

# How to control them





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# Why control them?

Fleas are biting insects that feed on the blood of humans and animals and can cause a great deal of irritation and discomfort. This irritation is caused by a reaction to the adult flea's saliva, which is injected into the host's skin to prevent blood from clotting during feeding.

Bites generally give rise to a dark red spot surrounded by a reddened area although individuals react differently to bites.

Many flea species are known to spread human disease. The best known example is the spread of the plague by the oriental rat flea.

Cat fleas (the most common flea) can lay up to 1,000 eggs which go through larval and pupal stages before reaching the adult stage, up to several months later.

## Treatment

Once a flea infestation has been confirmed it is important that a thorough treatment is carried out either by the occupier or by a reputable pest control contractor.

The council's pest control section can do this for a small fee. For information please call 01482 300300.

To achieve the best results from a flea treatment it is important to carry out the following steps:

### Before the treatment

All floors (especially around skirting boards and other wall/floor angles) and upholstered furniture should be thoroughly vacuumed to remove animal hair, debris, flea eggs and pupae (the contents of the vacuum must then be disposed of in a plastic bag in an outside waste bin).

All articles such as clothing, linen and toys should be removed from the floor so that the whole area can be treated.

Tiled, concrete, wooden etc. floors should be swept and washed or vacuumed.

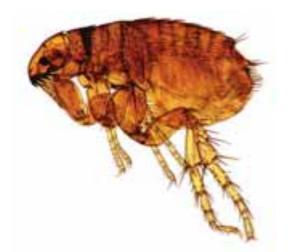
Cats and dogs (and their bedding) should be treated for fleas with an insecticide recommended for this purpose. Seek veterinary advice if unsure what products to use.

Remove all children and pets during the treatment and ensure that aquariums and food are covered or removed.

Remove all bedding and wash.

### The treatment

A residual (long lasting) insecticide spray should be used to treat all carpets and other floor coverings (paying particular attention to wall/floor angles), soft furnishings and areas frequented by animals. Look for products containing 'bendiocarb' or 'permethrin'.



### Following the treatment

Unprotected persons, children and pets should not be allowed back into the house until the treatment has completely dried. (normally within a few hours in a well ventilated property).

Do not vacuum for at least 10-14 days after the treatment. This will give the insecticide time to eliminate all stages of the flea infestation.

Flea activity may be observed for several days after the treatment. This is due to newly hatched fleas, which have not yet come into contact with the insecticide. If the fleas are still active after 14 days, a repeat treatment may be carried out, ensuring that all of the above steps are again followed.

# Important

Animal treatment and hygiene is essential for effective flea treatments.

# **Further advice**

Please remember that pesticides are toxic and the manufacturer's instructions must be followed at all times.

If you have any questions about the information contained in this leaflet or would like a treatment, please contact the council's pest control section on (01482) 300300.

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