

**Table 1.** AHS-Recommended Treatment Protocol for Heartworm Disease

Day	Treatment
Day 0	Dog diagnosed and verified as heartworm positive: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Positive antigen (Ag) test verified with microfilaria (MF) test</li> <li>• If no microfilariae are detected, confirm with 2<sup>nd</sup> Ag test from a different manufacturer</li> </ul> Begin exercise restriction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The more pronounced the signs, the stricter the exercise restriction</li> </ul> If the dog is symptomatic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stabilize with appropriate therapy and nursing care</li> <li>• Prednisone prescribed at 0.5 mg/kg BID 1st week, 0.5 mg/kg SID 2nd week, 0.5 mg/kg EOD 3rd and 4th weeks</li> </ul>
Day 1	Administer heartworm preventive. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If microfilariae are detected, pretreat with antihistamine and glucocorticosteroid, if not already on prednisone, to reduce risk of anaphylaxis</li> <li>• Observe for at least 8 hours for signs of reaction</li> </ul>
Days 1–28	Administer doxycycline 10 mg/kg BID for 4 weeks. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduces pathology associated with dead heartworms</li> <li>• Disrupts heartworm transmission</li> </ul>
Day 30	Administer heartworm preventive.
Day 60	Administer heartworm preventive. First melarsomine injection 2.5 mg/kg intramuscularly (IM) Prescribe prednisone 0.5 mg/kg BID 1st week, 0.5 mg/kg SID 2nd week, 0.5 mg/kg EOD 3rd and 4th weeks. Decrease activity level even further. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cage restriction/on leash when using yard</li> </ul>
Day 90	Administer heartworm preventive. Second melarsomine injection 2.5 mg/kg IM
Day 91	Third melarsomine injection 2.5 mg/kg IM Prescribe prednisone 0.5 mg/kg BID 1st week, 0.5 mg/kg SID 2nd week, 0.5 mg/kg EOD 3rd and 4th weeks. Continue exercise restriction for 6 to 8 weeks following last melarsomine injections.
Day 120	Test for presence of microfilariae. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If positive treat with a microfilaricide and retest in 4 weeks</li> </ul> Establish year-round heartworm prevention.
Day 271	Antigen test 6 months after completion; screen for microfilariae.