



What is the recommended time interval for testing after exposure to heartworm?

The Heartworm society organization notes the earliest that heartworm (HW) antigen and microfilariae can be detected is about 5 and 6 months post infection, respectively. Antigenemia may be suppressed until about 9 months post infection in infected dogs receiving macrocyclic lactone (ivermectins or milbemycin) preventive therapy. If a patient has just entered the country consider that a reasonable interval is 7 months after last possible exposure to infection. Thus two tests may be needed to determine HW status. There is no need or justification for testing a puppy for antigen and microfilariae prior to 7 months of age. Consider these recommendations when you have adopted rescue patients entering your practice. A handy heartworm treatment toolkit application is available [here](#).