



Puppy Guide

Puppy Care, as recommended by your veterinarian

VACCINATIONS, PREVENTION, TRAINING & MORE!

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Introduction

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Congratulations on your new puppy! We are so happy to have him or her as a part of the BVH Family! Whether this is your first puppy ever or you have raised many, our goal is to help you and your puppy start out on the right foot and paw together!

New Puppy Program

8-10 weeks of age:

A complete physical examination is performed, the first DHPP vaccination is given and a fecal (stool) sample is checked for intestinal parasites (Roundworms, Hookworms, Whipworms, Giardia, Coccidia). The first dose of heartworm/flea/tick prevention is prescribed. Our doctors and staff are here to help answer any questions you have and monitor your puppy's growth along the way.

12-14 weeks of age:

A physical examination is performed, the second DHPP and first Leptospirosis combination vaccine is given. A fecal sample may be rechecked if your puppy's last sample was positive. Most puppies receive their Bordetella vaccine orally at this time. Vaccination for Lyme disease may be given at this visit.

16 weeks of age or older:

A physical exam is performed, and the final DHPP - Leptospirosis combination vaccination is given. The second and final Lyme vaccination or at this visit a Rabies vaccination may be administered. Your veterinarian will help you plan Influenza vaccination if this has been recommended for your puppy.

Our vaccination protocols are appropriately recommended toward your pet's lifestyle, and are given to minimize risks, reactions, and poor immune system response. At BVH, no more than two injectable vaccinations are given at a time.



Canine Vaccination Protocol

It's much easier to prevent disease than to treat it. We are fortunate enough to have modern vaccines to prevent the major illnesses of our canine friends. Below are explanations of the diseases and a basic guideline of the vaccination protocol.

DHPP:

This is a core vaccine that all dogs receive during their puppy series every 3-4 weeks until they are 16 weeks or older. This "distemper vaccine" actually protects your pet against **the viral diseases Distemper, Hepatitis, Parainfluenza and Parvovirus**. Distemper affects the respiratory and nervous systems and is often fatal. Hepatitis may lead to severe kidney and liver damage. Parainfluenza is a respiratory disease that can be especially severe in young puppies. Finally, Parvovirus affects the digestive tract, causing life threatening vomiting and diarrhea. These are all severe and highly contagious diseases that are airborne or spread by bodily fluids. As a core vaccine it's important your dog stays up-to-date on this, even if your pet spends most of his or her time indoors. After the initial series, your pet receives a booster one year later and then every three years subsequently.

Leptospirosis:

Leptospirosis is a potentially serious bacterial disease. **It affects dogs but can also infect wild animals and humans. Human infection from animal diseases is called "zoonosis"**. It is usually spread through infected urine or contaminated water or soil. The disease can cause fever, joint pain, and lethargy, and leads to acute kidney and liver failure which can be fatal. As a bacterial vaccine, yearly inoculation is required after the initial vaccine series.

Canine Influenza:

Similar to human influenza, **canine influenza is a highly contagious viral disease that affects a dog's respiratory system and usually causes serious illness**. It is spread either by direct contact between dogs, via contaminated surfaces or through the air. Your pet may become infected at dog parks, dog shows, grooming facilities or boarding kennels. After the initial vaccine series, yearly inoculation is required.

Rabies:

Caused by a **virus that attacks the brain, Rabies is almost always fatal**. The disease can be transmitted to humans through a bite from an infected animal. Unlike the DHPP vaccine listed above, Rabies immunization does not require a second booster. After the initial vaccine, your pet receives a booster one year later and then every three years subsequently.

Lyme:

Lyme Disease is an infection caused by a **bacteria spread through the bite of an infected tick**. Lameness can occur as a result of arthritic joint pain which may shift limb to limb. More chronic infections can result in kidney damage or renal failure. Treatment for this is long term and the kidney damage can be fatal, so prevention is essential. As a bacterial vaccine, yearly inoculation is required after the initial series.

