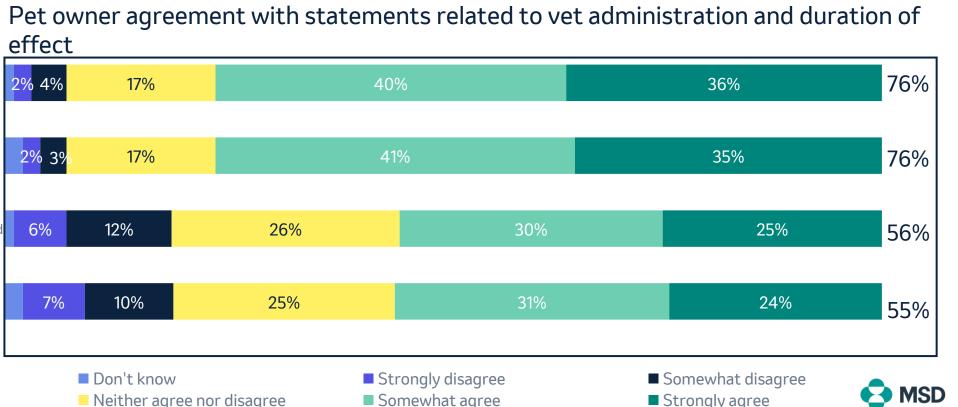
Have flea/tick experience

I would be open to explore new flea and tick treatments and/or preventative medications that are administered by a veterinarian

I would be open to explore new flea/tick treatments and/or preventative medications that require less frequent administration

I would prefer flea/tick care to be handled by the veterinarian

I would prefer to treat my cat and/or dog for fleas/ticks less frequently





Most pet owners are comfortable giving two medications for parasite control if they are the most effective

Pet owner agreement with statements related to protecting fully for parasite control



I am okay to give two medications to give my pet the needed parasite control if that is the best medicine (e.g., one for heartworm and one for flea/tick)



I will only give flea/tick medication that also includes heartworm medication







Pet owners place high trust in oral medications and yearly options

Owners more likely to trust all options:

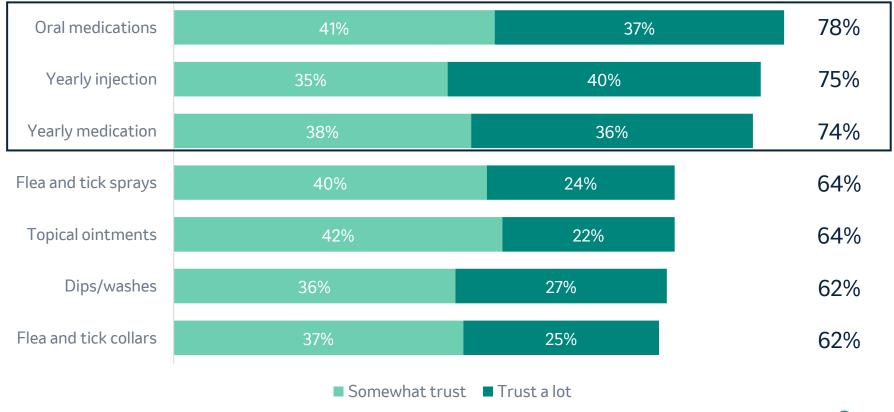
- Have flea/tick experience
- Do not define flea/tick season as year-round

Those who define flea/tick season as year-round are more likely to *distrust*:

- Collars
- Dips/washes
- Sprays

Trust in yearly injection is notably higher in the AMERS region – with 49% saying they would trust 'a lot'.

Pet owner trust in flea/tick medication options







Duration of effect is a top consideration when choosing a new flea/tick treatment, second only to safety

More likely to say...

No flea/tick experience

Vet recco

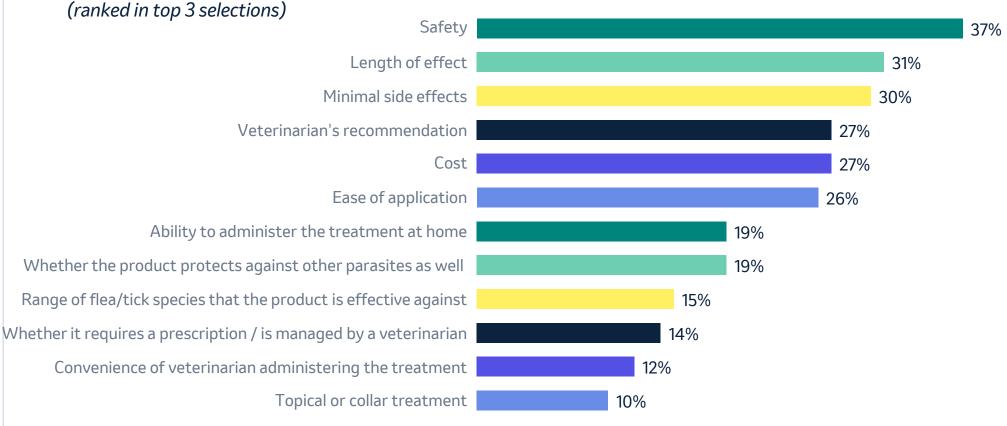
Flea/tick experience

- Ease of application
- Minimal side effects
- Range of efficacy

Define flea/tick season as year-round

Safety

Considerations viewed as most important when selecting a flea/tick treatment







Vets recognize pet owners rely on them for recommendations, and prioritize ease of use and duration of effect

