



Puppy Advice

Congratulations on your new puppy!

Introduction

A happy dog gives immense pleasure and satisfaction. Owning a dog involves you in a social responsibility for they are dependent on you for everything that makes their life a happy one. Keeping your pet happy involves providing for all of their needs such as food, shelter, affection, and care in sickness. Puppies should stay with their mother until they are at least seven weeks old (preferably eight or nine weeks), by which time they should be fully weaned and have begun toilet training. Many puppies are in their new homes by 6 weeks of age –if this is the case we recommend starting vaccinations straight away. Your new puppy should be bright and alert. If it is lethargic or obviously out of condition have it checked by a vet before accepting it into your home.



Feeding

The change from the litter environment to your home can be quite dramatic for your puppy, so patience, reassurance and kindness are very important at this time. The puppy at this stage has specific nutritional needs that are different from an adult both in the type of food and frequency of feeding. A growing puppy requires extra protein, energy, vitamins and minerals (particularly calcium) for optimum growth and health. Young puppies need three to four meals a day until they are around 12 weeks old, then two to three meals a day until about 16 weeks old. From then until fully grown two meals a day should be given. Adult dogs may be fed once or twice a day – however it is preferable to feed dogs twice daily for larger breeds due to various conditions that may develop from once daily feeding.

It is important not to vary the diet too much when the puppy is less than 16 weeks as this can often cause an upset tummy and diarrhoea. Puppies should be given a diet of a mixture of biscuits and tinned meat. The biscuits we have available in the clinic are specially designed for puppies and will ensure your puppy will receive a complete balanced diet. The puppy biscuits have extra calcium and the essential vitamins and minerals that puppies require, larger breeds of dogs require more calcium to help prevent bone development diseases such as Hip dysplasia and OCD and the puppy food designed for large breeds accommodates for this. Ensure you feed small breed puppies (eg Bichons, Chihuahuas) small breed food (check label) and medium breed puppies (eg border collies, staffies) medium breed food, and large breed puppies (eg Labradors, German

shepherds) large breed food. You can soak the biscuits in warm water but at 12 weeks your puppy should be eating crunchy biscuits this will ensure that your puppy's teeth remain healthy and strong.

Remember that puppies are just like babies and needs lots of sleep! After eating, take your puppy out to toilet to train him/her, and then always let your puppy sleep.

Teeth

Just like humans, dog's teeth should be brushed. In the clinic we have available toothbrushes and specially designed liver flavoured toothpaste for dogs (do not use human toothpaste as it is not designed to be swallowed. It is a good idea to brush your puppy's teeth a couple of times a week to keep them healthy and help prevent periodontitis. Periodontitis is a severe dental disease, which is caused by the build up of plaque on your dog's teeth. This can cause rotting of your dog's teeth and severe inflammation and bleeding of the gums. This causes extreme pain to your dog and can be very serious especially if infection from the rotten teeth gets into the bloodstream. Regular brushing can prevent this disease and while your puppy is young is the best time to start. You must be careful not to press too hard as this hurts their gums. If you are finding it difficult to brush your puppy's teeth, just ask us for ideas to keep his/her teeth clean. Feeding commercial dry food helps keep teeth strong and clean.

Housing and Restraint

This should be warm and without draughts or dampness. A kennel should be raised from the ground and have at least three wind and watertight insulated walls. A removable roof is a good idea for cleaning purposes. The dog will be quite happy living in this type of kennel, but most people (especially with smaller breeds) prefer their dog to live inside as a member of the family. This way s/he will give you much more pleasure and companionship, and in addition you will be much more likely to notice the onset of any illness or problems that may occur. Water should be available at all times. When taking your puppy for a walk or if temporarily restraining him/her, do not use choker chains. Use a lead and collar or alternatively if your puppy pulls hard on the lead consider a harness or gentle leader. Please discuss this with a vet if concerned.