Bordetella:

Like colds in humans, the organisms that cause "canine cough" are airborne. **Kennel cough is caused by bacteria and other viruses** (some of which do not have a vaccine). Your dog can catch this disease simply by being near other dogs, such as in boarding kennels, grooming salons, dog parks or veterinary hospitals. This vaccine is given every 6 or 12 months, depending on their lifestyle and level of exposure.



Potty Training Your Pet

Successful house training depends on aligning your handling with the dog's instincts and helping the dog develop the habits you desire. It also depends on holding up your end of the bargain: giving the dog a good schedule of chances to eliminate.

It is important to realize that ease of house training is relative to the size and breed of the dog. Many small dogs will never be able to handle the full run of your home without accidents. **Most dogs may not be capable of full bowel and bladder control until around 4 months of age (16 weeks).** Small dogs frequently require much longer. Complete house training requires time, patience and consistency.

Potty Training Schedule

The first element of house training is a good schedule. The schedule means you commit to taking your puppy outside at certain, regular times. The puppy is then able to count on those opportunities to relieve themselves.

Dogs who have to ask to go out to potty often ask to go out for other things. **Dogs taught that you will only let them out when they bark may become problem barkers.** Dogs who develop a fear of going out (such as fear that you will stick them out there too long) may not tell you they want to go out. Fortunately, scheduling solves this problem. Some simple guidelines to get you started:

- 1. Do not leave a puppy during the day more than the number of hours of the pup's age in months plus one.** This means an 8-week puppy should not be left without a chance to potty for more than three hours. See "Crate Training" Below.
- 2. Don't leave a dog of any age longer than 8 hours without access to a place to potty.** This may create a problem, but violating this guideline can lead to UTIs as well as serious fears including separation anxiety. To assist with your schedule, consider a dog walker, pet sitter, or doggie day care.
- 3. When you are at home and awake, give your puppy a bathroom opportunity at least once per hour.** The fact that your dog can hold it all night or 3 to 8 hours during the day does NOT mean the dog can or should be asked to do so around the clock. Watch your dog or puppy for signs that once per hour is not often enough. Some small dogs and young puppies may need to go outside more frequently.
- 4. Before you leave the house for work, take the pup out to the bathroom one last time.** It's important to establish this pattern so your dog can count on it. This helps your dog learn to relieve before your departure and to trust that they can make it until you get home.
- 5. Take the dog out promptly whenever you return home, even if you were gone for a fairly short time.**
- 6. In order to give a cue, associate one word or phrase with going potty.** This cue will also tell your dog when it's time to go to the bathroom if you're away from home or in some other situation. Use any words you like, such as "go potty" or "hurry up." Before you go outside, ask your puppy "Do you want to go outside?" Associate the word "outside" with going out the door. The "go potty" phrase is not for this. **"Go potty" means it's okay for the puppy to eliminate right here, right now.** Don't confuse the two cues.
- 7. Praise and try to reward in a way this puppy would like—as you get to know your dog, you'll develop more options for rewards.** These could include praise, petting, treats, a game, more time to play outside, going back inside immediately, or going for a walk. **Be careful with the timing of your reward** to make sure the pup has completely finished eliminating. **Aim to reward them as they are just done going potty. Don't reward them when they come into the house** – this is a reward for coming in, not for going to the bathroom outside!
- 8. Take your puppy out to potty any time the dog "asks" with body language indicating the need.** A dog dancing or bouncing, staring at you, resting the chin on your knee or pushing a nose at your hand can all be good signals. To encourage your dog to use a particular signal, just be sure to respond positively to that signal, in this case by taking the dog outside. Some people like a bell at the door, too. If you think your dog has developed a habit of asking to go out more often than needed, you can try extending the time just a little. But truthfully, every accident takes away from the habit you are trying to build, and puts the wrong scent into the house.

Other Potty Training Tips

Decide where you want your puppy to eliminate at your home.

An outdoor fenced area that does not expose your puppy to other people's dogs is ideal. If you don't have a yard, you may be able to rig up a box of grass sod or other arrangement on a patio. Teaching your puppy to use a specific area outside creates a clear concept of inside being the "den area," where it is not appropriate to eliminate.

