

# 5 Golden Rules

to fight fleas in the environment



As we've seen in the 5 golden rules to fight fleas on your pet fact sheet, 95% of the flea population isn't found on pets at all. It's found as eggs, larvae, pupae or pre-emerged adults in the environment. If you have been seeing fleas regularly on your correctly treated pet, then treating the environment is also vital to get rid of fleas sooner.

The aim of environmental control is to break the life cycle and stop reinfestation of your pet. Targeting the most vulnerable stages is important. Pupae are virtually impossible to kill or remove so are not the ideal stage to concentrate on.

1

## Dual action pet treatment



Use a pet flea treatment that kills BOTH adult fleas AND targets another life cycle stage too. Advantage™, Advocate™ and Seresto™ all kill adult fleas on your pet and larval flea stages in the pet's surroundings. The active ingredient is shed in the pet's dander and hair around their sleeping areas and so larvae are exposed this way.

2

## Treat the house



Use an Insect Growth Regulating (IGR) flea fogger/ flea bomb and/or target spray in your pet's environment. Asking your vet clinic for their recommendation on brand is a good idea. Follow the instructions carefully, and don't forget to treat the car if your pet spends time travelling with you.



### 3

## Remove off-host life stages



Remove as many flea eggs and larvae as possible in the house.

Washing the bedding initially in hot water at 60°C for at least 10 minutes helps physically to remove the eggs and kill larvae. Wash your pet's blankets, beds, pet carriers and throw rugs, if possible.

An initial vacuuming of floors will remove up to 90% of the eggs but is unlikely to remove many pupae or larvae. Larvae crawl deep into carpet and floor board cracks and can even grip onto carpet fibres! Once vacuuming is done, repeat vacuuming does little to remove any further eggs or larvae but might encourage new fleas to hatch in response to pressure and vibration – then once they are out in the open, rather than hiding as pupae, we can kill them with repeat fogging or use your treated pet as a flea Hoover! Vacuum very regularly (every couple of days) for best effect, and include the car and furniture.

Larvae are the most vulnerable stage and our efforts should be concentrated on eliminating this stage. They will concentrate in hot spots where the pet deposits a lot of flea eggs and which are conducive to larval survival. Bedding and carpets where the animal lies are obvious spots. Less obvious spots are areas like carpeted doorways where the animal jumps to greet you when you return home. It makes sense to concentrate on the areas your pet spends most of their time in, as this is likely where flea eggs will have fallen off their coat and developed into new fleas – your pet's favourite sleeping area can become a 'flea nest' or 'nursery' if you like! This might even be happening at the foot of your own bed. Don't forget the car upholstery, furniture or underestimate wooden floors and tiles for places for flea development to occur.

### 4

## Tackle outdoor areas



The garden is also a place where the flea stages develop. A tidy backyard discourages wildlife (including rodents) which can carry fleas and allows less favourable areas for fleas to develop. Leaf litter should be removed from areas where your pets like to rest.

Pets often pick up new flea infestations outdoors, even in their own backyard. Under the house, garden borders, bushes - any place where other animals (such as stray cats or dogs, rabbits, hedgehogs, possums, rodents) could have passed through and shed flea eggs, can become sources of new fleas. As these develop they then can jump on your pet as they walk by. Fleas seem to like plants such as Agapanthus as these provide a nice moist environment for their eggs to survive and develop underneath.

So prevent pets and stray animals from entering crawl spaces, foundation vents, porches and garages. Ask friends to make sure their pets are flea treated before they visit your house for doggy play dates too.



### 5

## Be patient



It may take 2-4 months to control flea populations. Fleas that are seen during this time are not adults that have survived previous treatments, but are new fleas still emerging from their cocoons. They will be killed soon after they jump onto their host, provided the host has correctly applied treatment on them.

If you live in a rural area or have a really big garden with heaps of wildlife reservoirs harbouring fleas, it can be very difficult to eradicate off-host stages altogether – do your best to tidy the area near the house and your pets resting areas, and expect that you may see fleas on your pets from time to time.

If you do see fleas and they are moving slow enough to catch them – success – they are busy dying!

If anything is unclear or your question hasn't been answered in the Golden Rules factsheets, please contact our friendly and dedicated customer service team to help you with any questions about the Elanco product range.

**Free phone: 0800 446 121** (0800 Hours: Weekdays during normal business hours)

**Email: [animalhealth\\_nz@elancoah.com](mailto:animalhealth_nz@elancoah.com)**

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