Vets more likely to strongly agree with all 3 statements:

• Fewer years in practice

Veterinarian agreement with considerations when making flea/tick recommendations

90% Agree (52% strongly, 38% somewhat)

"Cat and/or dog owners rely on me to provide recommendations about flea/tick prevention"

81% Agree (40% strongly, 41% somewhat)

"I would recommend a more convenient treatment option for flea/tick prevention if it was easier to administer"

73% Agree (35% strongly, 37% somewhat)

"I would recommend a more convenient treatment option for flea/tick prevention if it lasted longer"

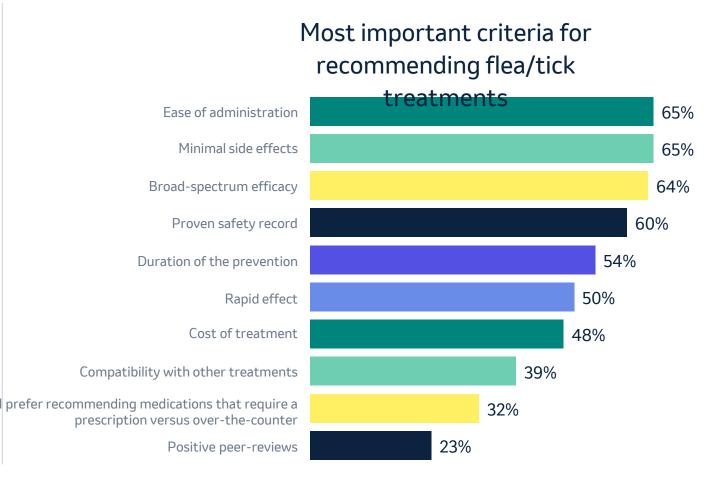


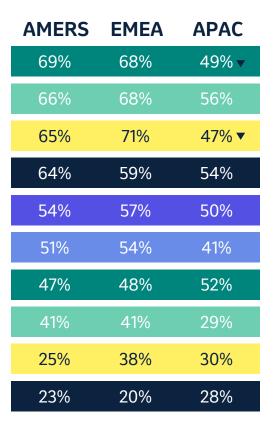


Ease of use, minimal side effects, and efficacy are key factors in vets' recommendations

Those with >10 years in practice or view Rx as more effect are more likely to view the following as important...

- Minimal side effects
- Broad-spectrum efficacy [Rx only]
- Proven safety record
- Treatment cost [YIP only]
- Compatibility [Rx only]
- Prefer Rx vs. OTC





▼/ ▲ = SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER/HIGHER VS. GLOBAL AT 95% CONFIDENCE LEVEL

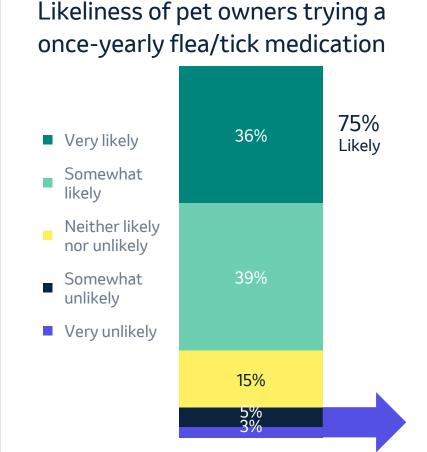




3 in 4 pet owners are likely to try a once-yearly flea/tick medication

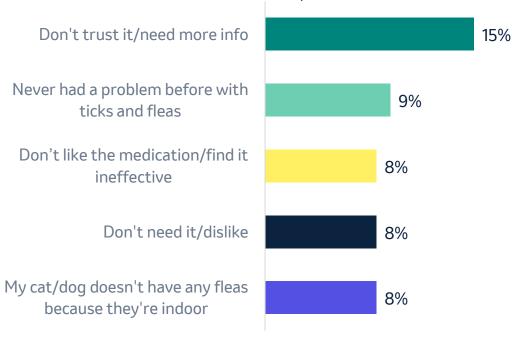
Owners that express greater likelihood to try:

• Have flea/tick experience



Top 5 reasons why pet owners are unlikely to try a once-yearly medication

(based on coded responses)

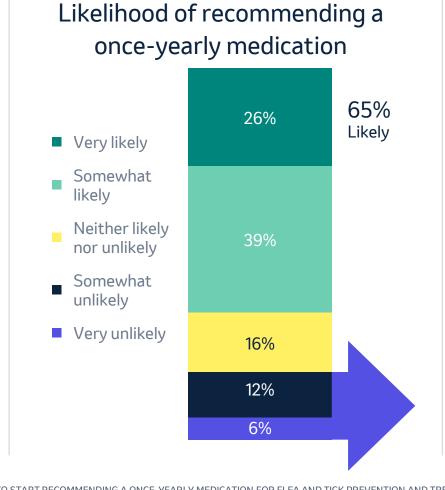






Two-thirds of vets are likely to recommend annual medication, but potential side effects concern those who would not

Vets in EMEA are least likely to recommend once-yearly medications, mainly due to fear of potential side effects



Reasons why veterinarians are unlikely to recommend a once-yearly medication