Never punish your puppy over housetraining.

A puppy who acts upset when you find a housetraining accident is not "feeling guilty," he or she is only showing submission towards you. Nothing is being accomplished towards housetraining, and the puppy's temperament may be suffering. If you "catch the dog in the act" of having an accident, the rule about no punishment still holds! Hustle the puppy outside quickly, with no more than a "no—outside" spoken in a normal, calm tone of voice. Once out there, say your "go potty" cue and wait. If they do it, that is a huge success, and you want to give great praise and reward. If you weren't fast enough, still be upbeat with the dog outside. Just BEING there needs to make your dog feel your approval.

Don't leave the puppy outside alone.

You need to know when your puppy eliminates in order to reward at the right time and to adjust the schedule, and your puppy needs to be free from worry about being stuck out there alone.

It may be best to temporarily confine your dog to whatever area they can manage.

Sometimes owners are unwilling to do this, thinking their pet will not get enough exercise. What then happens is that your dog may pick a private, unused area of the house to use the bathroom (such as a dining room), since it is not considered their "Den."





Cleaning Up Accidents

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Not knowing the right products to use for cleaning presents a major obstacle to houstraining. With the wrong products, owners may not be able to smell the odor (temporarily), but dogs can. One dog in the house having accidents that are not properly treated may lead to other (or future) dogs doing it. The scent is a signpost to the dog's instincts that this is the bathroom.

The only reliable product to use is a bacterial enzyme odor eliminator product. These come in various brands. The product must penetrate as deeply as the urine did. In many scenarios you will need to apply it several times or let it sit for a while. In severe cases, you may need a professional cleaning service.

Crate Training Your Pet

Part of raising a healthy dog is providing it with their own sanctuary, and crates are a perfect solution. Both puppies and dogs can be trained to enjoy their crate. Crate training is neither cruel nor unfair, provided your puppy has sufficient exercise and an opportunity to eliminate before you place them in the crate. Allowing your dog to wander through the home unsupervised to investigate, chew, and eliminate is unwise and potentially dangerous.

Things like travel, staying at a veterinary hospital, grooming, medical restricted activity and emergency situations may call for crate confinement. When a crate is necessary, you don't want that to add stress to what may already be a stressful situation. When you can supervise your puppy, the puppy needs to be out of the crate and under your watchful eyes. Puppies have dozens of things to learn, and they need to bond to you. They also need mental and physical exercise, so a crate should only be used occasionally when you are unable to directly supervise them.



Steps to Introducing the Crate:



Purchase the right crate.

The first step is purchasing the crate. The main thing to remember is to leave enough room for your dog to stand and turn around—even when they're fully grown. You may need to partition the crate when your dog is little, then move the partitions as they grow.



Avoid keeping the crate in an isolated area.

Because dogs are social animals, the ideal location for the crate is in a room where your family spends a lot of time, such as the kitchen, den or bedroom. **Avoid keeping the crate in an isolated laundry room or basement.** The key is to make the crate a positive, enjoyable retreat for your pet. Never use it for punishment. A radio or television can help calm your dog and mask environmental noises that sometimes trigger barking.



Never force your puppy to enter the crate.

Dogs are naturally curious. Use this to your advantage when introducing your dog to their new crate. **If your puppy is suspicious of the crate, drop a few treats into the crate for encouragement. Never force them to enter.** Be ready to reward him or her whenever they venture inside. Don't close the crate door yet but allow the puppy to enter and exit as they please, always rewarding them for entering the crate. As your puppy is confidently visiting his or her crate, continue to reward this by offering them tasty treats while inside.



Feed your puppy in the crate.

Feed your dog their regular meals in the crate, still keeping the door open. You're building great associations for your dog and their new crate. Once your dog is eating in the crate, carefully close the door while they're still eating. Stay near the crate. Open the door again while they are finishing the last bite. Now, you have introduced the closed door with no stress, and you're ready to move on to the next step.



Put their favorite treats or toys in the crate.

