



**Fleas are parasites, feeding directly on humans or other warm blooded animals.**

Fleas are small and wingless with narrow bodies covered with spines projecting backward. There are several types of fleas, but the most common is the cat flea, even on dogs. It is thought that adult fleas are attracted to body heat, movement and exhaled carbon dioxide. Some people are not bothered by bites but a few people get sick from allergic reactions to bites, with intense itching and secondary infection. Most people suffer redness and minor itching, which is highly annoying. Flea bites are most common around ankle areas, as the fleas are usually on the floor.

Cat fleas remain on their host (unlike most fleas) and lay 20-30 eggs per day. These small eggs are smooth and readily fall from the host, usually on surfaces like bedding and carpeting in the animal's environment. The larva (or worm stage) feed on dried blood, and cast off animal skin and hair. They then build small cocoons (the pupa stage) in which they develop into adult fleas. At cool temperatures fully formed fleas may remain in their cocoons for up to 12 months. Warm temperatures and mechanical pressure, caused by walking on carpet or vacuuming may stimulate emergence from the cocoon. At warmer room temperatures the entire life cycle may be completed in about 18 days. Flea populations tend to increase dramatically in summer and late fall.

**A dramatic increase in flea populations often occurs when there has been a change in the pet patterns.** This may occur when the pet is no longer in the home or when the pet has been gone for an extended period (such as when taken on vacation.) A new owner or tenant may experience a flea problem when occupying a home or apartment that has been vacant for a period. This may call for a professional treatment of the floor areas.

**Control:** Sanitation plays a big role. Regularly vacuum areas where fleas may occur. There are many excellent products available to treat pets. Consult with a veterinarian as to what is appropriate. If you purchase an over-the-counter pesticide to treat for fleas be sure to read and follow label instructions.

For further information or to schedule flea treatments give us a call  
**PARATEX PEST SOLUTIONS**      **1-800-GOT BUGS?**  
 (800 542 1234)

**Solutions**