

FACT SHEET

Fleas

Ctenocephalides felis



08444 828 321

Local Rate
7p per minute
Peak Time 10p per minute

03444 828 321

Basic Rate
Mobile Friendly

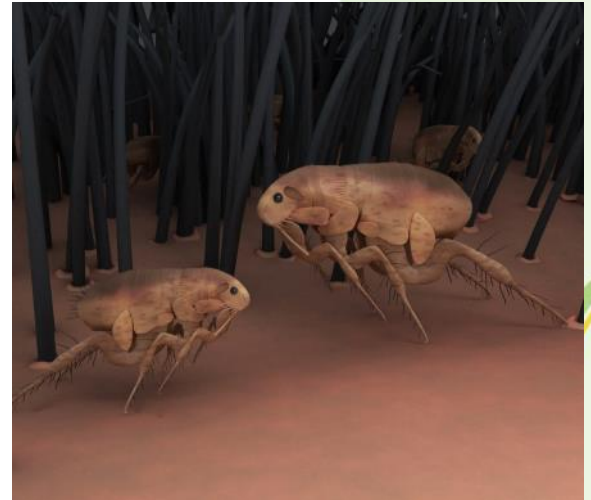
not 24 hour

SDK Environmental Limited
trading as Dial A Pest
Slough Campus
Unit 9 The Business Village
Wexham Road
Slough SL2 5HF

Full terms and conditions can be found at
www.dialapest.co.uk

There are about 60 different species of flea in Britain. All species are parasites (i.e. they need a host animal to live off). Many of these are associated with particular animals, so the dog flea, cat flea, and bird flea are all slightly different species. The human flea is very rare, but unfortunately although the different species of flea prefer to feed on their specific host, they will bite other hosts if they are hungry enough. Most of the flea infestations found in houses and on people are cat fleas.

Although still common, fleas have problems living in modern houses, as they like a little humidity and undisturbed surroundings. Central heating, vacuum cleaners and regular washing of bedding in washing machines all make life more difficult for the flea than in previous centuries. Although during an infestation of fleas you will often find them on pets, or may see one on your clothing, these fleas are only moving out from their living areas to feed. They do not live on the host animal all the time.



Life Cycle

The life cycle starts with a female flea laying eggs. These eggs are not usually found on the animal, but are on the floor or in the animals bedding area. The eggs hatch into larvae within 2 or 3 days and feed on any debris they can find in the cracks of floorboards and around areas where cats, dogs or birds have their regular bedding or resting places. After about 3 – 4 weeks the larvae spin a silk cocoon and inside this cocoon they turn into the adult flea. The adult flea needs some passing vibration to stimulate it to leave the cocoon. This may happen within a few days in an occupied house, but where the house is unoccupied; the fleas may remain dormant for many months. This is why entering an empty house or shed may result in a sudden and large number of flea bites, as the fleas are starving and will bite at anything. A more normal situation is where a single flea is brought into the house by a domestic pet and the infestation then builds up until it is suddenly noticed. To complete the life cycle, the flea has to have a drink of host blood before it can lay breed and lay fertile eggs. An adult flea is a tiny insect around the size of a pin head and dark brown in colour. Though you may see these adults it is important to realise that killing the odd flea seen jumping or only treating pet animals even with professional products will not bring the infestation under control. The answer is to have a full survey and treatment of the whole house and any affected areas. If you have any pets, particularly cats and dogs they must be treated with an approved flea treatment in tandem with any other premises treatment that is being considered. Your veterinary surgeon will be able to advise you on the best pet treatments on offer.

Should you choose a premises treatment it is important to use a professional pest control operator to carry out the treatment; they have access to a range of insecticides which are far more effective than those on sale to the general public and also they have the training and knowledge to ensure that a thorough and effective job is done. A professional treatment remains effective for several weeks and will kill all larvae and adult fleas that come into contact with it. After the insecticide wears away; there is always the risk that a pet animal could bring more fleas into the house, so be vigilant when taking pets for walks or even visiting other houses. Remember that it only takes one egg-bound female flea entering your premises to start the whole cycle off again.

For any treatment to be effective there are certain actions you the householder needs to take before and after any treatment provided, all responsible companies will advise you what you must do.



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Public Access Numbers

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Schedule 1

Terms Specific to Flea Treatments

Before Service

1. You should be prepared to leave your home during treatment and until insecticide is thoroughly dried. This will be for a minimum of 4 hours.
2. Wash all pet bedding in hot water or dispose of it.
3. Vacuum all carpeting and mop wood and tile floors, including along walls and inside closets.
4. Clean or vacuum furniture, especially between and under cushions. Dispose of the vacuum cleaner bag in a rubbish container outside your home and close tightly. If using a vacuum with a re-usable bag, empty the contents into a container outside your home, close it tightly, and discard. Wash reusable bag in hot water.
5. Remove all pets from the property during treatment. For cats, please ensure they cannot re-enter through a cat flap before the 4 hour period has expired.
6. Dogs and cats must be treated for fleas. If you plan to treat the animal yourself rather than using a Vet, it is essential that all label directions be followed and that you use only products specified for the species of animal on which the product is to be used. (See About Veterinary Medicine for more information on this treatment.) It is critical, however, that pets be treated at the same time as the home so that neither re-infests the other afterward.
7. Cover fish tanks with wet towels and turn off pumps until reoccupying home.
8. Floors must be clear and unobstructed for us to treat effectively. Please pick up all toys and items off the floor. This includes picking up items from floors inside wardrobes and under beds.
9. Remove all caged pets (birds, reptiles, hamsters) before service is started.
10. Cover and store any open food products, dishes or utensils before service is started.
11. Move furniture away from walls in readiness for the insecticide spray.

After Service

11. Remain out of the home until insecticide has dried thoroughly (minimum of 4 hours). It is essential to allow this time and ensure that the home is completely aired out before allowing sensitive individuals, such as small children, or vulnerable pets back into the home.
12. The insecticide remains active for over 2 weeks, so do not vacuum or wipe surfaces during this period as this will remove it and compromise your treatment.
13. You may still notice fleas during this two week period, this does not mean the treatment has not worked.

