



## FACT SHEET

### Why are fleas still there?

Fleas are well-adapted and persistent creatures, and often even diligent care may see them continue to flourish. Here are some reasons that your pet(s) could still be itching:

**1. Using a product that *does not* have a residual activity.**

Products that are applied and then washed off the fur, such as flea shampoos, wool mix and Tea tree shampoos, only kill the fleas that are present on that day. Any fleas that jump on your pet after the wash will continue to lay eggs until the next shampoo.

**2. Using the product incorrectly.**

For rinses, check the dilution rate, do not rinse off with water and allow to air dry. If your pet goes swimming, re-apply the rinse. For oral flea control methods, weigh your pet accurately. (Feel free to use our scales)

**3. Treating only some of your pets.**

All pets in your household need to be treated to get rid of the fleas, not just the ones who are itchy.

**4. Not treating at recommended times.**

It only takes three days for fleas to start laying eggs after the product as worn off. Delaying the recommended treatment intervals allows stronger fleas to survive and develop a resistance to the product you're using.

**5. Not treating for long enough.**

Because a flea cocoon can survive in the right environment for up to a year, killing the fleas for only a few weeks or months is not enough. To eliminate the flea problem you must persist with regular treatments. In Sydney that means right through winter too, particularly if your pet enjoys central heating or sleeping in front of heaters.

**6. Rapid hatching of fleas in spring.**

Under some conditions, the number of fleas hatching each day is greater than the number being destroyed. Although your method may be killing many fleas, they are being replaced so quickly it appears as if your treatment is not working. Persist. Look for dead fleas in your pet's sleeping area to check that the product is actually working. Typically this happens when no products have been used through the winter months.

### **7. Not cleaning up the animal's environment.**

The majority of flea eggs will be deposited where your pet spends most of its time. Consequently, this is where it will pick up most of the new fleas when they hatch. Don't shake out the bedding, it spreads the eggs - wash instead. Don't sweep away the mess, vacuum. Outside, sweeping and hosing also spread the eggs to protective crevasses. Sandy soil is a perfect place for fleas to hatch and wait for a passing pet. House your pet on a surface that can be easily cleaned. The dry sandy areas under the house or kennel is where fleas will hatch most easily; seal the kennel floor and block off access to under the house.

### **8. Pets removing the product.**

Some pets are very effective at removing flea products applied to their skin. Ensure your pet is quite still so you can place drops directly onto the skin. Then hold your pet so it cannot shake the liquid off in the first few minutes after application. Make sure the product is applied high on the neck so they cannot lick it off, and, finally, watch that any other pets in the house don't lick the product off; some pets like to groom their mates. (This is particularly important if cats lick dogs that have had Advantix applied.)

### **9. A particular flea product does not work on your pet.**

Despite all the attention to detail, some products just do not seem to work on a few dogs. If you're dissatisfied with what you're using, discuss the situation with one of our nurses or vets. Chances are, we can recommend a more effective alternative for your particular needs.

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