



Basic Care of the Young Dog

WORMING

Puppies are susceptible to heavy worm burdens, especially roundworm and hookworm. These parasites can cause poor growth in your puppy or, at worst, KILL. Worm larvae are a PUBLIC HEALTH risk especially for children. We suggest that you worm your pup with a reputable product every 2 weeks from 2 weeks of age till 12 weeks of age, then monthly until 6 months of age. After this age, worming every 3 months will control the problem in most situations. Also, removing droppings (not burying) daily is imperative in order to prevent contamination of your yard and re-infestation of your pup. We recommend "Drontal" or "Endoguard" tablets, dosed according to bodyweight. If you are unsure about your pup's weight, bring your pup in and weigh it. It is a free service!

IMMUNISATION

Young dogs are particularly vulnerable to a variety of viral epidemic diseases such as Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Coronavirus, Leptospirosis and Infectious Tracheobronchitis (Kennel Cough). These

diseases incapacitate and kill thousands of dogs each year. They are all highly contagious and infection can occur indirectly by the pup contacting objects that are contaminated. Therefore isolation does not always afford protection. Vaccination of young, healthy dogs affords protection against these diseases in most circumstances.

The vaccination program that we recommend is: -

At 6-8 weeks of age with C3 + C2i (for Parvovirus, Distemper, Hepatitis virus, Coronavirus and Leptospirosis). A full examination and advice on all aspects of puppy care is included with the cost of vaccination. This injection primes the immune system to protect against the above diseases.

At 12-14 weeks of age with C7. This injection covers Parvovirus, Distemper, Hepatitis virus, Coronavirus and Leptospirosis and "Kennel Cough". Pups going to boarding kennels, shows, obedience schools, puppy pre-schools or mixing with other dogs on a regular basis ideally should have C7 vaccines. Again, a full examination is carried out and we discuss the care of your pup and any concerns you may have.

At 16-18 weeks of age a booster C7 is given to complete the puppy vaccination program.

Thereafter, a yearly booster is strongly recommended. There are variations on immunisation programs and they do change from time to time, as newer and

more effective vaccines become available. Prices may also vary according to the brand used. We use the highest quality vaccines and sterile equipment. A complete examination is carried out prior to immunisation. We also give you TIME to discuss any concerns you have about your pup.

HEARTWORM

This parasite is not affected by the usual worming preparations. Preventative medication needs to be given on a monthly or daily basis. The immature worms are transmitted from dog to dog via mosquitoes, so the isolated dog is still at risk.

Preventative medication can be started from 12 weeks of age. Your options are varied. Ask our staff at reception for the most suitable for you and your pup.

For dogs older than 6 months of age "Proheart" injection can be given. This is active for 9-12 months, very convenient and quite cost effective.

If you have any concerns about your prevention program, then have your dog tested every 12 months. You can start dogs under six months of age on preventative medication without testing. All dogs over six months of age should be tested before starting preventative medication or changing from daily to monthly or annual preventative regimes.

FEEDING

The most convenient way to feed a balanced diet to your pup is by using a

combination of "Puppy" tinned/semi-moist and dry foods. Good quality foods generally contain all the necessary nutrients for a growing pup.

Some pups may develop diarrhoea or skin problems with certain types of foods. Should this occur, discuss the problem with the vet. A change of diet to a home prepared or prescription diet may be suggested. However, any change of diet needs to be made gradually to avoid tummy upsets.

Milk and cereals are not required but may be used for one meal a day. Milk can cause lactose intolerance or hypersensitivity to milk proteins.

Calcium supplementation is suggested if you feed meat as the main source of protein. This applies especially to large and giant breeds of dogs. However, an excess of calcium can cause bone and joint problems as well. If you are in doubt, then consult one of our staff about your pup's requirements.

Generally you should cook meat. Meat used should be of human food quality. Cooking destroys a variety of pathogenic microorganisms without affecting the nutritional value of meat. You can feed the odd raw bone for dental exercise and to alleviate boredom. Alternatives include pigs' ears, Dentabone, Rawhide chews etc.

Vitamin supplementation is not required if your pup has a balanced diet. Vitamins may be required if your pup is recovering from illness or stress.

Obesity in dogs is mainly due to excess food and inadequate exercise. Tailor your pup's food to its level of activity.

You should feed your pup 3-4 times daily up to 3-4 months of age. This decreases to 1-2 meals a day when the pup is fully-grown (9-12 months of age for most breeds).

We can supply you with premium quality foods such as "Advance", "Eukanuba" or "Hills Science Diet". Premium quality foods are designed to provide the optimal nutritional diet. They supply easy feeding and complete nutritional requirements at all ages. The quality and consistency of the ingredients are guaranteed.

DESEXING / SPAYING

This procedure should be carried out on all animals not intended for breeding purposes. The usual age suggested is 5-8 months for males and females.

