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VETERINARY CLINIC

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Recommended Wellness Plan - Canine

Congratulations on your new pet! Hopefully, your pet will have good health and provide you many years of companionship. We hope to be able to help you provide the best care and health possible to your new companion. The following are guidelines to give your pet the best chance for optimal health.

- The first visit should be as soon as possible after you get your pet.
- Bring any information about previous health care, medications, diet, fecal testing, vaccinations (type and date given), previous owners or facility, environment, geographical areas they are from and where you might have taken them.
- Bring a stool sample (toonie size or larger) for examination for internal parasites.
- Bring any questions or concerns you have about your pet.
- If a dog is older than 6 months, he/she should be tested for heartworm and tick born disease especially if the dog is from the United States.
- All pets should have yearly examinations and twice yearly fecal examinations.
- *The Center for Disease Control (CDC)* and the *Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC)* recommend monthly internal parasite control for all pets, whether indoors or outdoors. This is to protect humans as well as pets. Indoor pets can get parasites from rodents, insects, mosquitoes and fleas. For more information, refer to the provided websites.

<http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/animals.html>

<http://www.capcvet.org/guidelines/>

- There are many flea, tick, heartworm, and intestinal parasite preventative medications. Discuss the best plan for your pet with the veterinarian.
- Nutrition should be discussed with the veterinarian. Diet and exercise are key to a long, healthy life.

Vaccination Protocol

At each vaccination visit, the Veterinarian will examine your new puppy. An exam is required before any vaccines are given to ensure your puppy is in good health. This decreases the likelihood of complication or vaccine reactions. Puppies grow very quickly and new problems can arise rapidly.

- Ideally the first vaccination should be given at **8 weeks** of age. It can be given between 6-10 weeks. This vaccine will be given 2 more times to help prevent 3 harmful viruses.

DAP – Distemper, Adenovirus, Parvovirus

*Leptospirosis vaccine is an optional vaccine and is usually not given in Alberta. If you plan to travel to areas where Lepto. is more common, please discuss with the Veterinarian.

- The second vaccinations should be given at **12 weeks** of age. This is a booster of the first vaccine (DAP) as well as a Kennel Cough vaccination to prevent *Bordetella bronchiseptica* and Parainfluenza, common respiratory infections contracted through the nose and mouth from sniffing or coming in contact with other infected dogs at the dog park, kennels, groomers or pet stores. This vaccine is best given 2-4 weeks prior to exposure. This vaccine should be boosted yearly.
- The third and last vaccinations should be given at **16 weeks** of age. This is a booster of the first vaccine (DAP) as well as the Rabies vaccine. DAP & Rabies will then be repeated the next year, then every 3 years after that. Some breeds of dogs with a high exposure may be more susceptible and should be boosted every year.

What To Expect After Your Pet's Vaccinations

It is common for pets to experience some or all of the following mild side effects after receiving a vaccine, usually starting within hours of the vaccination. If these side effects last more than a day or two, or cause your pet significant discomfort, it is important for you to contact your veterinarian:

- Discomfort and local swelling at the vaccination site
- Mild fever
- Decreased appetite and activity
- Sneezing, mild coughing, “snotty nose” or other respiratory signs may occur 2-5 days after your pet receives an intranasal vaccine.

More serious, but less common side effects, such as allergic reactions, may occur within minutes to hours after vaccination. These reactions can be life threatening and are medical emergencies. Seek veterinary care immediately if any of these signs develop:

- Persistent vomiting or diarrhea
- Itchy skin that may seem bumpy (“hives”)
- Swelling of the muzzle and around the face, neck, or eyes
- Severe coughing or difficulty breathing
- Collapse

A small, firm swelling under the skin may develop at the site of a recent vaccination. It should start to disappear within a couple weeks. If it persists for more than three weeks, or seems to be getting larger, you should contact your veterinarian.

Always inform your veterinarian if your pet has had prior reactions to any vaccine or medication. If in doubt, wait for 30-60 minutes following the vaccination before taking your pet home.



Brought to you by your veterinarian and the American Veterinary Medical Association

Other Procedures

Neuter

What is a neuter? Neutering is an operation done under general anesthesia to remove both of the testicles in male animals. Rarely, one or both testicles do not descend from their embryonic position in the abdomen in a condition called “cryptorchidism”. In most dogs testicles fully descend before 4 months of age. Cryptorchid dogs still require neutering as they can still father puppies, still have testosterone in their system can still have the same secondary prostate and testicular cancer problem that intact males can have.

- Can be done any time after 4 months
- Recommended at **6 months** of age depending on the breed. If they have any retained deciduous (baby) teeth, they can be removed at that time (see Dental section).
- Neutering reduces sexual and aggressive behaviours as well as other undesirable behaviours such as roaming and urinary marking.
- Not neutering can lead to physical problems in the future such as a disease of the prostate and testicles. Talk to the veterinarian for more information.

Spay

What is a spay? A spay or ovariectomy is an operation performed under general anesthesia to remove the uterus and ovaries of female animals. It is a permanent form of birth control and will result in a pet that does not go through heat cycles and can not get pregnant.

- Recommended to spay at **6 months** of age depending on the breed, if any deciduous teeth need to be removed, it can be done then.
- Dogs that are left intact are also at increased risk of developing mammary cancer and bladder infections.
- Dogs that are spayed after their 2nd heat cycle are 200x more likely to get mammary tumors.

Dental

- Each year at the annual examination, the teeth will be assessed and recommendations made to keep your pets mouth healthy.
- Dental disease is very common and can start at just 6 months of age.
- Preventative care should be started as soon as you get your pet (ex. brushing teeth, water additives, etc.)