Injections (Vaccinations)

We are able to offer protection for your dog against five major diseases that can make puppies very sick or endanger their lives. These recommendations are for your general information and may be modified on an individual basis to suit your pet and the environment in which your pet lives. Puppies are particularly likely to show severe symptoms or die if not protected. The five major diseases of dogs that can be prevented by immunisation are: **Parvovirus, Canine Viral Hepatitis, Distemper, Leptospirosis, and Kennel Cough.**

The first vaccination should be given at 6-8 weeks of age and followed by a booster 3-4 weeks later and then a final vaccination at 14 to 16 weeks of age. All of the vaccines are repeated 1 year later. For dogs that stay at boarding kennels or attend dog shows or similar events annual

vaccination for all of the above diseases is recommended. In addition an intranasal vaccine for Bordetella (Bacterial Kennel Cough) is recommended—and is compulsory for boarding kennel entry. Puppies should not be exposed to unvaccinated dogs or places where unvaccinated dogs may roam until after their final puppy shot at 12 weeks. Some information about the specific diseases for which we vaccinate dogs:

Parvovirus

This highly contagious virus causes severe and prolonged vomiting and diarrhoea, dehydration and frequently death. The mortality rate is very high in young puppies who may also die from heart failure due to damage to the heart. Signs of parvoviral infection include vomiting, diarrhoea (usually containing blood), severe abdominal pain and depression.

Distemper Virus

Distemper is a highly contagious and deadly viral disease affecting dogs of all ages. The symptoms are coughing and discharge from the eyes and nose, followed by vomiting and diarrhoea. Permanent brain damage often occurs weeks or months later - leading to euthanasia in many cases.

Viral Hepatitis

This highly infectious virus affects mainly in puppies and causes vomiting and diarrhoea, liver and kidney damage with death or recovery usually within 2-4days. In recovered dogs recovery from weight loss caused by the illness is slow and often permanent liver or kidney damage occurs.

Leptospirosis

Usually caught from the urine of rats or other infected dogs; this bacteria causes liver/kidney damage and is often fatal. This disease can also be transmitted to people and is a serious illness for us as well.

Kennel Cough

This is an extremely contagious disease causing persistent coughing for up to 10 weeks. It is not confined to kennels as the name suggests, so it is recommended to dogs that frequently come into contact with other dogs. It is rarely fatal unless complications such as pneumonia develop. Some dogs will stop eating and may become depressed and lethargic.

Fleas

Fleas have the potential to be a major problem for all pets and owners in our climate—the warm humid climate in spring through to autumn can result in rapid rises in the flea population. People are often mystified by the appearance of fleas on their pet or in their house, but an understanding of the flea life cycle and life-stages can help in developing a strategy for preventing flea problems. The development of highly effective and safe flea control products over the last 10-15 years means that complete elimination is now possible. The flea population has four main lifestages which at any one time are approximately the following proportions:

eggs(50%)
larvae(35%)
pupae/cocoons ...(10%)
adults (5%)



Less than half of the adults will actually be on an animal so approximately 98% of the flea population is in the environment! Female fleas can lay between 25- 50 eggs per day each! The flea

life cycle can be completed in as short a time as 3 weeks or longer than 12 months (where pupal stages hibernate for long periods). These factors can lead to sudden exponential flea population growth when the conditions are suitable. Each owner/pet situation is different so please feel free to discuss your needs with one of our staff. The most effective flea control products available now are topical treatments, which are applied to the skin on the back of the neck and tablets/chews that provide continuous cover:

Advantage- Applied monthly in dogs and cats kills fleas only, safe to use on puppies and kittens 6 weeks of age or older and safe to use on pregnant and lactating animals

Comfortis and Nexgard- chewable tablets that kills for fleas and ticks for a month.

Advocate (Previously called Advantage Multi) - applied monthly both in cats and dogs. Advocate contains Moxidectin, which also treats some intestinal worms, sarcoptic and demodectic mange and ear mites. This will not remove tapeworm so it is recommended that a worming tablet is given at least every three to 12 months. Safe to use on puppies and kittens 7 weeks and older.

