

# 5 Golden Rules

to fight fleas in the environment



As we've seen in the 5 golden rules to fight fleas on your pet factsheet, 95% of the flea population isn't found on animals at all... it's found as eggs, larvae, pupae or pre-emerged adults in the environment. If you have been seeing fleas regularly on your correctly treated pet, then treating the environment too is vital to get rid of fleas sooner. The aim of environmental control is to break the life cycle and stop reinfestation of the animal. Targeting the most vulnerable stages is important. Pupae are virtually impossible to kill or remove so are not the ideal stage to concentrate on.

1

## Dual action pet treatment



Use a pet flea treatment that kills BOTH adult fleas AND targets another lifecycle stage too. Advantage, Advocate and Seresto all kill adult fleas on your pet and larval flea stages in the pet's surroundings. The active ingredient is shed in pet's dander and hair around their sleeping areas and so larvae are exposed this way.

2



## Treat the house

Use an Insect Growth Regulating (IGR) flea fogger/ flea bomb and/or target spray in your pets' environment. Asking your vet clinic for their recommendation on brand is a good idea. Follow the instructions carefully, and don't forget to treat the car if your pet spends time travelling with you.

3



## Remove off-host life stages

Remove as many flea eggs and larvae as possible in the house.

Washing the bedding initially in hot water helps physically to remove the eggs and kill larvae. Wash pet's blankets, beds, pet carriers and throw rugs.

An initial vacuuming of floors will remove up to 90% of the eggs but is unlikely to remove many pupae or larvae. Larvae crawl deep into carpet and floor board cracks and can even grip onto carpet fibres! Once vacuuming is done once, repeat vacuuming does little to remove any further eggs or larvae but might encourage new fleas to hatch in response to pressure and vibration – then once they are out in the open, rather than hiding as pupae, we can kill them with repeat fogging or use your treated pet as a flea Hoover!

Vacuum very regularly (every couple of days) for best effect, and include the car and furniture.

Larvae are the most vulnerable stage and our efforts should be concentrated on eliminating this stage. They will concentrate in hot spots where the pet deposits a lot of flea eggs and which are conducive to larval survival. Bedding and carpets where the animal lies are obvious spots. Less obvious spots are areas at carpeted doorways where the animal jumps to greet you when you return home. It makes sense to concentrate on the areas your pet spends most of their time... this is likely where flea eggs will have fallen off their coat and developed into new fleas – your pet's favourite sleeping area can become a 'flea nest' or 'nursery' if you like! This might even be happening at the foot of your own bed. Don't forget the car upholstery, furniture or underestimate wooden floors and tiles for places for flea development to occur.

4



## Tackle outdoor areas

The garden is also a place where the flea stages develop. A tidy backyard discourages wildlife (including rodents) which can carry fleas and allows less favourable areas for fleas to develop. Leaf litter should be removed from areas where the pets like to rest.

Animals often pick up new infestations outdoors, even in their own backyard. E.g. under house access, in garden borders, bushes... places where other animals (stray cats or dogs, rabbits, hedgehogs, possums, rodents etc.) could have passed through without you realising and shed flea eggs many months ago...which have now developed and waiting to jump on your pet! Fleas seem to like plants such as Agapanthus...these provide a nice moist environment for their eggs to survive underneath.

So prevent pet and stray animals from entering crawl spaces, foundation vents, porches and garages. Ask friends to make sure their pets are flea treated before they visit your house for doggy play dates too.

5



## Exercise your patience!

It may take 2-4 months to control flea populations. Fleas that are seen during this time are not adults that have survived previous treatments, but are new fleas still emerging from their cocoons. They will be killed soon after they jump onto their host...provided the host has correctly applied treatment on them.

If you live in a rural area or have a really big garden with heaps of wildlife reservoirs harbouring fleas, it can be very difficult to eradicate off-host stages altogether – do your best to tidy the area near the house and your animals resting areas, and expect that you may see fleas on your pets from time to time. If you do see fleas and they are moving slow enough to catch – success – they are busy dying!

If anything is unclear or your question hasn't been answered in the Golden Rules factsheets, please give our friendly and dedicated customer services a call on free phone **0800 446 121** – We're here 9am to 4.30pm Monday to Friday to help you with any questions at all about the Bayer product range. We really appreciate taking a small amount of your time to discuss the problem with you; it helps us work out what might have gone wrong. We will probably need to ask you a series of questions about your pets and their activities, as well as their environment and their previous flea treatments, and the animals that they might come into contact with too.

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