**LUNGWORM**

 Lungworm is a round worm that poses a huge risk to our dogs (and also cats). It has a lifecycle that involves slugs and snails and the adults can live in the heart and major blood vessels that supply the lungs. It can easily be picked up by dogs sniffing along the ground.

Your dog could be at risk if: -they drink from puddles/outdoor water bowls

 -they play with slugs/snails

 -they eat grass

Infected dogs can become seriously ill and can also spread the disease on to other animals in the area as the adult worms inside them start to produce eggs which are passed out in your dog’s faeces.

**Symptoms of Infection**

Coughing

Easily tired when exercising

Bleeding excessively from minor cuts

Nose bleeds

Pale gums/eyes (anaemia)

Weight loss and poor appetite

Vomiting and diarrhoea

Depression

Seizures

**Diagnosis**

The only way to conclusively prove that the cause of the signs we are seeing is lungworm if to look for adult worms and eggs in the faeces, we send a sample off to the lab for this. Often we make a presumptive diagnosis from clinical signs and treat for lungworm before we have test results.

**Treatment and Prevention**

 The most effective way to treat the infection is with a worming product called ‘Panacur.’ This comes in a liquid formulation which has to be given once a day for 7 days.

To prevent infection a routine spot-on treatment can be used. The most effective one on the market is ‘Advocate’. It is very important to treat dogs regularly (every 4-6 weeks).

**Bayer** which make Advocate have produce a very good website with lots of useful information on lungworm and what to do if you are suspicious.

 [www.lungworm.co.uk](http://www.lungworm.co.uk)

For further information, or if you think your dog is showing any of the above signs please come and see us at the surgery.