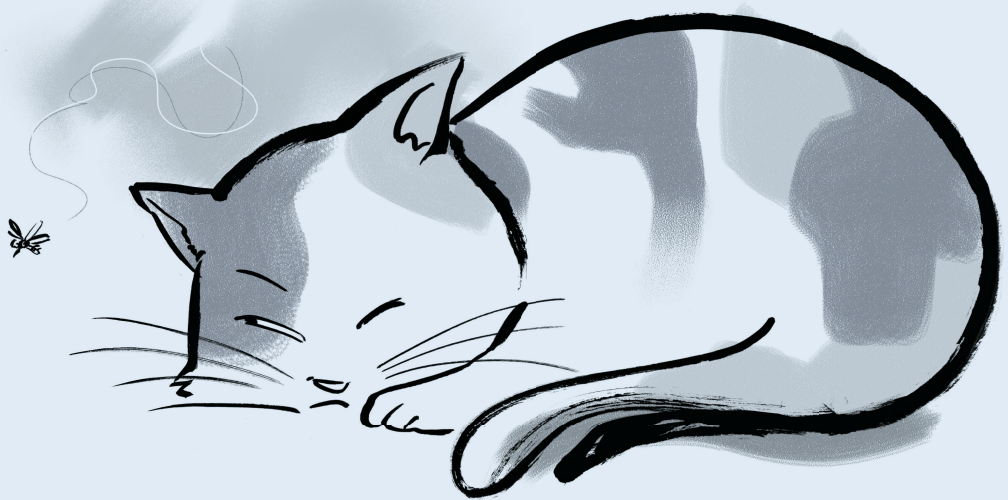


7 fun—and not-so-fun—facts about mosquitoes

Head straight to No. 7 for the fact that scares veterinarians the most and makes them worry for the health of your cats and dogs.



1. Mosquito means “little fly” in Spanish

We would argue that mosquitoes are bigger than flies. And more annoying. You be the judge.

2. Mosquitoes have been around a long time

The oldest fossil of their current form is dated at 79 million years old. Persistent pests, aren't they?

3. Mosquito saliva is what makes your bites itch

Mosquitoes dose you up with a menu of special proteins, keeping your blood from clotting and fighting back your immune system's response to their blood-sucking invasion. Your unique allergic response to that saliva is what makes you a little itchy, moderately itchy or painfully itchy.

4. Mosquitoes spend three of their four life cycle stages in the water

That's right—mosquito eggs, larvae and pupae mostly stick to the water. Bet you wish they'd stay there too.

5. The mosquito's enemy is your friend

If you hate mosquitoes, get rid of standing water, keep the bug spray on, and try to be nice to some predators that love eating them: birds, fish, frogs (and tadpoles), turtles, dragonflies, spiders and bats (just make sure your bat friends aren't rabid).

6. Mosquitoes love to spread the love

And by love, we mean diseases—yellow fever, malaria, West Nile and Zika, to name a few. They pick those diseases up from one victim and share them with their next victim. Worst of all, for dogs, is our final fact ...

7. Mosquitoes spread heartworm disease to dogs

Did you know adult heartworms can invade the chambers of your dog's heart and your cat's lungs? And once they're fully grown, it can be very expensive and difficult to treat. Yikes. And where do they get it? Eggs spread by mosquitoes who've picked them up from other infected cats and dogs. Heartworm disease is a vicious circle, and mosquitoes play a crucial role in it. Luckily, your veterinarian has the tools to prevent. Ask about it today.