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Congratulations on making the decision to add a puppy to your household! Although an exciting time for you, this can be a stressful time for your new addition. You will likely have many questions about what to expect and what needs to be done with your new puppy. This kit will help address common questions and concerns many new pet owners have, and help you navigate the important milestones in your puppy's life.



It is important to have an initial check-up by your veterinarian once obtaining your puppy. Remember to always keep emergency veterinary clinic numbers close at hand, as well as keep records of vaccines, deworming, and any other medical treatment.

Puppy Proof Your Home

- Always keep your puppy under direct supervision when not confined to a kennel or safe area
- Keep stairs, balconies, and other dangerous areas out of reach – baby gates are great!
- Store any cleaning supplies or toxic substances out of reach
- Place any prescription medications (human) or supplements out of reach
- Baby locks help with keeping cupboards closed
- Keep garbage cans safely tucked away
- Keep all electrical cords out of reach

Vaccines

Your veterinarian will help you to develop a vaccine protocol for your puppy depending on his/hers lifestyle and risks. All puppies should be vaccinated for **distemper, adenovirus, parainfluenza, and parvovirus** during their initial visit. These are known as “core vaccines” because they can cause severe disease or are quite common. **Rabies** will be administered at 16 weeks of age and is required by law.



Distemper – a widespread and often fatal disease that leads to respiratory, gastrointestinal, and neurological signs.

Adenovirus – causes severe acute liver disease, as well as to the kidneys, spleen, and lungs

Parainfluenza – highly contagious upper respiratory virus that is often present when kennel cough is diagnosed. Airborne transmission.

Parvovirus – Highly contagious and potentially fatal disease that may cause severe vomiting and bloody diarrhea. It is especially dangerous in young dogs, but any unvaccinated or immunosuppressed dogs are at risk of contracting this severe disease.

Rabies – Rabies is a fatal disease spread through saliva and bite wounds of infected animals. It is a fatal infection of the nervous system and can also affect humans. Rabies vaccination is required by law.

“Non-core” vaccines are those that are not required for all puppies, but may be added into the protocol depending on the pet’s lifestyle.

Leptosporosis – A bacterial infection that can lead to permanent kidney and liver damage. It is contagious to all mammals including humans and dogs and is spread through contact with infected urine or contaminated soil or water.

Bordetella bronchiseptica (kennel cough) – A very contagious infection of the upper respiratory tract characterized by a dry, hacking cough. Often required for boarding your puppy or adult dog. Contributing infectious agents include adenovirus, parainfluenza, distemper, and the bacteria *Bordetella bronchiseptica*.

Lyme Disease– spread through the bite of the deer tick and can lead to lameness, fever, anorexia, as well as damage to other tissues. Dogs that will be exposed to ticks, or in a heavily infested area should be vaccinated for lyme disease. Lyme disease can also affect humans if they are bitten by an infected tick.

Remember, it is important to discuss with your veterinarian what is best for your pet and your family

Deworming

All puppies should be dewormed every two weeks for three treatments in a row if unknown status. A fecal exam should be performed to check for the eggs of any parasites that need to be treated. Some common parasites include:

Roundworms – Spread through ingestion of eggs in feces, during development in an infected mother, through nursing from an infected mother, or from ingesting prey animals. Can cause vomiting and diarrhea in young pups and can lead to failure to thrive.

Hookworms - Hookworms suck blood from the small intestine, and can lead to . Can be transmitted through the soil or through a pup's mother. Puppies are often pale and very weak. Hookworms can also be transferred to humans.

Whipworms – Can lead to chronic bloody diarrhea in puppies. It is shed intermittently which can make it difficult to detect on routine fecals.

Tapeworms – tapeworms are spread through ingestion of fleas, or, for dogs that hunt, small rodents. Tapeworm segments look like small packets of rice in your dogs' feces and often require separate, specific treatment.

Giardia – Spread through ingestion of infective stage in stool. Can cause watery, foul smelling feces and is shed intermittently, making it difficult to diagnose.



Flea Prevention

Remember, FLEA PREVENTION IS MUCH EASIER THAN TREATMENT. It is advised that all new puppies get dosed with a flea preventative. During the summer months when fleas can survive, we recommend that your puppy be on a preventative flea/heartworm/deworming program. This season often lasts from May until November but can vary depending on the weather! Prevention can be administered topically on the back of the neck, or through an oral medication depending on owner preference.



Tick Prevention

Ticks are common parasites that can be found anywhere, from the deep woods to urban parks. And each year, thousands of dogs become infected with serious diseases transmitted by a number of different [ticks](#). Diseases like [ehrlichiosis](#), [Lyme disease](#), [anaplasmosis and others](#).

