

# Vet Cheat Sheet

Echinococcus Multilocularis (Tapeworm Parasite) — Dog Owner Quick Reference

## What Is This Parasite?

- A tapeworm (*Echinococcus multilocularis*) found in coyotes, foxes, and rodents
- Dogs become infected by eating infected rodents or contaminated soil/water
- Can spread to humans — causes serious liver cysts (alveolar echinococcosis)
- **Symptoms may not appear for 5–15 years** — silent but dangerous

## Symptoms to Watch For

In Dogs	In Humans
• Weight loss, lethargy	• Abdominal pain/swelling
• Pot-bellied appearance	• Nausea, vomiting
• Vomiting, diarrhea	• Jaundice (yellow skin)
• Distended abdomen	• Unexplained liver issues
• <b>Often NO symptoms early on</b>	• <b>Often silent for years</b>

## Prevention Checklist

- Deworm your dog every 6 weeks if they hunt or roam outdoors
- Use a vet-recommended dewormer containing **praziquantel**
- Prevent your dog from eating rodents, rabbits, or carcasses
- Wash hands after handling dog feces or soil
- Don't let dogs lick your face after outdoor activity
- Pick up dog waste promptly — eggs can survive in soil for months

## Vet Visit Quick Guide

Ask Your Vet	Tests Available
• Best dewormer for my dog's weight?	• Fecal flotation test
• How often should we deworm?	• PCR/DNA fecal test
• Is my area high-risk?	• Abdominal ultrasound
• Should my family be tested?	• Serology blood test

## Geographic Risk Zones

- **High Risk:** Pacific Northwest (WA, OR, BC), Upper Midwest, Canadian Prairies
- **Moderate Risk:** Northern US states bordering Canada, Alaska
- **Lower Risk:** Southern US states (but parasite is spreading — stay alert)