

PUPPY CARE

Thank you for trusting the staff at Superior Animal Hospital to care for your puppy. The following information lists some general recommendations and suggestions we have for your new pet.

NUTRITION: Because your puppy will grow as much in the first year of its life as an average human grows in the first 20 years of life, proper nutrition is critical to meet the needs of such rapid change.

We recommend: 1. **Science Diet Canine Growth**, or other premium puppy food, and water.

2. Chewable **Pet-Tabs** vitamins given as a nutritious treat if the pup is not on a premium diet.

3. **NO TABLE FOOD**, bones, or scraps be fed. These items can cause gastroenteritis, pancreatitis, excessive weight gain, intestinal obstructions, as well as behavioral problems.

4. Meals in measured amounts are fed 2 to 4 times a day, depending on the breed and age of the pup. Feeding meals is helpful in positive reinforcement housetraining.

VACCINATIONS: Many fatal diseases can be prevented with timely vaccinations.

We recommend:

1. Vaccination for Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, and Parainfluenza (**DHPP**) given 3 weeks apart through 16 weeks of age. The first set may be given as early as 6 to 8 weeks of age. Typically puppies get 2 to 4 of these vaccines during their puppyhood. This vaccine is required for surgery, puppy class, all boarding facilities, and needs to be boosted annually.
2. **Rabies** vaccine after 12 weeks of age, many times on the last puppy visit. This vaccine is required by state law and is good for 1 year. Subsequent vaccinations are given every 2 years.
3. **Lyme Disease** vaccination given as early as 9 weeks of age, with a booster in 2 to 3 weeks, in 6 months and 12 months, then boosted annually. This is highly recommended for dogs likely to encounter deer ticks.
4. **Bordetella** (Kennel Cough) vaccine is given to dogs that are boarded, attend puppy or training class, participate in dog shows, are regularly groomed, or hunt with groups of other dogs. The intranasal vaccine (protection lasts 6 months) can be given as early as 4 weeks of age. The injectable vaccine (protection lasts 12 months) needs to be given at 12 and 16 weeks.

***Please consult with our doctors to determine the most appropriate immunization schedule for your puppy.

EXAMINATIONS

Your puppy will receive a complete physical exam at the time of vaccinations. Exams help determine if there are existing congenital, hereditary, or developmental problems. We try to make the visits as informative for you and fun for your puppy as possible.

SURGERY

We recommend your female pup be spayed or male pup be neutered between 4 and 6 months of age. Small breed dogs generally are scheduled at 6 months of age to assure all of their baby teeth have fallen out. Alteration surgeries help avoid unwanted pregnancies, urine marking, heat cycles, as well as other medical and behavioral problems. We require that the final DHPP vaccine be given at least 1 week prior to scheduled surgery.

PERMANENT IDENTIFICATION

We recommend the **Home Again Microchip** for permanent identification. The microchip can be easily and painlessly placed under the skin at the time your pet is spayed or neutered.

GROOMING

All grooming procedures are best introduced when the puppy is young so it learns to tolerate being handled. Nails should be trimmed every two weeks. Brushing your puppy's haircoat helps control shedding and improve skin condition. Ear cleaning can be done weekly with recommended products and techniques. Your puppy may be bathed as frequently as every 2 weeks if a mild grooming shampoo is used. We recommend **EpiSoothe Shampoo** as an excellent shampoo for regular bathing.

DENTAL CARE

Puppies generally begin losing their baby teeth at 15 to 16 weeks of age. To prevent bad breath, tartar buildup, tooth infections and loss, start at-home dental care today.

We recommend:

1. Brushing your pup's teeth daily using recommended products; introduction to brushing the teeth develops the routine and increases the pet's tolerance of touching around the mouth.
2. Feeding primarily dry food.

PARASITES

Parasites are a common problem with puppies.

We recommend:

1. Checking a stool specimen microscopically (fecal exam) for intestinal parasite eggs at the time of your puppy's first or second visit. If the pup has recently received deworming medication, we may recommend rechecking the stool again.
2. Giving heartworm prevention medicine (**Heartgard Plus** or **Tri-Heart Plus**) once-a-month during the mosquito season (May through October). Fecal Exam (above) should be performed prior to beginning the preventative.
3. Using **Frontline** or **Vectra 3D** once-a-month to keep fleas from overwhelming your pet and home. Fleas can be seen all year long, especially in late summer and fall.
4. Using **Frontline** or **Vectra 3D** once-a-month throughout the tick season in puppies exposed to ticks. This will help minimize the transmission of tick-borne diseases such as Lyme Disease and Erlichiosis. These pups should also be vaccinated for Lyme Disease.

BEHAVIOR & TRAINING

Early socialization is extremely important for the behavioral development of your puppy. We offer a five week socialization class for puppies 8 to 16 weeks of age. Many past participants have stated that this was the best thing they ever did for their pet. Arrowhead Dog Training and Twin Ports Dog Training also have puppy kindergarten classes as well as beginning and advanced obedience training.

PET INSURANCE

Medical insurance for pets can be of great benefit to you and your pet. Packages through **Veterinary Pet Insurance (VPI)**, **Trupanion** and **Purina Care** makes insurance a very affordable option and assures that you will financially be able to take care of any medical problems that may arise.

If you have any questions about your pet, please call us at 715-392-6211.