



## FLEAS

Fleas as adults are parasites on warm blooded animals, e.g. humans, cats, dogs, birds, etc (the hosts).

Those commonly found in homes are cat fleas but others (dog fleas, bird fleas and occasionally human fleas) may also occur.

Female fleas lay their eggs indiscriminately. The eggs develop into bristly, legless larvae which pupate and can turn into adults within days or lay dormant for up to 12 months. Vibrations caused by the presence of a host triggers off metamorphosis and initiates the parasitic life of the flea.

In favourable conditions one pair of breeding fleas can produce 6000 off-spring in four weeks.

It is important to control fleas for various medical and social reasons, i.e. fleas can be carriers of serious bacterial diseases and are vectors of tape worms to domestic animals and humans.

In recent years flea infestations have increased due to a number of reasons:-



1. Central Heating
2. Fitted carpets, especially long pile
3. Increasing number of pets kept in homes especially cats
4. Resistance to conventional insecticides

The best way of treating a flea infestation in the home is by using a residual chemical and this is most easily and effectively carried out by a professional pest control operator. Charnwood Borough Council offers this service on a re-chargeable basis, unless you are a householder in receipt of one of the income related benefits e.g. Income Support, Pension Credit, Job Seekers Allowance (income based), Housing Benefit or Council Tax Benefit, Employment Support Allowance (income based) in which case treatment is free.

Using an ordinary can of insecticide bought from a chemist is not usually sufficiently capable of dealing with the whole life cycle of the flea.

Treatment of pets should be carried out on your veterinary surgeon's advice.

If you would like an explanation of this fact sheet in your language or to obtain copies in Braille, on audio tape or large print please contact 01509 634560

For further information contact:

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