Revolution - applied monthly in cats and dogs. As with advocate this will also treat mites and some intestinal worms, but not tapeworm.

Worming

Worms infestations are most serious in young dogs, but can affect any age. There are several types of worms that can affect dogs, which cannot all be treated by using one drug. The most effective worming tablets contain multiple drugs to kill all types of worms. Please ask one of our staff if you are unsure what to use. Worming should be done fortnightly from 4-12 weeks of age, then every month until 6 months of age, and then 3 month life long. Bitches should be wormed every 3 weeks during pregnancy and lactation.

Roundworms

Puppies are often born with these worms. Signs may include diarrhoea, weight loss, a potbelly, and poor coat condition.

Hookworms

These worms can be passed to the puppies through their mother's milk, by skin penetration, or by mouth. They cause damage to the intestine and anaemia.

Whipworms

Whipworms affect mainly dogs over 12 weeks of age and cause diarrhoea often with flecks of blood.

Tapeworms

These include the Hydatids tapeworm, which is rare but can affect people, and the flea tapeworm *Dipylidium* that is picked up by eating fleas when grooming. If your dog eats grass then s/he may ingest slugs or snails that also carry tapeworms.

Grooming and Skin

Dog coats should be brushed or combed regularly. Dogs should not be bathed more frequently with shampoo than is necessary (not more than once a month) as it does remove some of the protective oil from the coat and skin temporarily and may dry the skin or expose it to irritants.

Washing out mud or dirt with water does not have this effect. Only use reputable dog shampoos and make sure you rinse out thoroughly. Oatmeal and aloe vera based shampoos are gentle on their skin. Indoor dogs may need to have their nails clipped regularly, as they are not exposed too much wear. Some dogs that have chronic skin problems require special medicated shampoos. Some breeds of dogs eg Shih Tzus and poodles, require their fur to be regularly cut. You may wish to do this yourself or prefer a professional groomer to do this (especially around delicate areas like the eyes).

Neutering/Spaying

Like most cities - Auckland has a big stray dog problem: thousands of unwanted dogs and puppies are destroyed each year by the SPCA and the pound. Neutering your female or male puppy is the first step in population control. These operations do not change a dog's basic personality. Spaying a female dog involves the removal of both the ovaries and uterus. This prevents her from coming into heat or becoming pregnant. It also significantly reduces the chances of her developing mammary and uterine cancers, and pyometra which is a very serious infection of the uterus, which can be fatal. Allowing your female dog to have a litter before she is spayed contributes to the stray population significantly and also dramatically increases her chances of pyometra or mammary cancers.



Neutering (castrating) a male dog involves the removal of both testicles. This does not change his basic personality but reduces the chance of him wandering, becoming aggressive, or displaying embarrassing sexual behaviour. It also greatly reduces the incidence of some types of cancer, prostatic disease, and hernias. Neutering and Spaying should be performed when your dog is around 6 months of age.

Training

Dogs need regular care and attention to be happy, healthy and well adjusted and socially acceptable. Although they are domesticated, their essential nature differs from ours and, without adequate training and control, dogs can become either aggressive or a nuisance. So therefore training in some form is essential. Obedience can be very helpful in ensuring your puppy grows into a well-behaved and well socialised companion. Most dogs are eager to please their owners, so a reward of affection or food is more effective than punishment. A puppy's main learning period is from 8-20 weeks of age and ideally they should be socialised by exposure to different situations/environments. However remember to ensure your puppy has no contact with other dogs (especially unvaccinated dogs) until after the final vaccinations (10-14 days later). Please ask our receptionist for more information regarding specific training or obedience schools.

