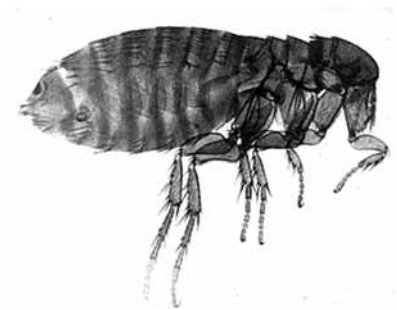


Fleas



Dog Flea

Advice to Householders



EAST LINDSEY
DISTRICT COUNCIL

What are fleas?

Most people will be familiar with adult fleas which are small, flattened, dark brown insects. They cannot fly, but can jump great distances.

There are many species of flea. Thankfully, 'human' fleas are very rare these days. Most infestations we deal with are of the Cat Flea (*Ctenocephalides Felis*) or the Dog Flea (*Ctenocephalides Canis*). A magnified picture of an adult Dog Flea is shown on the cover of this leaflet.

Adult fleas are parasites which suck blood from their 'host'. They live in the fur of the host, and in and around the places where the animal sleeps.

Adult fleas lay small white eggs which often fall off the host into their bedding, or into carpets. After about a week these hatch into larvae. The larvae are like tiny caterpillars which feed on the black bits of dried blood which fall from your pet after they have been bitten by adult fleas.

After two or three weeks the larvae spin a cocoon out of silk and then moult into a pupae. The pupae do not feed, but wait for a suitable moment to emerge as adults. This can be within a few days or not for many months.

Where do fleas come from in the first place?

A pet is the usual source of infestation, having picked up fleas which have hopped off another animal.

Sometimes infestations occur in houses or offices where there are no pets. In these cases the fleas are usually brought in by a person, normally on their clothes, after they have been near an infested place.

Sometimes fleas suddenly emerge after waiting as pupae for months. This occasionally happens when someone enters a house or room that has been shut up for a long period.

What can I do to prevent an infestation?

If you have a pet it is **vital** that some form of flea control is regularly used, such as a flea collar, powder or spray. Your vet will give you advice on this.

Spraying affected rooms alone will not cure the problem.

Regular vacuuming of carpets and the places where pets sleep will do a great deal to prevent problems.

What does the Council use to spray with?

We use a special type of insecticide which we feel to be the safest available. It contains pyrethrins, which are similar to a natural insect repellent made by some plants. The levels used are so low that, with care, it is completely harmless to children and pets.

We usually spray all carpets throughout the house, or just the affected areas if the full treatment is not necessary.

Spraying will kill any larvae and adults which are around at the time of the treatment within about 48 hours. The insecticide remains active for several weeks, so if any eggs hatch or pupae emerge, these too will soon be exposed to the insecticide and die.

If you have treated your pet and you see a flea within a few days after we have sprayed, it is likely to have only just emerged and it should die soon. We therefore request that you do not call us back unless you still have a serious infestation after three or four weeks.

If you are entitled to a free treatment, we regret that we cannot normally do a second free treatment within six months.

What should I do before the house is sprayed?

As far as possible, clear the floor and vacuum thoroughly. Please remove any toys or other objects that children have regular contact with.

Pay particular attention to those places where pets sleep, as these are the fleas' breeding grounds.

What should I do after the house is sprayed?

The insecticide is applied in a solution with water, which will mean the surface of the carpet may be slightly damp to the touch after spraying.

As far as possible, open windows and doors to ventilate treated rooms.

Do not wash floors or vacuum carpets for about four days after spraying, then clean as normal.

Keep children and pets away from treated areas, particularly carpets, until surfaces are dry.

We recommend you keep this leaflet for future reference.

Where do I get further information?

For further information on the Pest Control Service of East Lindsey District Council, please contact:

The Pest Control Section on **(01507) 601111**, or write to:

**The Pest Control Section
East Lindsey District Council
Tedder Hall,
Manby Park,
Louth,
Lincolnshire,
LN 11 8UP**