

HEARTWORM

Dirofilaria immitis, the causative agent of heartworm disease, is transmitted by infected mosquitoes when *D. immitis* larvae are transferred to a healthy dog. Heartworm has no obvious clinical signs in the early stages, making preventative measures so much more important—especially as advanced infection may result in death.

Did you know?

- Despite availability of monthly preventatives, prevalence rates of canine heartworm has remained consistent nationwide.¹
- The earliest heartworm antigen and microfilariae can be detected postinfection is 5 months and 6.5 months, respectively.
- For more information and current recommendations on treating canine heartworm disease, go to heartwormsociety.org or capcvet.org.



Medical background

Primary vector

Mosquitoes

Transmission

Prepatent period approximately 6 months

Pathogen

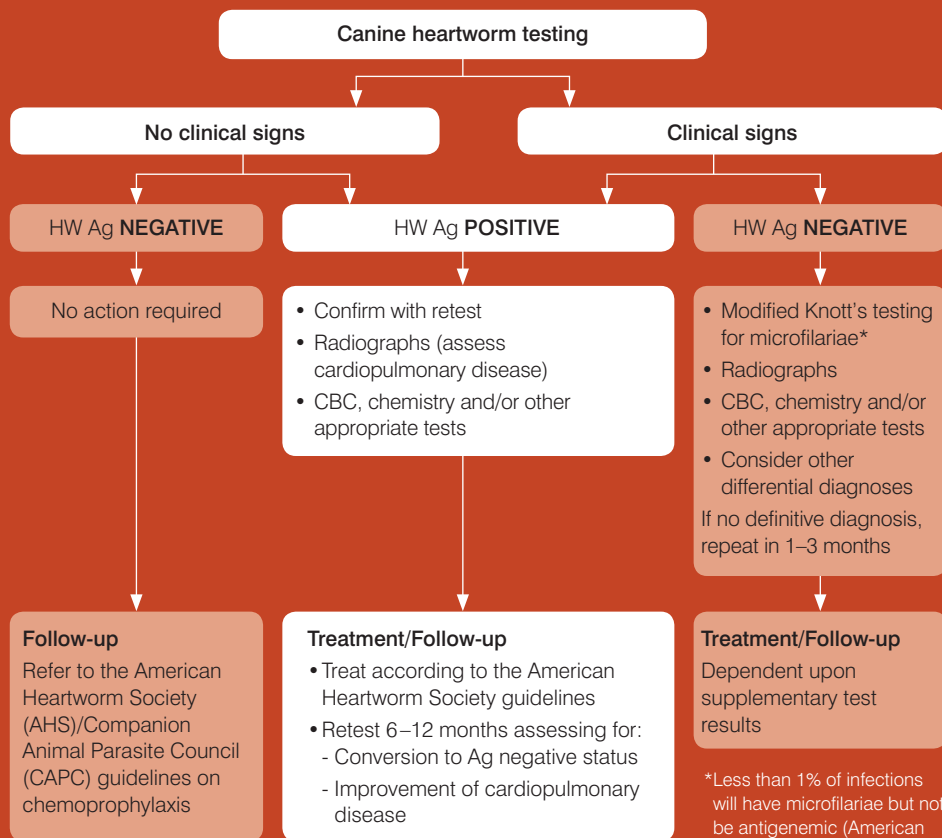
Dirofilaria immitis

Clinical presentation

Asymptomatic at first, later developing:

- Mild, persistent cough
- Lethargy
- Exercise intolerance
- Reduced appetite
- Weight loss

What to do with your result



*Less than 1% of infections will have microfilariae but not be antigenemic (American Heartworm Society)



1. Verdon DR. Heartworm infection continues its climb, survey reports. *DVM Newsmagazine*. February 1, 2006.