- Your puppy's baby teeth will fall out between 4-6 months of age but you should immediately start teaching your puppy to let you brush, even though the baby teeth will fall out.
- Brushing the teeth is the best way to prevent tartar build up. This can be a pleasant experience for your puppy by using flavoured tooth paste and appropriate brushes.
- Do not use human products as they are not meant to be swallowed and will cause stomach upset.
- Sometimes the baby teeth are in an abnormal position and will prevent the adult teeth from coming into the proper position in the mouth. These teeth need to be removed.
- For more information, talk to the Veterinarian.

Annual Examinations

Annual visits may reveal underlying conditions that could be affecting the health of your pet. During the exam, the veterinarian will do a complete physical examination. We will discuss diet, exercise, parasite prevention and will answer any questions you may have.

Housetraining

Teaching your puppy good toilet habits takes time and patience, but it is one of the most important things he/she must learn.



Successful house training is based on:

- ✓ Prevention: Limit the puppy's opportunities to eliminate in the wrong places. When you are unable to supervise his/her activities, confine to a crate or designated location.
- ✓ Routine: Feed and walk at regular times
- ✓ Anticipation: Take the puppy out when he/she is most likely to eliminate. The most common times are after sleeping, playing and eating.
- ✓ Praise: Throw a party! Lots of attention and tasty treats.

We want our puppies to be successful with housetraining. If you take them out and nothing happens, wait a few minutes, crate if needed then try again. Be consistent with the amount of time in between each potty break; set a timer if needed. Your puppy will start to learn the routine and form a pattern of behaviour around the routine. Watch for subtle signs that he/she needs to go out: circling, sniffing the ground or running to the door. Reward, reward, reward! Trying to communicate with you when he/she needs a potty break is a good thing. Accompany your puppy outside; don't let him/her out on his or her own. This serves three purposes: You know they went potty, you can direct them where in the yard they should go, and gives you an opportunity to celebrate when they eliminate you. After a few successful trips outside to do their business, try adding a cue word such as 'Go Pee' to the formula. This helps them realize why they're outside & that it's not play time or walk time.

Accidents will happen and scolding a puppy will not prevent others from occurring. Punishment, whether it be hitting, shaking, yelling or rubbing their nose in it will not work. Puppies do not have accidents in

the house to punish you, or because they are lazy, they don't remember 30 seconds later that they did it. When you catch a puppy eliminating inside, scoop him/her up and take him/her outside right away.

Don't expect your puppy to be fully trained overnight. A 6-month-old puppy is still mentally not grown up enough to be considered completely house trained can have mistakes from time to time. The following schedule will assist you on the average age to time ratio:

Puppy's Age	Time Between Bathroom Visits
2 months	2 hours
3 months	4 hours
4 months	5 hours
5 months	6 hours
6 months	7 hours
7 months	8 hours

Crate Training

Dogs are den animals and we can help a new puppy adapt to a new home and household routine by creating a den for them. The most convenient way to provide a substitute den is for your pup is to use a standard airline-style crate. It should have solid sides and top so it reminds the dog of a den.



Size: The crate should not be too large, or it won't feel cozy and protected.

If you plan on using the same crate for when the dog is an adult, it should be large enough for the adult dog to turn around in. It should be sturdy and have no sharp edges inside.

Sleeping In The Crate: It is best to start with the crate on the puppies first night. At bedtime, tuck the puppy in with blankets or towels for a brief amount of time. Keep the room as quiet as possible. Now comes the hard part: when the puppy whines to get out, ignore him/her. If he/she gets her way once, it will make it much harder to convince her to settle down a second time.

Using The Crate When You're Not Home: Young puppies can be kept in their crate when you're out of the house. This prevents elimination accidents and destructive behaviour. A small snack and a couple toys can be left in the crate. Use only indestructible chew toys such as Kong Toys. Use these 'special' toys only when in the crate so they hold the pup's interest longer.

Using The Crate When You're Home: You can help make the crate a comforting and safe place for your pet by leaving the door open so your puppy can go inside when he/she is tired or wants to be left alone. You should respect the puppy's privacy when he/she goes into her crate voluntarily. Make sure children in the house abide by this rule, its not a play fort.

Traveling With Your Pet

In the car your dog should always be in the back. Dog crates and dog seat belts are highly recommended as they reduce the risk of injury if you should stop suddenly or are involved in an accident.

When travelling by plane or train, contact the transport company to find out what their regulations are. Contact your hotel to ensure they offer pet friendly accommodations. If you plan to travel outside of North America, contact the embassy of the country to be visited. You will need to know about restrictions such as mandatory vaccinations and parasite prevention. Some vaccines must be administered up to 6 months ahead of time. Rabies titres may need to be checked for travel into the United States and a valid certificate of health may need to be obtained and dated within 10 days of travel and a valid Rabies certificate is mandatory.

Pet Insurance

Most pet insurance companies offer a free trial for 4 weeks. Your breeder or rescue organization may have started one. We recommend using the trial, you may decline or continue when the trial is over. Insurance gives you peace of mind for any unexpected bills, especially in the puppy's first year of life.

Internet Information

The internet can be a source of good or bad information. Check out our website www.calgaryvet.com and click the 'Resources' tab for a full list of websites we support. Below are a few worth noting.

- www.veterinarypartner.com
- www.dogsandticks.com
- www.pethealthnetwork.com

Please consult the veterinarian before accepting any information found online. We would be happy to share our professional opinions with you regarding the information you collect.

Before you administer **any** over the counter medications, please consult with a veterinarian. Some human medications can be very harmful to pets.