



Looking after your puppy

Congratulations on the arrival of your new puppy!

These notes outline the basics of how to care for your puppy. Health care issues including vaccination, intestinal worming, heartworm, flea control and desexing are all discussed. Other things such as diet, socialisation and training are also very important. If you would like more information on any of the topics in these notes don't hesitate to give us a call, or make a list and ask us at your next visit.

The first year of your puppy's life will be a lot of fun for you both – so enjoy it!

Their new home

Taking a puppy from its mother into your home can be an extremely stressful time for your puppy. Puppies need gentle handling and friendly contacts to help them adapt to their new family. If children are present, they need to be taught this puppy is not a toy as puppies can easily become scared of children in their new environment. Here is a list of items which your puppy will need in their new home:

- Bedding
- Lead, collar, name tag
- Range of toys
- Puppy food
- Food and water bowls

Health

Vaccinations: Your puppy should be vaccinated against certain diseases which are highly contagious and can be life threatening. More information is in the handout 'Vaccinations'.

Worming: Your puppy should be wormed with a good quality, broad spectrum intestinal wormer such as 'Milbemax' or 'Drontal' fortnightly until 12 weeks of age, monthly until 6 months of age and then every 3 months from 6 months of age.

Microchipping:

Pets should be microchipped by 12 weeks of age and registered with the local council by 6 months of age.

Heartworm prevention: Heartworm is different to intestinal worms. Heartworm is a type of worm that lives within the heart and blood vessels, causing potentially life threatening cardiac disease. It is spread by mosquitoes therefore pets within our area are at risk of contracting disease. There are multiple products on the market for heartworm prevention, so talk to your vet about the prevention measures which best suit your pet and your situation.

Desexing: Desexing is always recommended for non-breeding dogs. There is more information regarding desexing in the handout.

Fleas: Fleas suck blood from your dog, causing irritation, allergies and potentially anaemia. Monthly, year round flea control is recommended to prevent outbreaks and contamination of your pet's environment with flea eggs.

Nutrition

Nutrition is extremely important to your puppy or dog. Dogs are not carnivores (meat eaters), they are actually omnivores (like humans), and therefore meat alone is not a balanced diet for a growing puppy. We know there are many brands of dog food on the market; therefore it is often hard to choose a product that suits your needs. A **premium quality pet food** (such as Hills, Royal Canin or Advance) is recommended as they have a higher quality of ingredients and are fully balanced to support healthy growth. Premium foods offer a guaranteed analysis of ingredients and do not contain 'fillers' like many mainstream foods, therefore reducing the amount of food your dog needs to be fed and unwanted side effects such as flatulence.

Once your puppy has been weaned, provided their diet is complete and balanced, there is no longer a need to provide milk. Many puppies and kittens are lactose intolerant, therefore feeding cows' milk may cause diarrhoea and intestinal upset.

Oral health

Similar to humans dogs have **deciduous teeth**, so your puppy will lose its puppy teeth and will be replaced by adult teeth. This process generally occurs between **3 – 6 months of age**. Once your puppy has its adult teeth they are permanent and need to be looked after properly.

Bones are great to reduce boredom and help with oral hygiene. Bones such as chicken necks can be given 3-4 times a week. For larger breeds, brisket bones or long marrow bones can be given to help remove plaque build up on teeth. Bones should always be raw, never feed cooked bones as they can splinter and cause serious complications.

Canine Vaccination

Why should I vaccinate my dog?

One of the most important things you can do to give your dog a long and healthy life is to ensure they are vaccinated against common canine diseases. During the first weeks of life, immunity obtained from your dog's mother's milk will protect against common diseases, but after that period it's up to you to provide protection for your dog through vaccination.

When should I vaccinate my dog?

Initial vaccinations should commence at **6-8 weeks of age**. An initial course involves 2-3 vaccinations given every 4 weeks, with the final puppy vaccination given when your dog is over 12 weeks of age. After that period, vaccinations should be carried out yearly.

What should I vaccinate my dog against?

- C3 vaccination - basic or 'core' vaccination

This vaccination is required for every dog and protects against Parvovirus, Distemper virus and Hepatitis virus. These diseases are highly infectious, difficult to treat and often fatal.

- **Kennel cough vaccination**

Recommended for all dogs, is essential for dogs boarding in kennels or undergoing dog training. Protects against *Bordetella*, Parainfluenza virus and Adenovirus Type II, which are three of the most common causes of Canine Kennel Cough.

