

Robinson Veterinary Services

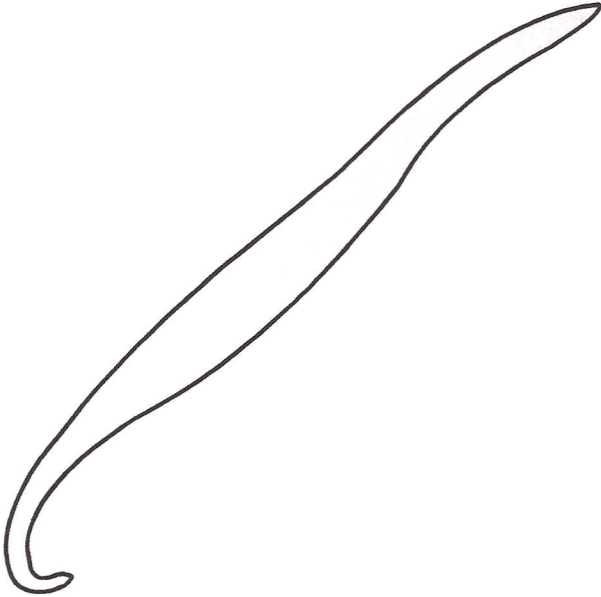
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Hookworm: Hookworm clinical signs and disease.



Actual size 1/8"
(2-3mm)

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Hookworms are intestinal parasites of the cat and dog. Their name is derived from the hook-like mouthparts they use to anchor to the lining of the intestinal wall. They are only about 1/8" (2-3mm) long and so small in diameter that they are barely visible to the naked eye. The most common hookworms of the cat and dog are *Ancylostoma tubaeforme*, *Ancylostoma braziliense*, and *Ancylostoma caninum*. Hookworms are more common in crowded conditions with poor hygiene. Adult hookworms feed on tissue fluids and/or blood, and inject anticoagulants into their feeding sites, causing intestinal bleeding. If there are large numbers of hookworms in the intestinal tract, the animal may suffer from severe anemia due to blood loss. Adult hookworms are prolific egg layers, and a hookworm infection is identified by detection of the characteristic eggs during a microscopic examination of a fecal sample. Further information about this important parasite can be found in our Client Education Handout Series.