



# Ringworm

**Advice for adopters**



Thank you for adopting a cat from Cats Protection. Your cat has had a thorough health check by a vet, and they are happy that your cat can go to a new home. During their stay with us your cat was either diagnosed with and treated for ringworm or was in contact with a ringworm case. Please find more information on the condition below.

## What is ringworm?

Ringworm is a relatively mild skin condition. Despite the name, ringworm has nothing to do with worms. It is an infectious skin condition caused by a type of fungus. Cats who are infected develop areas of hair loss with scabs or flaky skin, particularly on the head, ears and legs. Sometimes it may cause itching, but not always. In healthy cats the disease will normally get better on its own within a few months. The cats in our care are often more stressed than cats in a home or may be otherwise unwell. This can make them more likely to develop a more serious form of the disease, or it takes longer for the infection to clear up. For this reason, any cats diagnosed with ringworm at Cats Protection are treated until the skin has completely healed and they have tested negative for the condition. Cats who have been in contact with another cat with ringworm, but who have not shown signs of disease themselves, are monitored for three weeks to make sure they don't become infected (as it usually takes three weeks for skin lesions to develop).

## What does this mean for my cat?

### Your cat:

- ☐ Has been treated for ringworm, has now recovered and had a negative post-treatment test result
- ☐ Was in contact with a cat with ringworm, has been monitored for three weeks and has not developed any signs of disease

*(Cats Protection team to tick which applies)*

This means they are very unlikely to still be carrying ringworm or become unwell with it again.

However, a small number of cats can carry ringworm on their coat and appear healthy. In these cases, it is possible that with the stress of rehoming, or if your cat becomes otherwise unwell, they could develop ringworm symptoms. If you see any signs of hair loss or skin disease in your cat you should get them checked by a vet and explain they have recently been treated for ringworm or been in contact with a ringworm case.

Your insurance policy is unlikely to cover any diagnostic tests or treatment associated with ringworm.

## Can ringworm be passed on to other pets?

Yes, ringworm is passed from cats to other animals via spores on the infected cat's coat. In rare cases, healthy cats can carry these spores on their coat and even though they appear completely well they can pass infection on to other animals in the house.

Animals who are ill, very old, very young or who already have skin disease are most at risk of picking up infection. If another pet in your household develops a new skin lesion you should make sure you inform your vet that you have a new cat in your household who has previously been treated for ringworm or who has been in contact with a ringworm case.

## Can ringworm be passed to people?

Yes, ringworm is a zoonotic disease which means it can be passed from animals to people. As your cat has either been fully treated and/or has not shown any signs of disease over a three-week monitoring period, it is very unlikely they can pass ringworm on to you. However, as explained above, in rare cases healthy animals can still carry spores of ringworm. If you, or any of your family members, develop any sore or itchy patches of skin, you should contact your GP and let them know your cat has recently been treated for ringworm or has been in contact with a ringworm case.



**[cats.org.uk](https://cats.org.uk)**

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