Desexing does not: -

- *Alter personality
- *Cause obesity

Desexing does: -

- *Decrease aggression in males
- *Decrease territorial marking eg. urinating on pot plants, tyres etc
- *Decrease wandering in both sexes
- *Prevent uterine infections in older female dogs
- *Prevent cyclic sexual activity
- *Prevent unwanted pregnancies
- *Reduce council registration fees
- *Reduce the risk of some cancers in both sexes

*Reduce the risk of prostate problems in older male dogs

The cost of desexing in young dogs is relatively inexpensive. Your fee includes the safest gaseous anaesthesia, pain relief, aseptic surgical technique, check-up prior to anaesthesia, suture removal, safe and proven instruments and materials.

In females spaying involves removal of the uterus and the ovaries. Desexing of the young male involves removal of the testes via a pre-scrotal incision.

Desexing/spaying dogs that are older, fat, have uterine infections or have tumours can be considerably more expensive and riskier.

"Animals are such agreeable friends... they ask no questions, they pass no criticisms" (George Eliot).

GENERAL CARE

Studies have shown that pet ownership can be beneficial to your physical and mental well-being. Dogs provide companionship, a non-critical ear and security. A dog should encourage responsibility and a respect for life in people of all ages. All aspects of care and maintenance of your new pup should be shared by all members of the family.

Give your pup a name as soon as possible, it will quickly learn to answer to it. Make sure you have a secure, sheltered spot that your pup can call it's own. Your pup should be able to rest undisturbed and

get into the routine of staying in this spot when placed here for sleep or rest.

Ensure that you have plenty of fresh water available, especially in the summer time. Also, in summer NEVER leave your dog in the car unattended without a window open for air circulation. It may take only a few minutes for irreversible heat stroke to develop in your dog on an average day in summer. Even an open window may not provide enough airflow.

REGISTRATION/MICROCHIPPING

Your dog is required to be registered from 6 months of age. Desexed dogs are cheaper to register. Microchipping is now the mandatory form of permanent identification from 12 weeks of age or earlier if ownership changes. If your dog is lost or stolen it is easier to trace. Council pounds, animal welfare organisations and vets have scanners to detect the chips. The cost of microchipping includes lifetime registration with the database in NSW. We can demonstrate the procedure for you if you wish.

RESPONSIBILITIES

State laws require you to keep your dog confined to the yard unless it is on a leash or in a council designated dog exercise area. Dogs must have a collar and identification tag on if outside the registered premises. Roaming dogs disturb neighbours, may be injured or killed or may injure or kill native animals or other pets. Of course an unrestrained dog is more likely to attack humans, especially

children... a tragic and potentially very expensive end-result of irresponsible dog ownership.

Your dog can be lead trained from an early age. Practice in your backyard for short periods only. Remember your pup cannot go outside until fully vaccinated. If you have any questions or need assistance training your pup with on lead walking please discuss collar types with staff. There are options even for the most boisterous of animals. If you feel your dog's temperament is unsound around other people or animals then use a muzzle when walking your dog. Nylon muzzles are cheap, lightweight and comfortable, but should not be left on the dog while it is unattended.

GROOMING

Is essential to keep your dog's skin and coat in good condition. Longer-haired breeds need more attention due to the tendency for their coats to matt. If left unattended, this may lead to skin irritations, infections, fly strike and a lot of discomfort. Bathing is usually required for inside dogs, from fortnightly to monthly. Only use shampoos registered for use in dogs. "Fido's Everyday" shampoo, the Dermcare range and "Allergroom" are both soap free shampoos that can be used regularly. Outside dogs do not need to be washed as regularly unless they develop specific skin problems.

HOLIDAYS

If you cannot take your dog with you then leave your dog in the care of a responsible neighbour, boarding establishment or home care service. Make sure you arrange with us your instructions if any illness or injury occurs in your absence.

TRAINING

This can begin at an early age; from 6 weeks or as soon as you get the pup home. Basic commands such as sit, come, stay and walking on a lead etc. can be learnt easily using positive reinforcement. Positive reinforcement is rewarding the pup with something that is desirable eg. food treat, toy or attention, to increase the chance of the animal repeating the behaviour. Research has proven positive reinforcement is the most effective way to train your puppy. Note that young dogs have a short attention span, so short (5-10min) and frequent training lessons are best. You should *always* reward correct responses with praise, food or toy. Once the command is *learnt*, occasional reinforcement is most effective.

Hitting and yelling at your dog is absolutely counter productive. This can result in a hand shy and anxious puppy. Unwanted behaviour is best ignored. Remember that touch, eye contact, bending down or talking to your pup, regardless of tone, is viewed as positive - they have your attention! Therefore the chance of them repeating the undesirable behaviour increases! Ask us about puppy preschool today. You will learn about behaviour, basic training and

health care maintenance. Pup will learn basic commands and be socialised with an adult dog, our resident cat, other puppy owners and puppies in a controlled environment. Above all it's FUN!