Next, put some of your dog's favorite treats or toys in the crate for them to discover. They'll begin to check the crate often to see what wonderful goodies have appeared. Use food stuffed toys for your dog to enjoy as you start closing the door and adding duration. **Increase the amount of time the door is closed very slowly so that your puppy is not anxious.** Stay nearby and begin to take brief walks away from the crate and even very short steps out of sight.



Never use the crate as a place of punishment.

Pretty soon your dog will begin to go to the crate regularly. You can now begin building more time away from the crate with longer periods out of sight. Reward them each time you return or pass by the crate. Never use the crate as a place of punishment. Help them learn to love their crate time.

Helpful Tips for Crate Training

- **Reward your puppy every time you put them in their crate by giving them a toy filled with treats or a lick mat. Kongs filled with peanut butter or canned pumpkin can be other options.** This makes a positive association with the crate. It ideally should take them about 10 minutes to finish their food puzzle. Never give your dog bones or other toys/treats that require direct supervision.
- **Don't leave your puppy in a crate longer than the number of months of age plus one (8wk old puppy = 2 months + 1= 3 hours).** Occasionally you'll hear the advice, usually from well-intentioned people, to keep your puppy in the crate full-time except for trips out to potty. Don't do this. It will cause more problems than it could ever solve.
- **Don't isolate your puppy in another room by themselves.** Remember, this may be the first time they have been away from their mother and litter-mates. Keep their crate in a well-used area of the house. Most puppies will whine at some point the first time they're crated. It's important that they learn it's ok to be away from their family at times. If they don't learn this now, they could develop anxiety disorders later.
- Don't let your puppy out when they whine. Dogs continue to use behaviors that get them desired results. By rewarding the whining, you can create quite a noisy dog in their kennel. **Only open the crate door to let them out when they're quiet.** They will soon learn that quiet and calm behavior opens the door.
- **Make sure to give your dog a chance to go outside right before you put them in their crate.** Then, be sure to give them plenty of opportunities to go outside for potty breaks during their time in the crate.
- **At night, if you hear a whine that you think isn't typical, give them the opportunity to go outside to potty.** You want to prevent an accident at all costs. After the potty break, place them back in the crate. Don't give them time to play.
- To put the behavior of going in their crate on cue, start by saying the cue every time you put them in the crate. When you place the treat on the floor and the dog starts to walk in, say **"Kennel up! Good kennel! Good dog!"** You can use any cue you choose.
- **When you take your puppy out first thing in the morning, pick them up and go straight outside to your chosen potty spot.** Once they're older, you can start letting them walk from their crates outside so they learn the route to the appropriate spot.
- **Never kennel your dog with their collar or leash attached.** Sometimes tags or collars can get caught on the crate and can be a hazard.
- **Pheromone diffusers and sprays** such as "Adaptil" can be purchased online or at the pet store. This pheromone can only be smelt by your dog, and mimics the scent mom released when she was nursing her puppies. This calming pheromone will help to settle your puppy in his or her new kennel.
- **Sometimes it helps to leave a TV talk show or talk radio on** while your puppy is kenneled during the day. Monotone type voices can help your puppy feel not alone.



Feeding Your Puppy

Our Recommended Puppy Diets

Many puppies will come home with a few days worth of their current diet. Any time you change your pet's diet, gradually mix the new food in with the old food over 1-2 weeks to avoid any GI upset. **We do NOT recommend grain free diets** as they can be associated with heart disease.

We recommend "puppy" diets for most dogs until 8 to 12 months of age, depending upon their breed and lifestyle. A few puppy food brands to consider would be Purina Pro Plan Puppy, Royal Canin Puppy, and Science Diet Puppy. For giant breed puppies (Great Danes, Mastiffs etc.), we recommend a diet specially formulated for large breeds until 12-18 months of age. The calorie and mineral content will allow more appropriate skeletal growth.

Most puppies are fed three meals per day until they are about four months old. Toy breed dogs may benefit grazing throughout the day to avoid low blood sugar known as hypoglycemia.

