

Puppy Care

Vaccination

Puppies require a series of vaccinations to protect them against some common infections which can be fatal. Dogs then require an annual booster vaccination to continue this protection.

- * 8 weeks - c3- Parvovirus, Distemper, Adenovirus
- * 12 weeks - c5 - Parvovirus, Distemper, Adenovirus, Parainfluenza, and Bordetella Bronchiseptica
- * 16 weeks - c5 - Parvovirus, Distemper, Adenovirus, Parainfluenza, and Bordetella Bronchiseptica

Heartworm

Heartworm is transmitted by mosquitoes, so your puppy does not need to be in contact with other dogs to become infected. The worms live inside the heart and can grow to 30cm in length, interfering with circulation and eventually causing heart failure and death. Generally there are no outward signs of the disease until it is quite advanced and although there are treatments available the disease is usually still fatal as the damage to the heart is permanent. Puppies should start heartworm prevention at 12 weeks of age. There are several different products available - either monthly tablets or "spot-ons", most of which also protect against a range of other parasites, or the convenience of the once yearly Proheart injection.

Proheart Injection

This injection is given once a year in adults dogs, but has to be given a little more frequently in pups:

- * 1st dose 12 weeks (when due for final puppy vaccination)
- * 2nd dose 6 months (when desexing is recommended)
- * 3rd dose 15 months (when 1st annual vaccination is due)
- * Then every 12 months

Worming

Intestinal worms can be transmitted from dogs to humans, especially children and can cause serious health problems. Pups can be born with intestinal worms or pick them up from their mother soon after birth and if left untreated, can be fatal. Please note that not all worm preparations are effective against all types of worms.

Worm puppies:

- * Every 2 weeks until 12 weeks of age, then
- * Every month until 6 months of age, then
- * Every 3 months

Fleas

Fleas can cause skin disease, anaemia and tapeworm infestation in your puppy. Washes, powders and collars generally only kill the fleas that are on the animal at the time of application and before long a flea infestation builds up again from an infested environment. There are a number of excellent "spot-on" preparations that are very effective, last for a whole month and kill fleas before they can even bite your dog.

Feeding

Puppies need extra calcium and phosphorous when they are growing, to develop healthy bones and

muscles. A good quality "puppy" food will have these added nutrients in the correct ratio and should make up at least 2/3 of your pup's diet. Dogs need to eat puppy food until they are 6 - 18 months of age depending on their breed. Large breed dogs should eat a puppy food specially formulated for their high growth rate. RAW bones should be fed from an early age, as chewing helps maintain healthy teeth and gums. NEVER FEED COOKED BONES. Chocolate, onion, garlic, grapes and fatty food should not be fed to dogs, as these may have fatal consequences.

Desexing

We recommend that male and female dogs are desexed at 6 months of age. There are several important reasons for this:

- * Reduces the risk of unwanted pregnancy and the number of unwanted puppies
- * Makes dogs more receptive to training (especially male dogs) and can make dogs less territorial and less aggressive
 - * Reduces the risk of mammary tumours in females
- * Eliminates the risk of uterine infections (pyometras) in female dogs which are fatal if not treated
- * Eliminates the risk of testicular cancer and reduces the risk of prostate problems in males.

Female dogs will come into season from 5-12 months of age depending on their breed. Female dogs DO NOT need to have a season before being desexed. In fact the risk of developing malignant mammary tumours is only 0.5% in dogs that are spayed before their first season. This jumps to 8% in dogs spayed after their first season then to a 26% risk after their second season.

Microchipping

This involves injecting a small microchip under the skin at the back of the neck. This microchip contains a number which is linked to your details in a data base, so that you can be reunited with your dog if they are ever lost. A good time to do this is at desexing when the dog is already under anaesthetic, but the microchip can be implanted anytime.

Puppy School

It is very important that puppies are socialised with other animals and people from an early age to prevent behavioural problems later in life. Puppy school is an excellent way to start this, as well as learn about puppy care, basic training and puppy behaviour in a fun small class environment.

Pet Insurance

Pet insurance gives excellent piece of mind that your pet will be able to get the treatment that is necessary if any unforeseen health problems should arise. There are several different companies which offer pet insurance with a wide range of different policies available. It is important to select a policy that will best suit your situation.