- **Leptospirosis & Coronavirus**

Recommended for future breeding dogs or pets living in high risk situations. This vaccination is not part of our standard vaccination protocol, however if indicated the veterinarian will recommend vaccination for these diseases.

Desexing

Desexing and neutering are terms used for the surgical removal of reproductive organs of male and female dogs.

Advantages of speying (desexing of female)

- **Prevention** of unwanted pregnancies
- **Prevention** of health problems associated with the female reproductive tract. These include:
 - **Mammary tumours**- significantly reduced risk if desexed prior to first heat/season. Desexing prior to their first heat will prevent 99% of these tumours.
 - **Pyometra** (infection of the uterus) - life threatening condition seen in older, non desexed females.
- Your pet will not come into season/heat- when your pet comes into heat, she will drip blood from her vulva for a period of 1-3 weeks.
- Reduced price of lifetime registration.

Advantages of castration (desexing of male)

- **Aggressive behaviour** is much less likely, both towards other people and other pets.
- Male desexed pets are more likely to grow into contented family members that are easier to control, **roam less** and fight less with other animals.
- Reduced territorial aggression

- **Reduced** chance of developing **testicular tumours**. These are common in older, non-desexed males.
- **Reduced** risk of **prostatic disease** commonly seen in older, non desexed males.
- Reduced price of lifetime registration

Disadvantages of desexing

There are not many disadvantages of desexing your pet. Occasionally, speyed female dogs may experience urinary incontinence after desexing. Incontinence occurs only in a small percentage of cases and can be controlled with medication. We do not consider that the small risk of incontinence should outweigh the many advantages of having your pet desexed.

When to desex

We recommend desexing of your pet at approximately **6 months of age** - before their first heat/season. As a clinic, we do not advocate the early desexing of pets due to increased anaesthetic risk.

Puppy Pre-school

Puppy preschool is an important introduction to training and socialisation. Most pet shops run puppy training classes.

Puppy preschool is run for puppies aged between 8-14 weeks of age. It is an important age as it is when they learn the most in an accepting and socialising manner. When they are older than 14 weeks of age, puppies have already learnt their behavioural foundations, and behaviour modification/training is much more difficult.

Topics covered in classes should include:

- Socialisation
- Health and well being
- Positive reinforcement
- Canine behaviour and body language
- General obedience
- Anxiety issues
- Common behavioural issues
- Environmental enrichment

Pet Insurance

Just like house, contents and car insurance; there are insurance options available for your dog. Pet insurance is offered by many different companies and can even be included in many cases as part of your own personal insurance.

Pet insurance is similar to other types of insurance- allowing you to make a claim for eligible vet bills. If you are thinking about getting pet insurance for your dog, consider **commencing a policy when your dog is young**, as most insurance companies won't cover your dog for pre-existing conditions.

Pet insurance gives you as the owner piece of mind that if an accident does happen to your dog or your dog is diagnosed with a chronic condition; you can do everything possible to ensure your dog is offered the best treatments possible.

If you have any questions regarding pet insurance, please don't hesitate to contact our team.

Puppy Schedule

6-8 weeks

- First vaccination (C3)
- Continue to worm fortnightly for intestinal worms (Milbemax/Drontal)
- Monthly flea prevention (spot on)
- Microchip
- Start puppy classes
- Consider pet insurance if this is an option for you

10-12 weeks

- Second vaccination (C3 + Kennel cough)
- Worm monthly for intestinal worms
- Continue monthly flea prevention (tablet or spot on)
- Start monthly heartworm prevention
- Microchip (if not already done)

14-16 weeks

- Third vaccination (if the second vaccination was done prior to 12 weeks of age)
- Worm monthly for intestinal worms. Continue this until 6 months of age.
- Monthly flea prevention- continue throughout your pet's life.

6 months

- Desex your dog
- Change to worming your dog every 3 months.
- Register your dog with the local council
- Proheart SR12 injection for heartworm prevention

15 months

- First yearly booster vaccination due (C3 + Kennel cough)
 - Proheart injection yearly from now on

Adult dog

- Monthly flea prevention
- Broad spectrum intestinal wormer every 3 months
- Heartworm prevention- dependent upon product used
- Yearly health check/vaccination



PIPER STREET
Veterinary clinic