Puppy Treats

Treating your dog is a great positive reward method for training. You don't necessarily need to purchase training treats; for many dogs their own kibble given as a treat will do. Other healthy treats can include pieces of baby carrots, apples, cucumbers, celery, or bell peppers.

Foods That are Toxic for Dogs

The following foods are toxic for dogs: chocolate, grapes, raisins, alcohol, caffeine/coffee, macadamia nuts, onions/garlic/chives, xylitol (artificial sweetener), raw yeast dough, and fruit pits (cherry, apricot, plum etc).





Play Behavior in Puppies

Puppies begin to play as soon as they can walk. Littermates commonly wrestle and chase each other, pulling on ears or tails. Through play with littermates, pups learn just how strong they are or how to turn circumstances to their advantage. By the time they are weaned, each puppy has formed an impression of its own abilities and social standing within the ranks of littermates.

Wild and uncontrolled forms of play frequently lead to undesirable behavior in juvenile and adult dogs. Games that encourage chasing and jumping on people promote these behaviors. Don't encourage your dog to mouth, chew, nip or nibble any article of clothing or part of a person's body, even if it is behaving playfully. Avoid games that arouse your dog's aggressive instincts, such as wrestling or tug of war with any object.

Play should incorporate obedience training to provide an opportunity for constructive interaction with a practical purpose. As compared with wild play, controlled play is often more enjoyable for both you and your dog, and tends to inspire more frequent play sessions. Your dog will enjoy obeying your command to "sit" if this will earn it the right to chase after a ball. Call your dog to "come" as it retrieves the ball and to "sit" again when it returns. Say "drop it" as it gives the ball to you. This is a chance to practice obedience skills and provide your dog additional opportunities to earn your praise.

Destructiveness in Dogs

To be effective, appropriate redirection must be timed correctly. Unless your pet is caught “in the act” or only seconds after, scolding will accomplish little. Punishment should serve to startle him or her, distracting them from their current pursuit. Substitute the naughty activity (i.e. chewing) immediately with an acceptable activity. If your puppy is chewing on your slippers, for example, say “no” in a firm tone and gently remove the slipper (without playing tug of war). Follow this immediately with an acceptable toy and praise (“good dog”).

Most pets quickly discover they will be rewarded with your attention when they misbehave. A puppy lying quietly in a corner is frequently ignored, but you become upset when it chews on your expensive shoes. Your dog may overlook the fact that you are unhappy about their behavior and focus on the discovery of how effectively they attracted your attention. Instead, try to reward your pet for calm behavior. Throw them treats when they are quietly lying on their bed and praise them. If your dog learns that you will chase him/her when they grab your shoe, do not chase them and positively reward the behavior.





Handling and Preparing for Grooming

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Young dogs are a blank slate for handling and training. How you handle and train your puppy now will affect their responses and behavior in the future. Now is the time to reward your puppy for simple “sit” and “stay”.

Handle your puppy’s paws, ears, nails, belly, and mouth. Your puppy should be acclimated to this type of handling because we evaluate these areas during their physicals! Your puppy’s attention span is very short, so any session should be less than a few minutes to make it a positive experience. Introduce a hair brush and practice brushing your dog, making it an enjoyable activity for both of you.

Tooth Brushing

We know, it is tough sometimes to remember to floss and rinse your own teeth let alone your pet's teeth! However, daily tooth brushing is one of the best preventative health actions you can take for your pet.

Getting Started

Apply a small amount of dog toothpaste to your finger and gently rub it along the outside of your puppies gums & teeth. Never use human toothpaste, as the ingredients can be toxic to your pet when swallowed. The most important area to focus on is the gum line (the crevice where the gums meet the teeth). This is where bacteria and food mix to form plaque. Make sure to get the back upper and lower teeth and gum areas. You do NOT need to brush the inside of the teeth; dogs and cats have an abrasive tongue which takes care of this brushing. Once your pet is okay with this, gradually introduce a piece of gauze with the toothpaste on it. Place it over your finger and rub the outside of the teeth & gums.

