

# ORCHARD HILLS VETERINARY HOSPITAL

## Flea Allergy Dermatitis (F.A.D) & it's control

### Cause & Symptoms

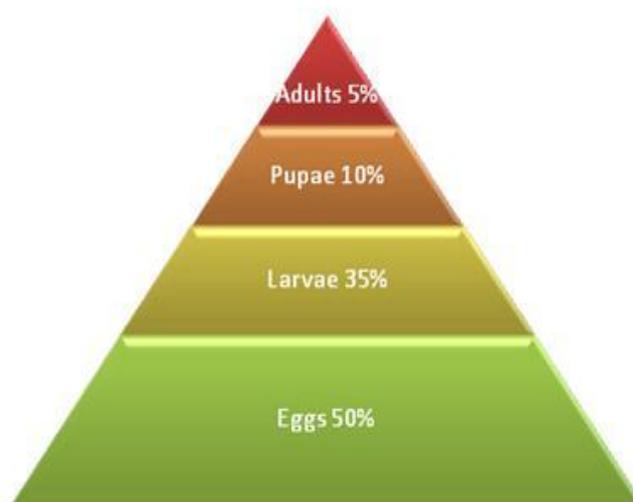
Flea allergy dermatitis or F.A.D is the most common cause of skin disease in pets. One bite from the common dog or cat flea can start up an allergic reaction, so an animal suffering from flea allergy may not necessarily have many fleas - Hence the importance of a rigorous control program.

Symptoms are often worse in the summer months, but some animals may have symptoms year-round. The first sign is an ITCHY animal which quickly becomes a VERY ITCHY ANIMAL. The inflamed skin then sets the scene for secondary bacterial infection - pimples, rashes & hair loss (particularly along the backline and base of the tail). Angry and inflamed 'weepy' lesions called "hot-spots" may flare up overnight due to flea bites.

The animal is in a great deal of discomfort by this stage and needs **your** help! For this condition to be treated sucessfully the underlying cause (i.e the presence of fleas) must be dealt with.

### Flea Control

The life cycle of the flea consists of the egg, larva, pupae & adult. The adult flea which is most susceptible to insecticides, contributes to only 5% of the total flea population on the animal and is just the 'tip' of the iceberg.



### **Point 1**

Successful flea control must include methods which kill the immature forms as well as the adult. The adult flea spends all of its time on the animal, the majority of the flea lifecycle however (eggs, larvae and pupae) live and develop in the environment. They are present all year round, however do hibernate during the winter months. Be mindful that one warmer day in winter will be enough to start the life cycle again, so it is important to continue flea treatment all year round.

### **Point 2**

Successful flea control usually involves treating your environment as well as the animal. This may require using 2 separate products. There are a variety of flea control products on the market which can make the decision quite daunting. It is very important to choose a product which is right for your situation. A good idea would be to have a chat to your veterinary team, to help you choose the right one for you.

PLEASE COME SEE US, SO THAT WE CAN HELP YOU FORMULATE A FLEA CONTROL PROGRAM TO FIT YOUR HOUSEHOLD. (02) 4736 2027