

NEW PUPPY CARE

Vaccinations are a very important part of any puppy's preventative health program. The "distemper" vaccine is really a combination shot protecting your puppy against six diseases: distemper, parvovirus, hepatitis, parainfluenza, leptospirosis, and coronavirus (DHLPPC). Puppies should receive a series of vaccinations 3 to 4 weeks apart starting at 8 weeks old and finishing at 20 weeks old. In addition, puppies get a complete physical exam and weight checked at each of these visits to ensure they are developing normally. The "distemper" shot should be boosted annually in adults. Rabies vaccination is necessary for all dogs and vaccination and registration is required by state and county laws. Rabies vaccination should be administered at 4 months of age. The rabies shot is boosted annually, then every 1 to 3 years. Kennel cough vaccine is an intranasal vaccination to protect against bordatella and parainfluenza infection. This vaccination is required by many boarding and grooming facilities and recommended any time your dog that has nose-to-nose contact with other dogs (obedience classes, show ring, playing in the park). This vaccine also needs to be boosted annually. Lyme's vaccination is available for dogs at risk due to potential tick exposure or traveling to endemic areas (Northeast and Northern Plains States). Additional protection from Lyme's disease as well as other tick borne diseases can be achieved with monthly use of Frontline.

DHLPPC 1 _____ Rabies _____ Kennel Cough _____ Lyme's 1 _____
DHLPPC 2 _____ Lyme's 2 _____
DHLPPC 3 _____
Parvo Booster _____

Heartworm disease is major cause of illness and death in unprotected dogs. This disease is spread by mosquitoes which bite the dogs, transmitting juvenile worms which, over 6 months, develop into adult worms living in the heart and major blood vessels of the lungs. Heartworms are prevalent in Illinois and infect 1 in 10 unprotected dogs every year. Therefore, it is recommended that all dogs be given heartworm preventative. These medications are pills that are given monthly at least from April through December to prevent infestation. Heartworm preventatives such as Sentinel, Interceptor and HeartguardPlus also provide some protection against common intestinal worms. We encourage dog owners to use heartworm preventatives year-round to avoid exposure to these parasites due to lapses in medication. Heartworm test is a blood test identifying the presence of adult heartworms. This test is administered after the pup is 6 months old and then every one to two years throughout the dogs life.

Heartworm Test _____ Preventative _____ Given on the _____ of each month

Intestinal parasites or worms are a common concern in all dogs, especially puppies. Worm infestations cause inflammation of the intestinal tract, deprive the dog of nutrients and can cause blood loss. This can result in diarrhea, vomiting, anemia, and failure to grow normally. In addition, most parasites are contagious to other dogs and some (Giardia and Toxocara) can be transmitted to humans. Almost all puppies are born with roundworms (of which Toxocara is one species), therefore, routinely deworming for this parasite is recommended. Since most infestations can only be accurately identified by microscopic examination of the pet's feces for parasite eggs and the worms shed eggs intermittently, we also recommend testing the puppies stools 3 times to diagnose any intestinal parasites. Adult should have a fecal test performed annually.

Deworm _____ Fecal test _____

Pet overpopulation is a major problem in this country resulting in the abandonment and death of millions of dogs and cats every year. A simple way to be a part of the solution to this sad problem is to have your pet neutered. In addition, many serious diseases of older pets including breast cancer, perianal and testicular cancer, prostate disease, and uterine infections are largely due leaving dogs intact. Therefore, the one thing a responsible owner can do to improve the quality and quantity of their pet's life is to neuter them. Spaying or neutering your dog is routine surgical procedure that provides birth control and removes the organs that produce sexual hormones. Most pet are only hospitalized one day, but may need a couple days of recovery at home. We recommend limited activity for 7 to 10 days after surgery. The best time to neuter your pet is at 5 to 6 months of age, but can be done at any time after that age. Other procedures (repairing hernias or stenotic nares, microchip implants, removal of baby teeth) can also be done then.

Neuter/Spay _____ Additional procedures _____

Microchip implants are a form of permanent identification where a small, sterile, coded chip is injected under the skin between the shoulder blades of the dog. If the pet becomes lost, they can be scanned to identify the presence of a microchip and retrieve the owners' information. In addition, if there was ever a dispute over ownership, the pet could be positively identified by the unique number of their microchip. Avid brand microchips are one of the most common brands available nationally and the animal control facilities and most of the veterinary clinics of Champaign, Vermillion, and Macon counties are equipped with scanners. This simple procedure can be performed at an office visit or with surgery.

Nutrition is a very important part of raising a healthy puppy. Canine nutrition has improved vastly in the last 30 years and most puppies and adults can get all the nutrients they need from a quality commercial diet. National brands, such as Purina and Pedigree, tend to have very consistent quality diets and are widely available at grocery stores. Premium brands, such as Science Diet and Iams, have the advantages of improved palatability and higher digestibility resulting in decreased stool volume. Premium diets are available at veterinary clinics and pet stores. Dry foods are better for dental hygiene and tend to aid digestion with the additional fiber. We usually recommend canned food only for underweight dogs or those with inadequate teeth for chewing. Whenever changing diets always mix gradually over 1 week. Meal-feeding often aids in housebreaking because most dogs will defecate after a meal.

Diet _____ Frequency _____ Follow up _____

Cleaning your new puppies' ears regularly is helpful to reduce the incidence of infections, eliminate a common source of "doggy odor", and to get your pup used to having their head examined and handled. We recommend using commercially available ear cleaning solutions, such as Epiotic. These products help break down the wax, disinfect the ear canal, and gently clean. To clean: flush the solution into the ear canal, gently massage the vertical part of the ear canal, and then wipe out with a cotton ball. These ear cleaners are available at veterinary clinics, pet stores and through pet supply catalogs. Avoid using alcohol or peroxide for cleaning as these tend to be irritating. Most dogs should have their ears cleaned every 1 to 4 weeks, in addition to after baths and swimming. Any unusual discharges that persist could be an indication of ear infection, and should be checked out by your veterinarian.

The amount of grooming required in dogs varies based on their coat type and length, health status, environment, and needs and desires of owners. Most dogs should be bathed no more frequently than every 2 weeks with a mild shampoo, such as an oatmeal shampoo like Episoothe or a hypoallergenic shampoo like Allergroom. Dogs with persistent dandruff, allergies, or other skin problems can be bathed more frequently but also need a conditioner such as Vetsolutions oatmeal and aloe conditioner or Humilac. Owners with allergies to their pet can use shampoo and skin sprays such as Lo-Shed to reduce allergens in their home. In addition, regular brushing helps with human allergies, prevents matting, and reduces chances of skin infections. Breeds with long hair should be brushed at least weekly. Northern breeds with thick undercoats need intense brushing during their seasonal sheds in the spring and fall. Breeds with continuously growing coats do not shed and so require regular haircuts with a groomer every 1 to 3 months. Finally most dogs should have their nails trimmed regularly. If the nails are clear, simply cut past where the pink blood vessels end. Black nails are more difficult and require a knowledge of the normal curvature of the nail to determine where to cut. In general if you position the nail clipper blade parallel to the bottom of the toe pad, you should avoid the "quick". At any rate, it is best to have a styptic available when you trim nails. Powders and creams are available at pet stores for this purpose. If you are uncertain how to correctly trim nails, ask your veterinary professional or groomer to demonstrate proper techniques.

