



Puppy Care Plan

This plan should help to answer some of the most commonly asked questions about your puppy. If you have further questions we are more than happy to discuss any concerns or queries you may have.

Your puppy's first six months

This table helps you keep track of your puppy's needs.

PUPPY'S AGE	TREATMENTS	DATE COMPLETED
6 WEEKS	Worm treatment.	
8 WEEKS	1st vaccination, insurance and establish a programme for flea and worm control.	
10 WEEKS	Second vaccination with nurse and worming.	
11 WEEKS	Allowed outside and can socialise with other dogs but no access to water courses.	
12 WEEKS	Third vaccination with nurse and worm/flea check.	
14 weeks	Allowed access to water courses.	
4 MONTHS	Free weight check with nurse and worm/flea check.	
5 MONTHS	Free weight check with nurse and worm/flea check.	
6 MONTHS	Free weight check with nurse and worm/flea check. Book in neutering if no plans to breed.	

Vaccinations

We routinely vaccinate puppies at eight, ten and twelve weeks of age. Until this age, they are protected by maternal antibodies passed from the mother provided that she has been vaccinated.

We vaccinate for Distemper, Parvovirus, Infectious Canine Hepatitis and Leptospirosis.

For puppies the primary vaccination course is recommended as follows:

8 weeks: An injection is given which includes all components of the dog vaccine; Distemper, Parvovirus, Infectious Canine Hepatitis, and Leptospirosis. It is also recommended to vaccinate against Kennel Cough now or at the time of the second injection.

10 weeks: A second injection is given for the 'dog-to-dog' transmitted diseases (Distemper, Parvovirus and



Infectious Canine Hepatitis). This will allow the pup to socialise at the earliest opportunity i.e. at 11 weeks of age. We will usually vaccinate for kennel cough at this time if your puppy is doing to be at increased risk of this.

12 weeks: A third vaccine will be given for Leptospirosis. Immunity to this will develop 2 weeks following the injection so it is important that your dog does not go near the more risky areas when socialising outside i.e. don't let your dog play in any watercourses.

A booster vaccination is required every year. At this time your puppy will have a full health check and there will be opportunity to discuss any concerns you may have.

A note about Kennel Cough

Kennel cough is a very misleading name for this respiratory disease as it suggests it is only transmitted in kennels. However, your dog is at risk of this highly contagious disease whenever he/she comes into direct contact or shared airspace with other dogs (kennels, dog shelters, dog training classes, agility, dog shows, dog walking and dogs meeting each other at the local park). The correct name for kennel cough is Infectious Tracheobronchitis or Canine Infectious Respiratory Disease.

Like with many diseases, kennel cough is multifactorial. The Kennel Cough Vaccine does include the two most common agents that are responsible for over 90% of cases.

Worming

All puppies have the potential to contract worms. They can be passed from their litter mates or from their mother's milk or faeces. The main worm of concern at this age is the round worm *Toxocara canis*. Puppies can be born with this if the mother has not been correctly wormed as it can also pass across the placenta from day 42 of pregnancy. Puppies can become very ill with these worms causing diarrhoea, poor growth and in some cases death. These round worms can also infect children so it is especially important to worm puppies if they live in households with children.

To keep your puppy safe from round worms:

Worm every 2 weeks until 12 weeks of age

Worm every month from 3 months to 6 months old

Worm every 3 months from 6 months of age and older

Fleas



Fleas are the most common parasite affecting dogs. They are prevalent all year due to the warm summer months and the use of heating during the winter. Flea eggs have been reported to remain dormant for 3 years; they can live in carpets, between floorboards, under the cooker, anywhere! One adult flea can lay up to 50 eggs a day and can survive 3 months if it gets a daily feed. The adult flea represents 5% of the flea population with the remaining 95% being eggs and larvae living in your home and the environment. Just because you can't see them doesn't mean they aren't there! Treatment therefore, should be aimed at killing both the adult flea and the stages living in the environment.