Obedience schools, private trainers and obedience clubs can start you off and take you down an almost limitless series of tasks that both you and your dog can enjoy. We also have books available that help you in this area. Ask at the reception desk for details of local organisations that may be able to help you.

"But was there ever a dog that praised his fleas" (W.B. Yeats)

FLEA CONTROL

The life cycle of the flea occurs mainly off the dog. For every flea on the dog there may be up to 100 in the animal's environment. So it is important to treat the animal, it's sleeping and grooming areas.

Fleas can cause severe skin irritation leading to chronic allergic dermatitis, skin infections and in extreme cases death due to blood loss anaemia! Fleas also act as the intermediate host for the common dog tapeworm.

Pups from 2 days of age can be treated with "Frontline" spray. We recommend "Frontline", "Advantage" or "Revolution" spot ons as they kill all three life stages of the flea.

For immediate effect, "Capstar" is a tablet that can be used to kill fleas on the animal for a 24 hour period. "Sentinel" is a product that can be used to prevent flea eggs from hatching and, also treats heartworms and intestinal worms. Please discuss with staff the most appropriate treatment for you and your pup.

Remember the key to flea control is persistence with proven, reliable and effective products designed to kill and control fleas. We do not recommend "Woolwash" or garlic.

FLY WORRY

This can be a considerable problem for some dogs. It generally develops in late summer and early autumn. Biting flies attack the ears and the tail base area. This leads to rubbing and scratching of the ears and skin. Bleeding, ulceration and aural haematomas (swelling of the earflap) can develop. These conditions are painful and can be expensive to treat.

This condition is more obviously prevalent on older dogs but dogs of any age can be victims. Attempt to control the problem by keeping affected areas clean. Apply antiseptic/repellent preparations to and around the affected areas e.g. "Fly Repella", "Repel-X" or "Permoxin".

CARE OF TEETH

Your pup's teeth are only temporary. Although very sharp and seemingly strong they will begin to deteriorate from about 12 weeks of age. You may notice the teeth

changing colour to a reddish or blackish colour. They will soon fall out after this happens. There will be some bleeding and a lot of chewing to ease the irritation associated with the eruption of the permanent teeth. If you think there is excessive bleeding then call the clinic. It may indicate a possible bleeding disorder.

Make sure that all the temporary teeth fall out. If they remain in place they can displace and distort the permanent teeth leading to poor dental occlusion and possibly pain. If you notice they are still in place as the permanent teeth are erupting contact the clinic for an assessment. They may need to be surgically removed. The teething process is complete by 7 months of age. However, the teeth are not fully mature till about 14 months.

In order to ease the irritation associated with teething use safe, hard nylon toys or large uncooked bones. Try to discourage your pup from eating dangerous objects such as rocks, corncobs, bits of metal etc.

You can help prevent a lot of dental problems by assisting your pup to get dental exercise with raw chicken wings and bones. Cleaning your pup's teeth is the best way to maintain oral hygiene. Dog toothbrushes and pastes are available from reception. If your pup is not co-operative then "Maxi Guard" oral cleansing gel is an excellent alternative or "Aquadent" can also be used as an in water solution that maintains oral

hygiene and decreases bad breath. Ask at reception.

Bad breath and poor appetite can be associated with gingivitis and periodontal disease. If left untreated, infection can gain access to the bloodstream and become lodged in other parts of the body causing severe health problems.

Dental check ups should be a part of your pup's yearly preventative health program. Smaller breeds of dogs and dogs on soft diets may require regular scaling and polishing of their teeth to prevent progressive deterioration.

Some owners assume that dental care is trivial. However, good dental hygiene, good diet and adequate exercise will give your dog a better quality of life. Always ensure that your dog's mouth is checked at your yearly check up.

SOME TIPS...

You should have your dog checked every 12 months at least. During this annual examination, vaccination will be carried out, perhaps heartworm testing or tests for intestinal worms will be suggested. Older dogs may require assessment of kidney or heart function especially if surgery and anaesthesia is required. This may include blood and urine tests, X-rays or electrocardiograms.

In other situations the following clinical signs may suggest the need to visit the clinic...

- A decrease or loss of appetite
- Hiding or resentment of handling
- Any form of lameness
- Vomiting and/or diarrhoea
- Coughing
- Any sign of discharge from the eyes, rubbing at the eyes or redness
- Head shaking, rubbing at ears, odour or discharge
- Excessive scratching, biting or rubbing at any points of the body
- Any known access or exposure to poisons such as snail baits, rat poisons or garden insecticides

Hopefully your dog will remain a happy and healthy individual. However, always act early if you suspect any of the above problems. A phone call and early advice or intervention may save your animals life or at least alleviate unnecessary pain.



"If you have to throw up, quickly get into the nearest comfy chair. If you can't make the chair, a Persian rug will suffice, or if none is available any carpeted surface."