Generally known as vector-borne disease, the risks they pose to your dog can be minimized with [preventive measures](#) and a spring vector-borne disease screening called a 4 DX . This is especially important, as symptoms of vector-borne disease are often vague and difficult to recognize. Because of this, many pet owners don't know their dog is suffering from a debilitating tick disease until it's too late. **We typically prevent ticks from April to November.**

Ehrlichia is an infection of white blood cells that can eventually affect bone marrow function, including production of blood cells. Common symptoms can include any of the following:

- Depression and/or lack of energy
- Loss of appetite
- Runny eyes and nose/discharge
- Spontaneous nose bleeds
- Bruising on gums and belly
- Lameness/joint pain



Anaplasmosis comes in two forms. *Anaplasma phagocytophilum* is an infection of the white blood cells that's transmitted by the [deer tick](#) (also known as the black-legged tick) and the [western black-legged tick](#). The other form, *Anaplasma platys*, is an infection of the blood platelets that can lead to bleeding disorders and is transmitted by the [brown dog tick](#). Although these two forms of anaplasmosis present with different signs, both pose a threat to your dog's health.

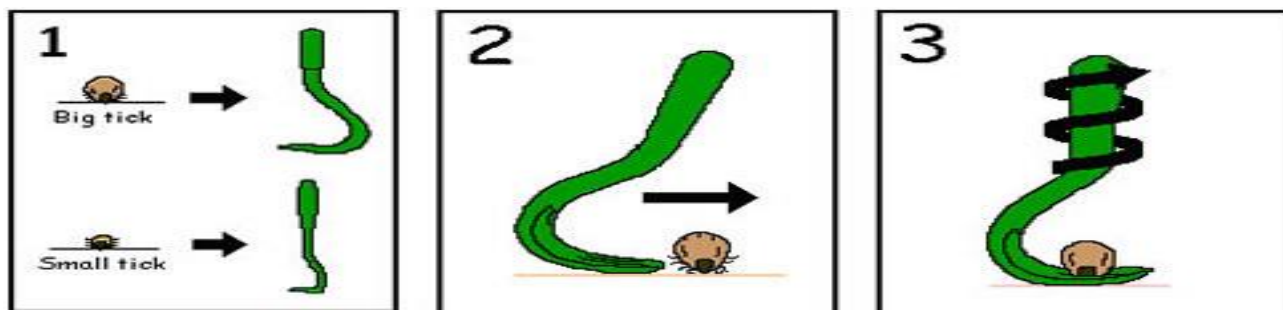
Common signs can include any of the following:

- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy
- Lameness, reluctance to move
- Neck pain or neurologic signs in some cases
- Bruising on the gums and belly
- Spontaneous nosebleeds

Lyme Disease Transmitted by the [deer tick](#) (often referred to as the black-legged tick) the [western black-legged tick](#) and the [lonestar tick](#) (often found on wild turkeys) , Lyme disease is an infection of the tissues that often leads to lameness. Lyme disease is zoonotic and can be very serious for both people and pets. In general, symptoms in dogs are difficult to detect and may not appear until several months after infection. Also, symptoms may come and go and can mimic other health conditions. Cases vary from mild to severe with severe cases sometimes resulting in kidney failure and death.

While a “bull’s eye” rash at the site of the tick bite is common with human Lyme disease infection, dogs have no such indicator. In fact, a dog infected with Lyme disease may show few if any signs, but some of the more common symptoms of this disease can include any of the following:

- Spontaneous and shifting leg lameness that lasts 3–4 days, sometimes accompanied by loss of appetite and depression
- Reluctance to move
- Fatigue



Spay/Neuter

We strongly recommend that you spay or neuter your puppy **at 6 months** of age. The procedures are different between males and females, although both serve to remove the source of hormones from your puppy's body. There are several benefits to sterilization, including:

- Making your puppy easier to train
- Reducing the likelihood of marking behaviour (urinating)
- Reducing roaming behaviour as there is no need to find a mate
- Reducing the risk of health problems including:
 - Pyometra (infection of the uterus which can be life threatening)
 - Mammary cancer in females
 - Prostate cancer in males
 - Testicular cancer in males

It is best to spay your female puppy prior to their first heat (usually around 6 – 7 months of age). If your female puppy does go into heat, it is advised to wait 6-8 weeks following her heat to then spay her to reduce the risk of bleeding.

Prior to surgery we recommend all puppies get pre-anesthetic bloodwork done to reduce the risk of anesthesia and to detect any subclinical disease. We also recommend that your puppy receive IV fluids during the procedure to help support blood pressure and perfusion to organs, as well as providing an easily accessible port in the case of an emergency.

Microchipping

A microchip is an excellent way of **providing permanent identification** for your new puppy. It is a small implant (similar to the size of a grain of rice) that is placed through an injection under your puppy's skin. It contains a unique tracking number so that in the event that your puppy gets lost, the shelter, veterinary clinic, or animal control officer that finds him or her will be able to scan the number and return your puppy safely! This service is offered at the time of spay or neuter, but can also be done earlier if desired.



WHY TAKE THE RISK?
GET YOUR PET MICROCHIPPED

Training

Training is one of the most important, and most difficult, parts of obtaining a new puppy, and can often be a source of frustration from pet owners.

Housetraining

Until your puppy is 3-4 months old (and sometimes later), your puppy will have limited bowel and bladder control.

