

When your pet has ringworm, it is really important to clean and disinfect your home to prevent the spread of ringworm to other pets and to people.

Environmental decontamination is a two-part process. The first part, cleaning to remove as much hair as possible, is the most important. This is because infected hair can spread the infection and also reinfect your pet. Cleaning is then followed by disinfection to kill any remaining spores in your home. Most homes only need to be cleaned and disinfected twice a week. Some homes with many pets may need more frequent cleaning and disinfection. Environmental decontamination is continued until all household pets have been cured of ringworm.

Below are some tips for cleaning the home and removing pet hair:

- Keep the infected pet in an easily cleanable room. Bathrooms and other rooms with hard surface flooring work great.
- If you must keep your pet in a carpeted room, vacuum frequently to remove hair. After vacuuming, immediately dispose of the vacuum bag. Wear gloves when handling the vacuum bag to reduce the risk of ringworm exposure.
- While your pet has ringworm, try to use plastic toys that can be easily cleaned. If you use any towels or blankets with your pet, wash them regularly.

Once a surface has been thoroughly cleaned, many disinfectants are effective against ringworm spores. Below are two of those disinfectant options:

- Chlorine bleach, when diluted 1:10 or 1:32, has good antifungal activity and is inexpensive. Prepare fresh solutions at least once weekly and store in a dark, opaque container. Do NOT combine chlorine bleach with other cleaning chemicals because this can create toxic gases. Bleach can also discolor fabrics and damage floor finishes.
- Accelerated hydrogen peroxide is a proprietary compound of concentrated hydrogen peroxide combined with other cleaners. It is different from the bottles of dilute hydrogen peroxide available at drugstores.

Below is a guide to cleaning and disinfecting various materials. Information is summarized from publications by veterinary dermatologist Dr. Karen Moriello of the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine.

Material	Cleaning Step	Disinfection Step
Carpeting (small area rugs)	Vacuum	Launder, any water temperature and cleaner is sufficient. Do not overload washing machine. Wash separately from nonexposed laundry.
Carpeting (wall to wall)	Vacuum	Professional steam cleaning or Chemical disinfection (spray with a disinfectant then rinse with a carpet shampooer after 10 minutes of contact time)

Material	Cleaning Step	Disinfection Step
Upholstered furniture	Vacuum or Lint rollers or duct tape	Professional steam cleaning or Chemical disinfection (spray with a disinfectant then rinse with a carpet shampooer after 10 minutes of contact time)
Hardwood floors	Vacuum or Use disposable electrostatic wipes (Swiffer® pad)	Wash with a cleaning product safe for hardwood flooring (e.g., Murphy's Oil Soap®)
Laundry (towels, blankets, etc.)	Launder twice on a long cycle (for ≥14 minutes). Any water temperature and cleaner is sufficient. Wash separately from nonexposed materials. Do not overload machine to ensure maximal agitation and remove hairs.	
Cat trees, pet clothing, fabric collars, etc.	Discard all non-washable items and do not introduce new items until infection has been successfully treated.	
Pet food bowls	Soak dishes in hot, soapy water, scrub until clean, and rinse. Wear dishwashing gloves for protection against infection.	