



## **CARING FOR YOUR NEW PUPPY**

### **VACCINATION**

Pups require 3 vaccinations at 6-8 weeks, 12 weeks and 16 weeks. The diseases these cover are: Distemper, Hepatitis and Parvovirus and now Parainfluenza and Bordatella.

Ideally your puppy should not go into public areas (eg: parks, beaches) or have contact with unvaccinated dogs until they are fully protected against the main viral diseases. With the newer vaccines we use here that is 2 weeks after their 12 week vaccination. All dogs must receive a booster vaccination every 12 months to maintain immunity.

### **HEARTWORM**

Heartworm is a disease that is spread by mosquitoes. The worms grow and live in the heart, and causes disease by affecting the proper function of the cardiovascular system. It is risky and expensive to treat, and if left untreated will be fatal – yet it can be easily prevented. Heartworm prevention should begin around 12 weeks of age to avoid having to do a blood test and must continue for the whole of the dog's life. Older dogs that are not on heartworm prevention need to have a blood test, to determine that they are free of heartworm before they can safely begin prevention. Heartworm prevention is available in monthly doses or a Yearly injection.

### **WORMING**

Dogs should be wormed against: Roundworm, Hookworm, Whipworm and Tapeworm. These worms are totally different to heartworm, as they live in the intestinal tract. They can cause slow growth, poor condition and stomach upsets. If severe enough they can cause death in pups through anaemia and intestinal blockages. Some worms can cause medical problems in children if infected.

Most pups are born with worms that have crossed the placenta from their mother. Pups should be wormed every 2 weeks until 12 weeks of age, then they should be routinely wormed with an allwormer (such as Milbemax) about every 3 months for the rest of their life. Allwormers can be purchased economically at your vet clinic. Some Heartworm products also control intestinal worms.

### **FEEDING**

This is very important as pups are rapidly growing and need sufficient nutrients to remain healthy. Pups need more calories, protein and minerals (such as calcium) than adult dogs do, so feeding your pup an adult food isn't enough. Choose good quality puppy foods as they will be balanced and contain the right amount of nutrients they need. It can be difficult, but not impossible, to make a home cooked diet. But be aware that you will be cooking for them for the rest of their life. We recommend and stock 'Science Diet', and 'Eukanuba as excellent quality puppy foods. Please ask if you are unsure of the "right" type.

Calcium supplements are not necessary if your pup is on a good quality puppy food. Care needs to be taken with calcium supplements, as too much or too little can also cause bone problems. You should start to feed your pup adult dog food when he or she begins to cease growing. This can be anywhere from 8 to 18 months of age depending on the breed. Smaller breeds stop growing at a younger age than larger breeds.

## ***GROOMING AND FLEAS***

Obviously if you have chosen a breed that has long hair, you will be required to comb them on a regular basis to prevent their fur from becoming matted and difficult to manage. Long haired dogs often need to be clipped to maintain neatness, and be more comfortable in the warmer weather. If your pup's hair is short, this is much easier to manage but should still be brushed/combed regularly to remove loose hair. Your pup should only be bathed when needed, because shampooing too much and using the wrong shampoo can dry out their skin and lead to problems. Bathing once a fortnight or month is fine. Using a quality dog shampoo is best, we can advise you on which one is best for your pup.

If your pup has fleas, or you would like to prevent them from getting fleas, you need to use a product that is suitable and safe for puppies, as some insecticides can be poisonous to them at such a young age. We have "spot on" applications that are safe to use on pups. Another very good product available is "Sentinel", this is a monthly tablet that stops flea eggs from hatching, so it acts as a flea prevention rather than a flea treatment. Sentinel also has the extra benefits of not only preventing flea infestations, but it also prevents heartworm and treats intestinal worms. One top spot product called "Advocate" kills fleas as well as preventing heartworm and intestinal worms. You can discuss the merits of these products at your pup's check or vaccination.

## ***DESEXING***

We suggest desexing both male and female dogs from 5 ½ months of age onwards if you do not intend to breed from them. The Advantages far out way any disadvantages. Desexing your female dog means no messy heats, and no accidental pregnancies. It all but eliminates the risk of common cancers and infections associated with the reproductive system. Desexed male dogs are less likely to be aggressive and less likely to wander, urine mark or show embarrassing sexual behaviour. You also receive much cheaper dog registration with the council if your dog is desexed.

## ***PET INSURANCE***

Pet Insurance is *Highly* recommended. Medicare and the government do not subsidise Veterinary treatment and cost of treating accidents and illnesses can be high. Insurance allows us to provide the best care and treatment without cost constraints. Please ask us for an Brochure if you don't have one.

We are happy to help you with any other queries you may have. Please come in or phone us on 9300-2322.