

HOME

Less-Toxic Pest Control Methods  
for Your Home & Garden

# FLEAS



Flea

## INSECT TIDBITS

Adult fleas can live up to  
8 months without food

If you could jump as  
well as a flea, you could jump  
250 feet high and leap a  
450-foot wide river.

## PREVENTION

- **Be aware** of when flea season begins and take early action. It is easier to start washing bedding, vacuuming, and flea combing when the first fleas appear, than to deal with a huge infestation!
- **Wash** pet bedding weekly during peak flea season.
- **Vacuum** frequently and thoroughly, especially in cracks. Eggs and immature fleas drop off of your pet and will be wherever pets travel.
- **Flea comb** as often as possible during peak flea season.
- **Bathing** drowns adult fleas; so an insecticidal soap is not necessary.
- **Treat** animals with low toxicity pesticides such as fipronil or permethrin. These will kill fleas on your pet, preventing an outbreak. Purchase at veterinarians.
- **Caution:** Flea collars work by releasing pesticide vapors continuously. These pesticides interfere with normal nerve transmission. Nearby humans and pets are also exposed to the vapors. Try other methods.

## LESS-TOXIC CONTROLS

- **Remove and wash** all carpets. Fleas reside in carpeting, flooring cracks and pet bedding. For a big outbreak, clean carpeting by calling in a carpet steam-cleaning company. Wash pet bedding.
- **Vacuum** carpets and furniture every day to remove adults and eggs.
- **Spray** carpets with an insecticidal soap, or an insect growth regulator called methoprene or fenoxycarb to kill immature fleas. You can find these at a veterinarian's office or farm supply centers.
- **Treat your animals** by bathing, flea combing, using fipronil or permethrin. Follow the label. You can find these at a veterinarian's office or farm supply centers.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**, please contact the Central Coast Environmental Health Project (CCEHP) at (805) 963-1622 ext. 111, or the Santa Barbara County Agricultural Commissioner at (805) 681-5600. Information compiled by the Environmental Center of San Luis Obispo (ECOSLO) and the San Luis Obispo County Agricultural Commissioner's office on behalf of the CCEHP.