Treatment and prevention should be aimed at both the animal and the environment. All cats, rabbits and dogs in the house should be treated. They can each transfer fleas to one another. All products should be used as frequently as recommended by the manufacturer as most causes of failure to prevent or treat is down to poor compliance. It can take up to 6 months of treatment targeting both the adult fleas and the environmental stages to clear an infestation.

Neutering

If you have no plans to breed from your pet then neutering is often recommended. There are many benefits to neutering, not least reducing the risk of unwanted puppies. We recommend spaying females 3 months after their first season. We do not recommend neutering for all male dogs; the decision is made on a case by case basis depending on their breed, temperament and environmental factors such as if they will be in contact with entire female dogs. We usually advise waiting to neuter male dogs until they are 12-18 months of age but neutering can be performed as early as 6 months if required. If you have any questions about neutering, we are happy to discuss this at any of your pet's weight checks.

Microchipping

Microchipping is a form of identification that is permanent, safe and cost effective. It is approximately the size of a grain of rice and is inserted in a similar fashion to a vaccination injection. From 6th April 2016 microchipping became a legal requirement and is the responsibility of the breeder, therefore when you buy your puppy it should already be microchipped. If a breeder does not comply with the law they may face criminal prosecution and a £500 fine.

All lost animals that are brought to the vets, police or animal shelters are routinely scanned for the presence of a microchip. Each chip has an individual barcode that corresponds to your details so that you can be contacted when your animal has been found. Several cases have been recorded of pets being reunited with their worried owners after going missing for months or even years in some cases!

If for any reason you are sold a puppy that has not been microchipped, this is a breach of the law and you should book your puppy in with us as soon as possible.



Insurance

The standard of veterinary care available to animals these days is extremely high. However, there is no NHS available for animals and good veterinary care is not always cheap. When you consider that one in three animals require veterinary treatment as a result of accident or illness, we strongly recommend taking out pet insurance. Please see our insurance fact sheet on the website for more information.

Feeding

Sensible feeding of young animals is extremely important. To ensure correct growth and weight gain puppies need to be fed a properly balanced puppy food diet. The nursing team have considerable knowledge regarding pet nutrition and are happy to talk through the types of diets available.

Exercise, socialisation and environmental enrichment

Socialisation may be described as the process whereby a puppy learns how to interact and respond to its environment as well as people and other animals. There is a critical period in a puppies life during which socialisation is crucial in order to avoid potential behaviour problems at a later date. This period begins with the breeder and continues until the puppy is 12-16 weeks old and it is during this time the puppy must be exposed to a variety of sights, sounds, odours and situations. A good way for owners to achieve a complete and thorough socialisation is to follow a checklist of basic tasks to avoid missing important stimuli.

Regular exercise is also important in the development and growth of your puppy. In general, regular and controlled exercise two or three times a day with on and off lead activities will allow you puppy to develop normally and experience new things safely. Regular exercise is also important for young dogs to ensure muscular development as well as preventing early onset obesity. There are no hard and fast rules as to the quantity of exercise that each puppy needs but it is important to be aware that both under and over exercising when young can cause joint damage and lead to arthritis later on in life.

Allow your puppy supervised access to the outdoors prior to normal feeding times, that way your puppy will associate coming back into the house with feeding. Make a fuss of your puppy and have some fun playtime to reinforce the feeling of security from being at home.

If you are introducing a new puppy into a household with cat(s) already present, we recommend you keep them in the same house but separate for a while, followed by slow and supervised introductions. Make sure each has their own space; cardboard boxes provide a good place for young puppies to feel safe and beds at various heights will give the grown-ups a place to escape youthful enthusiasm.

Try to make your puppy work a little for their favourite treats. This can be achieved by hiding (non-perishable) treats at various locations around the house, or try placing food in old drinks bottles with holes



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cut in; when they roll the bottle around your puppy will be rewarded with food.