

### Heartworm Prevention and Testing

It is still possible that a dog could have been infected with heartworm disease since the last heartworm test despite being on the heartworm preventative for the previous heartworm season(s). This could have happened if the dog was under-dosed because of an increase in weight over the time the medication was given, if a treatment was missed or was late, or if the dog spat out or vomited up the medication.

The label on the heartworm medication indicates that the preventative is for dogs that have been tested just before starting the drug and found to be clear of heartworm. If a dog is infected at the time of taking these heartworm medications, there is a very slim chance of an adverse reaction.

Despite the preceding, we allow owners to put their dogs on heartworm medication without the annual test provided they have remained on the prevention in the previous year from June to November at least. We allow this for three main reasons:

- 1) The chance of contracting heartworm in this area is small.
- 2) If given properly, heartworm medication is highly protective.
- 3) If the dog was infected when given the heartworm medication, the adverse reactions are very infrequent and usually very mild and transient.

Having said this, because dispensing any heartworm medication the way we do is an "extra label" use, we have to have the above read carefully and the waiver signed.

Billings Bridge Animal Hospital cannot guarantee the authenticity or safety of parasite preventative medications obtained from online pharmacies. Owners are encouraged to purchase medications that have a Canadian Drug Identification Number (DIN), which will ensure that they are approved by Health Canada. To our knowledge, online pharmacies do not have access to medications that have a Canadian DIN.

**Owner's Name (Name on file):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dog's Name(s):** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Breed:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sex:** F F/S M M/N

I am responsible for the dog described above. I am aware of the risk involved in administering heartworm medication to prevent heartworm infection without having the dog tested negative in the spring of the year the medication is to be given.

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Owner's Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_