Should I Use a Toothbrush?

When your pet tolerates the gauze, try a finger toothbrush or a brush specially designed for pets. If your dog doesn't tolerate the toothbrush that's OKAY. Gauze alone will provide some level of plaque removal. Animal toothpaste is mostly for flavor, it's really about the mechanical action of you brushing along the gumline!

The entire process should only take a minute. If your pet continues to resist, try gently wrapping him or her in a large bath towel with only his head sticking out. Above all, avoid stress and keep sessions short and positive.



Spaying & Neutering, Is it Important?

There are many misconceptions concerning spaying and neutering. Spaying or neutering your pet may be one of the best steps you will ever take in keeping your pet healthy.

Will spaying/neutering cause my pet to become overweight and lazy?

Spaying or neutering your pet will not necessarily make your pet become overweight and lazy. Genetics, diet, and how much exercise your pet receives has much more influence on the weight and attitude of your pet than does the surgery. Remember that their calorie requirements when spayed or neutered are less than if left intact.

When is the best time to have my male dog neutered?

The best age for neutering small male dogs is around 7-10 months of age. Certain purebred dogs and large breed dogs may benefit from neutering between 12 and 24 months of age. Neutering your pet has many medical benefits and can prevent undesirable behaviors such as urinary marking.

Is the surgery dangerous?

There is always some level of risk while a patient is under general anesthesia, whether the patient be human or animal. Elective veterinary procedures are similar to human medical procedures. All of our patients receive intravenous catheters and IV fluids during anesthesia. While under anesthesia we closely monitor blood pressure, blood oxygenation, end tidal carbon dioxide output, heart rate, respiratory rate, and body temperature. In addition, there is always a designated nurse who is doing nothing but monitoring your pet while under anesthesia.

When is the best time to have my female dog spayed?

For small female dogs it is recommended to spay (an ovariectomy) around 6 - 7 months of age, just before the first heat cycle. Spaying your pet before her first heat greatly reduces the risk of mammary cancer. However some purebred and large breed dogs may benefit from going through one heat cycle. These dogs are then spayed 8-12 weeks after the last day of bleeding, which puts them around 12 to 18 months of age at time of spay.

For more information about the timing of spay and neutering, please see the link below. The scientific article is called "Assisting Decision-Making on Age of Neutering for 35 Breeds of Dogs: Associated Joint Disorders, Cancers, and Urinary Incontinence" and it gives an objective look at the data for each breed recommendation. (<https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2020.00388/full>)

What are the Benefits of Having My Pet Spayed or Neutered?

✔ Spaying:

- Eliminates heat cycles
- Prevents accidental pregnancies
- Eliminates risk of ovarian and uterine cancers
- Greatly reduces the risk of mammary cancer
- Significantly reduces undesirable behavior
- Prevents life threatening uterine infections common in older intact pets

✔ Neutering:

- Significantly reduces prostate and testicular disease or cancer
- Reduces undesirable behavior such as aggression, humping, marking and wandering

Spaying and neutering pets can help drastically reduce the number of sheltered animals and reduce the number of unwanted dogs being euthanized each year.





Microchipping

Prevent pet theft and loss by having your pet microchipped!

Microchipping is a painless procedure that helps to ensure the protection of your pet. The microchip itself is a small computer chip, about the size of a grain of rice. The chip is easily injected under the skin between the shoulder blades. This chip stores a number unique to your pet, and can be read through a scanner passed over the skin. Local pet stores, animal shelters and veterinary hospitals have scanners and use them to identify any unidentified animals that are brought in. When a pet has a microchip, they can easily be identified and quickly returned to their owner. Microchips are required to identify your pet for international travel.

Newer microchips have the ability to read your pet's temperature when scanned! Unfortunately these microchips are NOT GPS tracking devices, they only hold an identification number that is then linked back to you.

The chip poses no health threat to your pet. Unlike tags and collars, which can fall off, the microchip is permanent. No one plans on losing a pet or having one stolen. Unfortunately as many as 1 in 3 pets are lost, and only 1 in 10 are found.

