



PUPPY CARE

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW PUPPY!

We are so happy you have a new “furry” addition to your family. Your puppy’s first year is the most important, to not just develop a bond with you, but to also get the healthiest start we can provide for his or her life. Owning a puppy is a lifelong relationship, and we want to help and support you along the journey that is dog ownership.

The four most important things to keep your puppy healthy and active are:

1. VACCINATIONS - first vaccination at 8 weeks of age.
2. WORMING - from two weeks of age.
3. DESEXING - at six months of age.
4. FEEDING - a planned and balanced diet.



VACCINATIONS

PARVO, DISTEMPER and HEPATITIS. These three viral diseases are “killers” so it is important to protect your puppy by way of vaccination. The younger your pup is the more likely it will die if it gets PARVO. It is very important to give your pup its first vaccination at eight weeks of age, followed by booster vaccinations at 12 and 16 weeks.

VACCINATE YOUR PUPPY AS SOON AS YOU GET IT!

KENNEL COUGH

Kennel cough is a highly contagious respiratory disease your puppy can contract from being in the vicinity of an infected dog as infectious parasites are spread through the air. Once contracted the bacteria causes uncontrollable coughing, and retching. Most boarding facilities these days require this vaccination to be up to date before your dog can stay with them. It needs to be administered at least 3 days prior to boarding and is then given annually.

LEPTO 3-WAY

There are several different strains of Lepto in New Zealand, 3 of which we are seeing more and more in our farm dogs. A vaccination is available that covers all three of these strains. Once the initial vaccination is given, a booster injection is required 1 month later, and then it is an annual vaccination. This vaccination should be considered for all dogs on farms, or who interact with farm dogs or stock. Your vet will talk to you about both of these diseases, as vaccinations are available.

AFTER VACCINATION CARE

After vaccination, your pet may be lethargic and off its food for a day or two. Your pet may have some slight swelling or tenderness at the injection site. Access to food and water and a comfortable area to rest are usually all that is required for your pet to recover. However, if the response seems more severe or you are concerned for any reason, please contact your veterinarian for advice.

WORMING

Worms can cause poor health and even death in young puppies. No matter how well-bred and hygienically they are reared, all pups get worms. To control worms, you must start worm treatment early (at two weeks of age) and repeat it regularly.

NORMAL WORMING GUIDELINE

- Worm at: two, four, six, eight and ten weeks of age.
- Then at: three, four, five, six, nine and twelve months of age.
- Adult dogs require worming with an all wormer twice a year.

Make sure you use a good quality worm treatment and weigh your pup to ensure the correct dose. There are 3 options available for worming.

- 1) An oral all wormer tablet (Drontal)
- 2) A topical treatment (Advocate, applied to the back of the neck directly onto the skin) which will treat worms and fleas at the same time (This is only used from 8 weeks of age) This treatment is not an all wormer, so an all wormer tablet would need to be used every 6 months.
- 3) An oral chewable tablet/treat (Nexgard Spectra) This will treat fleas, ticks and most intestinal worms (This is only used from 8 weeks of age (This treatment is not an all wormer, so an all wormer tablet would need to be used every 6 months.

FLEA TREATMENT

There are a few different flea treatments available.

- 1) Frontline or Advantage. These are topical treatments (applied directly to the skin on the back of the neck) these treatments continue working for 4 weeks.
- 2) Advocate. A topical treatment (applied directly to the skin on the back of the neck) will treat fleas and worms for 4 weeks. (This is not an all wormer)
- 3) Nexgard Spectra. An oral tablet which treats parasites from the inside out (excluding tapeworm). This lasts for 4 weeks.
- 4) Seresto Collar. This is a flea collar which provides up to 8 months flea protection.



It is very important to always keep up to date with flea treatment to break the cycle and get good environmental control.

DESEXING

FEMALES

Your puppy will have her first heat between six and eight months of age (smaller dogs mature earlier). They can (and will) get pregnant at this stage. The best way to avoid unwanted pregnancies is to have your puppy spayed. Spaying removes the ovaries and uterus so she will not come into heat and breed. We recommend that she is spayed before her first heat (at around six months of age), as this also reduces the risk of mammary tumours developing in the future.

There is no proven advantage in allowing a bitch to complete her first heat cycle, or to breed.

De-sexed animals have a different metabolic rate to entire animals so it is a good idea to reduce the amount you feed by about a quarter to one-third after her surgery to maintain a good weight. Make sure you are also assessing his or her appearance. Some may need more, or less than is recommended.

MALES

Your puppy will start to wander in search of female dogs on heat from about six months of age. (This is a major cause of road accidents.) To prevent this, he should be castrated at approximately 6 months of age. Older dogs can still be castrated but there may be less effect on wandering and aggressive behavior than in those castrated at an earlier age. Once again after surgery reduce the amount fed to your dog by about a quarter or one-third to maintain a healthy weight.

THE SURGERY

Both spaying and castration surgery are performed under general anaesthesia so we require your dog to stay with us for the day. Dogs are admitted to the clinic between 8am and 8.30am in the morning and can go home that afternoon. Do not feed your dog after 7.00pm the night before surgery or give any fluids on the day of surgery. They will have stitches which need to be removed in ten days. Phone the clinic to book today.

FEEDING

Your puppy will grow quickly between weaning and six months of age. It is important to provide high quality food at this stage. Canned and dry foods specifically for puppies are available eg. Hills or Royal Canin. With these specially formulated diets extra Calcium is not required. Give your puppy large shanks or brisket bones with no loose or sharp pieces. These are great for the teething as well as for entertaining your pup. Avoid chicken and fish bones or any small bones which could be swallowed or splintered.

Young puppies need 3 or 4 meals per day as their livers aren't always able to store enough glucose for the in between periods. Over the following months the amount you feed your pup will increase but you won't need to feed as often. At 6-8 months of age your pup will require only two feeds per day. After 1 year of age the transition to adult food begins.

MICROCHIPPING

It is now law to have your dog micro chipped from 6 months of age. (Farm dogs exempt)

What is a microchip? It is a small chip the size of a grain of rice which holds a unique number that is implanted under the skin between the shoulder blades. The chip will last for your animals' entire life.

If your dog is ever lost or gets picked up by SPCA, Council or a veterinary clinic, your animal will be scanned. A number will then register onto the screen of the scanner and they can start to track you down.

There are two options when it comes to registering this number.

- 1) You can register it with just the council and your vet clinic. This option is usually used for people who live out of town, or the dog never leaves the property.
- 2) New Zealand Companion Animal Registry- is a New Zealand wide data base. This is when your animal's information is up loaded onto the data base, meaning that if your animal became lost in another district and was picked up by either council or SPCA or a vet clinic, they can access that information and get in touch with you. This is accessible New Zealand wide. So, the chances of reuniting with your pet are much higher.

TRAINING

We strongly recommend that you enroll your pup into our puppy pre-school. Between 8 and 12 weeks of age puppies are at their peak with regards to learning new behaviors and this is the most important period to socialize your puppy. The aim of puppy school is to produce well-mannered and socialized dogs that are a joy to have in your family. We look forward to watching your puppy grow throughout the years, and to do whatever we can to help you and your new puppy have a happy and healthy time together.



If you have any questions or concerns about your puppy's health, please don't hesitate to give one of our vets a call.