

Sierra Animal Wellness Center

Specializing in Holistic, Integrative Veterinary
Medicine



March 29, 2018



About Revolution

Revolution is the brand name of a pet medication that is designed to provide broad spectrum protection from a range of parasites. Introduced almost 20 years ago, it was the first topical product available for both fleas and heartworm prevention. The active ingredient in Revolution is Selamectin which has been shown to be highly effective and rapid in its action. It works in the skin oils of the pet and also gets absorbed into the blood stream and interstitial fluids.

Revolution for Dogs is applied on the skin once monthly to prevent heartworm in dogs at least 6 weeks old. It also controls fleas, flea eggs, ear mites, sarcoptic mange, and some, though not all ticks.

Revolution for Cats is applied on the skin once monthly in cats at least 8 weeks old. In addition to heartworm protection it also controls fleas, flea eggs, ear mites, round- and hookworms.



So, why do I recommend Revolution more than other forms of heartworm and flea prevention? There are several reasons:

1. One of the main reasons I recommend Revolution is because it has been on the market a long time and in that time has proven itself to be one of the safer and most effective parasiticides when used properly. In pre-release clinical trials less than 1% of animals had adverse reactions. But far more important than pre-release trials, are adverse drug event (ADE) reports compiled by the Center for Veterinary Medicine (CVM), a division of the FDA, once a drug is in widespread use in the marketplace. Selamectin, the ingredient in Revolution, has one of the better safety records.

2. Tests on laboratory animals and cell cultures have determined that the chemical, Selamectin (Revolution) does not cause cancer. At a time when almost 1 in 4 dogs dies of cancer, that is a very important consideration.

3. Revolution contains a single medication, Selamectin. Most other parasiticides that protect from multiple parasites, contain multiple medications. As most of you know, I prefer not to give additional medications unless they are needed. With each additional medication you increase the risk of adverse reactions. While Revolution does protect against multiple parasites, it is one medication, not two or three that your pet may not need.

4. Although it is possible to prevent pet parasites by using separate medications for each type of parasite, Revolution offers an easier option. One medication applied topically is generally easier than trying to use multiple medications.



Other advantages of Revolution are that being a topical it can be an easier and less stressful way to protect your pet than trying to pill an unwilling dog or cat. It is waterproof after two hours, and dries within a few hours so pets can play outdoors and carry out normal activities within a fairly short period of time.

No Perfect Drug

Of course we know there is no perfect drug. Every drug, even the best ones that have saved countless lives, have also had damaging side effects in some. In humans, Penicillin is the iconic example, saving countless lives from infection, but damaging and even taking the lives of those who were sensitive to it.

While Revolution/Selamectin has a wide safety margin, there is always the possibility of an adverse reaction. Some animals should not be exposed to it. Never give Revolution to a sick, weakened or underweight animal. Debilitated animals are at much greater risk for an adverse reaction. Always give the smallest dose recommended. A higher amount does not offer more protection from pests, it just increases the likelihood of toxicity. Do not apply when your furry friend is wet or if he or she has broken or irritated skin. Revolution contains isopropyl alcohol and will sting and burn irritated skin.

We recommend not using any heartworm/flea control medications within 10 days of a vaccine. Please note that you should not use any additional flea medication, even over-the-counter ones while your pet is receiving Revolution.

Use caution before giving Revolution to certain herding breeds, especially Collies, Border Collies or Collie mixes. It is best to perform DNA tests first to determine if your collie carries the gene that indicates certain sensitivities. Dr. Peggy can give you more guidance on this issue.

Any animal can have a reaction to any medicine or vaccine. To be safe here is what we recommend:

1. Any time you give your pet a new med make sure you have a couple of hours to observe him or her.
2. It's best to give a new med on a weekday, if possible, so you can bring them to the clinic if needed.
3. Don't start meds right after vaccines when your pet's immune system is compromised.

If you believe your dog or cat has had an adverse reaction to this or any other medication always contact the prescribing vet and let her/him know. Also contact the drug manufacturer. You can also file an Adverse Drug event with the CVM/FDA. [Click here for directions.](#)

Revolution Side Effects

Like all medicines, Revolution has some side effects that can affect some patients. The most common is hair loss at the site of application with or without inflammation, redness or flaking. Most hair loss is temporary. Other side effects reported in cats and dogs include vomiting, diarrhea with or without blood, decreased appetite, lethargy, salivation, rapid breathing, pruritus (itching), urticaria (welts, hives), erythema (skin redness), ataxia (incoordination), fever and rare instances of death. There have also been rare reports of seizures in dogs. If you have additional questions about possible side effects, talk to Dr. Peggy or your regular veterinarian.

Until next time, be well.

- Dr. Peggy

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Clinic Hours

Monday, Thursday and Friday
from 9:00 to 6:00

Tuesday from 9:00 to 3:00

Wednesday from 12:00 to 6:00

Contact Us

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