- Most accidents happen by allowing your puppy too much freedom, too soon
- Confine your puppy unless you can provide direct supervision
- Have a schedule for feeding and walks
- Take your puppy out first thing in the morning, after naps and meals, and before you go to bed
- Reward your puppy for eliminating outside, always go outside with your puppy so you can reward good behaviour
- Never punish a puppy who has had an accident (prevent your puppy from ever having the need to eliminate inside)
- Don't wait for your puppy to signal his or her need to go outside, take them out on a regular schedule

Basic commands, such as "sit", "lie down", and "stay" should be taught to puppies as soon as possible. Puppy classes are an excellent way to get professional guidance on instilling these behaviours in your puppy, as well as providing an excellent atmosphere for socialization.

Travelling with your Pet

The best time to start travelling with your puppy is when they are young. Take a few short rides before going on a long ride, as puppies often get nauseous their first few car rides. Make sure your puppy has positive reinforcement during the ride with treats or toys to reinforce a pleasant experience.



Socialization

Your puppy goes through specific time periods where they are more open to learning and should be exposed to a variety of stimuli, such as other dogs, children, and different environmental situations. The more your puppy interacts with new people and pets, the less likely they will become fearful or aggressive. Puppies go through a "fear period" at around 4 months where they are very susceptible to negative experiences.

Puppy Grooming

It is best to get your puppy used to common grooming procedures while they are young, before they develop habits that are difficult to correct!

Bathing – frequency varies according to lifestyle and coat. Lukewarm water should be used, and shampoo specifically designed for puppies. Human shampoo is often very acidic and can irritate the skin. Allow your puppy to dry off in a warm area, or use a hair dryer on a low setting

Nail Trimming – All dogs need proper nail care. Please clip them regularly, when left too long they can become painful and become prone to tearing and breaking. Handling your puppy's feet regularly will make nail trimming much easier!! Be sure to avoid hitting the quick (blood vessels and nerve tissue) inside the nail; this can be avoided by trimming nails back a little bit at a time.

Ear Cleaning – You can clean your puppy's ears as needed to clean out debris. Often a cotton pad with ear cleaning solution swiped a few times around the ear will help prevent ear infections. Please avoid using Q-tips as they can go too deep and damage internal ear structures.

Exercise

Destructive behaviour in puppies is often the result of boredom; a puppy who is not stimulated enough will find his or her own way to keep busy! The exercise requirements among breeds can be highly variable; for example, a Border Collie will require a lot more exercise than a Boston Terrier. However, don't be fooled, as Jack Russell Terrier is very active and needs significant exercise.



Large breed dogs also benefit exercise modifications to help reduce the chance of injury. Due to their rapid growth rate, a large or giant breed puppy must have the proper support to develop at a healthy rate. Rapid, extensive growth puts stress on bones and joints and excessive activity can lead to injury and long-term problems. Speak to your veterinarian about modifications to your puppy's exercise program if you are concerned.

Diet

Your veterinarian will likely provide diet recommendations depending on the specific needs of your puppy. The right formula will help provide optimal nutrient delivery, small well-formed stools, excellent digestion, ideal skin quality, and an optimized immune system. Superior nutrition can increase a dog's life expectancy, and lead to a healthier, happier life. Often we will recommend a small breed or large breed diet for your puppy, as different breeds require different nutritional components for ideal growth. ***Remember, a Great Dane will grow to be 120-150 lb and will take over a year to mature, while a Chihuahua will have reached their maximum size by about 4-5 months at less than 20 lb.*** These breeds have VERY different rates of growth that need to be addressed by different foods!

What about treats?

It is best to use your kibble as a source of treats. Please do not feed your puppy any bones as fragments can result in severe damage and possible surgery. Many puppies cannot digest milk and will develop diarrhea...please provide **fresh water only!** Raw meat can contain a number of pathogenic bacteria and parasites that can be detrimental to your puppy's health. A raw diet is not a balanced formula for a growing puppy. As well, bacteria found on raw eat can present a human health hazard to family members, especially young children!



Why can I not feed my large breed puppy and adult maintenance formula?

Growing puppies have unique needs for calcium and phosphorus in specific ratios that are often not met by adult diets. Your growing puppy also requires higher protein requirements than an adult does. Puppies eat to meet their energy needs; so if they need to eat a greater amount of an adult food, they may experience more digestive upset.



Your Puppy's First Year of Life

1st Vet Visit – 6-8 weeks

- Vaccines – DAPPV (distemper, adenovirus, parvovirus, parainfluenza)
- Deworming and fecal exam

2nd Vet Visit – 12 weeks

- Vaccines – DAPPV +/-leptosporosis and lyme

3rd Vet Visit – 16 weeks

- Vaccines – DAPPV + rabies +/-leptosporosis, lyme, bordetella

6-12 months of age – Spay or Neuter (microchip)

June until November – Flea and Heartworm Prevention

April to November - Tick prevention

Your puppy will get vaccinated again at 1 yr and 4 months of age. After that yearly examinations are recommended to ensure your adult dog is in good health and to recommend an appropriate vaccination protocol. We are happy to discuss concerns or any questions about your pets at any time. Our goal is to make your pet happy