Your pet does not need to be tranquilized for the procedure, it can easily be done while he or she is in for any appointment or procedure. After insertion, you will need to register your pet with HomeAgain Pet Recovery Service for a small one-time fee.

For more information, see www.homeagain.com.

Heartworms, Fleas, & Ticks...Oh My! Preventatives for Your Dog

Heartworms are blood borne parasites transmitted by mosquitoes. Heartworm infection is very simple and safe to prevent, but it is expensive and risky to treat! Heartworms are worms that live in the heart, lungs and associated blood vessels. Left untreated these worms lead to severe lung problems, congestive heart failure and death. For more info see: <https://www.heartwormsociety.org>

Fleas...fleas are not a problem until your pet has them. Then you have a **big** problem! Even a single flea bite can make your pet extremely itchy. Some pets even experience "Flea Allergy Dermatitis" and have severely itchy skin infections when exposed to flea bites. Once fleas are in your home, they live and lay their eggs on soft surfaces such as carpets, bedding, and furniture. Fleas transmit tapeworms and many other bacterial diseases. Flea prevention is important, but if fleas are in your home proper cleaning and disinfection are critical to completely eliminating this issue!



A picture of a flea taken by one of our technicians!

Ticks are parasites many of us in New Jersey are already aware of. Ticks most notably transmit Lyme Disease but they also carry many other diseases transmissible to dogs. There are multiple species of ticks in this area, commonly referred to as "Black Legged Tick" and "Brown Tick". Tick bites can cause local reactions and dogs with certain tick infestations can experience "Tick Paralysis". Diseases transmitted by ticks often cause fever, lethargy, and appetite changes. Long term effects can result in kidney and joint damage. If you see a tick attached to your dog, remove it with a tick twister or special device made for removing 100% of the tick. If some mouth parts are burrowed deep do not dig them out! They will fall out in a few days. You may clean the area once by dabbing it with hydrogen peroxide on a cotton ball and then applying Neosporin.

Preventatives

No one wants to treat the diseases caused by heartworms, fleas, or ticks if we can prevent them! **Most puppies will be prescribed their first 3 in 1 prevention tablet, Simparica Trio at the first visit.** This chewable is given monthly and the dose will change as your puppy grows. **It is important to continue preventatives for heartworms, fleas and ticks year round.** Preventatives also aid in gastrointestinal parasite control for roundworms and hookworms. Once puppies are a year old (i.e. fully grown), they can receive a once yearly injection called **Proheart 12**, which protects against heartworms and some intestinal parasites for a full year. If your pet receives a Proheart injection we also prescribe oral **Bravecto**, which protects against fleas and ticks for a full 12 weeks.

Testing for Parasites

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Young dogs will have their first heartworm and tick test between 6 and 8 months of age. Dogs are tested annually for heartworm and tick borne diseases. Our in-house test screens for antibody positive dogs. Dogs who test positive may need confirmatory testing prior to any treatment. We are commonly asked about testing after tick bites, typically the test takes 4-6 weeks to turn positive from recent exposure.



Fecal Testing and Intestinal Parasites

Nobody likes to think of their sweet puppy having intestinal worms, but it is very common even from the best breeder or cleanest kennel. Intestinal parasites may cause bloating, gas, diarrhea, or poor weight gain. Sometimes you may see live worms pass in stools or vomit. **Intestinal parasites can affect you and your family because some are zoonotic, meaning you can get them from your dog!**

Common parasites found in dogs are Giardia, Roundworms, Hookworms, Coccidia, and Whipworms. Puppies are exposed from their mother, other puppies, and through environmental exposure. Dogs that frequent dog parks or daycare are at much higher risk for infection. Year round heartworm prevention can aid in control of some of the intestinal worms listed. Stool samples are checked once or twice yearly, or any time your dog has stool irregularities, to screen for parasites.

If your puppy does test positive for intestinal parasites, our pet care team will review treatment, management, and prevention of reinfection with you. **It is always good practice for you and your family (especially children) to wash hands after handling puppies and before eating.**

