



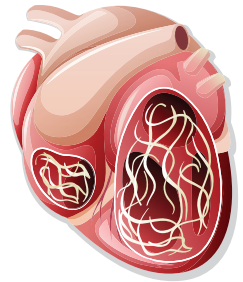
# Heartworm Disease

## Testing is better than the cure

Heartworm, caused by the nematode parasite *Dirofilaria immitis*, is a significant health problem for dogs in Australia. Once associated with tropical and subtropical conditions, heartworm can now be found sporadically in cooler climates such as Victoria, including areas of Melbourne. Heartworm most commonly occurs in dogs, however, the heartworm parasite may infect a wide variety of mammals including cats and ferrets, while 7% of foxes in Melbourne have been shown to be infected.

With the increase in mosquito numbers over the spring and summer period the risk of heartworm transmission is increased. Adult Heartworms live in the heart and the major blood vessels of the lungs and cause severe illness that can lead to heart failure, lung disease, organ damage, and sometimes death. Treatment of advanced disease is intensive, complex and carries risks of adverse outcomes when worm burdens are heavy.

Early detection of infection by laboratory testing allows treatment to clear the infection before severe disease develops. Testing is also recommended prior to beginning heartworm prophylaxis, ensuring that subclinical infections are identified and treated.



Lab Tests	Specimen	Container
Heartworm antigen ELISA	Whole blood, serum	EDTA & Plain
Heartworm Knott test	Whole blood	EDTA & Lithium Heparin
Heartworm Knott test & antigen	Whole blood, serum	EDTA & Plain
In Clinic Testing		
SensPert CHW Ag per single test	Whole blood, serum or plasma	Plain, Lithium Heparin

For more information, please contact your local Business Development Manager or our Veterinary Help Desk on 1300 307 190.