House Training



For very young pups choose an area such as the laundry where you can cover a small area with paper or puppy pads. First thing every morning, last thing at night, and after each meal; the pup should be placed on the paper/pads and encouraged to go to the toilet. If successful - make a fuss, praise him/her, and even use food rewards. If not don't worry - your pup will soon establish a pattern. Be very patient but consistent, and remember that some puppies do not have much bladder control until around 12 weeks of age. At 16 weeks the paper/pad should be able to be removed and the same pattern established outside. Don't be discouraged if things are not going well, all puppies learn at a different rate. The important thing is to be consistent and provide positive reinforcement. Punishment or "rubbing its nose in it" does not

help, as your puppy doesn't understand what it is doing wrong. You must catch your puppy in the act and instead of telling your puppy off quickly pick it up and place it onto the paper or pads or outside so it will learn where it will need to go when it has to toilet.

Crate Training

Containing your puppy in a cage during the day while you are at work is a great idea. This method of raising your puppy will mean that you know that your house will be safe, as the puppy will not be able to rip up carpet, tear up curtains and pillows or chew things that little puppies shouldn't chew. This can also keep your puppy safe, as there will be no poisonous substances that your puppy can ingest or electrical cords to chew. Your puppy will begin to treat this area as their own it will be where they sleep they will treat it like their "den". As puppies don't like to toilet where they sleep toilet training can be easy. After eating place your puppy outside to toilet after a few minutes place your puppy into it's cage to sleep, once your puppy wakes take it straight outside to toilet, you can say the word "toilet" as your puppy is going. This can teach your puppy to toilet on command, which can be very useful later on.

Being in a cage can be scary at first but do not allow barking as the puppy will think this is acceptable later on in life. Remember all dogs grow up and you will not want a big dog barking all day long.

Registration and Microchipping

It is now a requirement that as well as being registered at 3 months (12 weeks) with your local Council. You must register your dog within 72 hours of acquiring him/her if older than 3 months. All new puppies are microchipped. The council allows for a 2 month period following registration for this to be carried out. It can be done with the last vaccination at 12 weeks or in some cases at the time of neutering or spaying (you must advise the council that you have booked the microchipping to be done at the time of neutering). We register our cats and dogs with the New Zealand Microchip database on www.animalregister.co.nz. Having your pet microchipped can enable us to return your pet to you if he is lost.

For registration, contact:

Manukau Animal Shelter
33 McLaughlins Road
Wiri
Manukau
261 8033

Failure to register your dog could result in fines up to \$300 or the loss of your dog.

Exercise

Irrespective of the size of the dog he or she should be taken for a short walk at least once a day. If



this is not possible you can provide adequate physical exercise (for smaller dogs at least) in your back yard with games involving balls, sticks or toys. Some dogs tend to develop behavioural problems such as chewing, digging and continuous barking if they lack stimulation, take this into consideration when choosing what type of dog is suitable for you and your lifestyle.

Insurance

Pet insurance is designed to take some of the financial burden away from pet owners in the event their pet suffers an unexpected illness or accident. A host of new treatments are now available to pet owners, but they are increasingly expensive. Tests such as MRI's and treatments such as chemotherapy, and increasingly sophisticated surgical procedures now mean your pet has a good chance of recovering from events when only a few years ago euthanasia would have been the only option.

Pet insurance gives you some protection against potentially major veterinary bills, and means you can make decisions about your pet's future based on maintaining and improving quality of life, not around whether or not you can afford the treatment. Pet insurance policies can range from covering only major medical and surgical events, through to helping you pay for a more comprehensive range of pet and pet-related expenses.

Any other questions you can contact our friendly, trained staff on (09) 299 8932 at Auckland Veterinary Centre.

Puppy Schools and Dog Training Clubs

Counties Dog Training Club

Pukekohe

(09) 236 0207- Secretary

All Breeds Dog Training Club

Onehunga

(09) 576 8700- Anne

Manukau Dog Training Club

Ardmore

secretary@manukaudogtrainingclub.

East Auckland Dog Obedience

Flatbush

(09) 279 8430- Sue

