



How to get rid of a flea infestation

The life-cycle of a flea involves it only spending a quarter of its time on our animals. The other three-quarters are spent in the environment, either outside waiting for a passing pet, or inside, warmly bedded down in our homes.

Here are our ten top tips for reducing a flea problem, through a combination of on and off-animal actions!

1. Regularly use the appropriate flea treatment for your animal

Activyl and Activyl Tick-Plus contain a new ingredient designed to activate in fleas and kill them quickly, often before they have had a chance to take a blood meal. Ensure you are using the correct strength for your animal's size and weight, and apply the pipette to a couple of sites on your animal's scruff. Use one pipette every four weeks to ensure your animals are protected.

2. Thorough vacuuming reduces eggs in the environment

Even wooden and laminate floorings can house a burden of flea eggs. Make sure furniture is moved round to allow access to all nooks and crannies. Also, the vibrations of moving furniture can cause larvae to emerge, making them more vulnerable to vacuum cleaners.

3. Wash bedding at 60°C

Larvae and eggs can survive at 40°C, so higher temperatures are advisable.

4. Household sprays can be an important weapon

A spray such as Indorex will kill fleas in the environment. Remember larvae like warm and dark areas, so under furniture is ideal for them. Spray any areas where your pet might be transporting fleas.

5. Wake pupae before cleaning to make them more vulnerable

Pupae are kept relatively safe while they are dormant, but once hatched, they can be more easily dealt with. Warmth, vibration, humidity and CO₂ cause pupae to hatch. You can increase these by

- Turning up the heating in your house while you clean.
- Place damp towels on hot radiators, boiling kettles and bowls of hot water increase air moisture.
- Vacuuming itself causes vibrations and heat.

6. Ensure your pets have the usual run of the house

Fleas are exposed to Activyl simply by jumping onto a treated animal. By allowing your pet to roam the house, fleas will jump on and be exposed to Activyl rather than simply jumping onto you instead.

7. Activyl is active against immature fleas too

Regularly treating your animal helps regularly treat their environment.

8. Repeat cleaning may be necessary to get on top of larger burdens

It will take time for the protected pupae to all emerge, repeat cleaning, spraying and vacuuming will ensure you are there to remove the fleas when they emerge.

9. It may take several months to fully remove a flea burden

Animals will continue to pick up further fleas while they are out and about, topping up the environment. By fighting back over a period of time, this burden can be kept in check.

10. Activyl or Activyl Tick-Plus should be used all year round

The days of fleas as a summer problem are over, and gaps in spot-on treatment will allow flea numbers to increase. Unfortunately it takes less time for a problem to build up than it does to clear it up!