

Taking a new puppy into the house and family can be rewarding if slightly daunting experience. These notes provide some guidance for the first year of life and getting your pup off to the right start.

## Vaccination

Canine Distemper - Less frequently seen today thanks to widespread vaccination levels. Causes initial conjunctivitis and gastrointestinal signs and is frequently fatal. Dogs which apparently recover may develop neurological problems many years later.

Canine Parvovirus - Still commonly seen and persists in the environment for many years. Causes acute severe vomiting and haemorrhagic diarrhea of pups which is frequently fatal. Mothers antibodies may interfere with first vaccination but newer vaccines are designed to help overcome this. Early vaccination is essential to allow external contact and social play, puppy preschool and development of normal social behaviours.

Infectious Canine Hepatitis - Less frequent today due to effective vaccines. Causes liver disease and corneal problems can be fatal.

These diseases make up the “C3” core vaccine.

Infectious Bronchitis also known as “Kennel cough” includes both the Parainfluenza virus and the Bordetella bacteria. While not generally fatal, kennel cough is highly contagious and affected pups may be infectious for 5 weeks thereby excluded from vital socialization classes.

These diseases together make up the C5 vaccines. The primary course of vaccines is generally given at 6-8 weeks, 10-12 week and ideally a final injection at 16 -18 week age. This initial puppy course is the most important but boosters are recommended at varying intervals depending on pets age and protection level. Kennel cough protection is short lived so annual boosting is pre-requisite for boarding.

## Worming

Intestinal worms include roundworm, hookworm, whipworm and tapeworm. Some worms may be passed directly through the placenta from the mother or via skin entry. Puppies should be wormed every fortnight from 2 weeks to 12 weeks then monthly thereafter. This can be done orally via tablets such as Drontal or Milbemax or using a multi purpose topical spot – on like Advocate or Revolution. Some may not cover tapeworm so ask the Vet or Nurse for advice. Regular worming is important for public health, especially where children are handling pets.

Heartworm is actually a blood parasite living in the lungs and heart. It is carried by mosquitoes and endemic to Queensland and the subtropics. Even dogs living alone in the yard are at risk. Treatment for affected dogs can be complicated, unpleasant and expensive. Prevention however is simple and effective with a choice of either once yearly Proheart SR12 injection, monthly spots - ons like Revolution or Advocate or oral monthly tablets like Sentinel Spectrum and Heartgard. Pups should be started at 10 weeks age. Older dogs which have not been receiving heartworm prevention may need testing prior to commencing preventatives.



# PUPPY INFO

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## Licenses( and Microchipping)

As at July 2009 new council laws require microchipping for all new pups and kittens ie those less than 12 weeks of age on 01/07/09. By law this must be done no earlier than 8 weeks and no later than 12 wks age. This means they must now be chipped and registered before desexing period ie generally at second vaccination. While undoubtedly less convenient and painless than chipping during desexing we can still do this during normal consultation. Note older/existing pets only require a chip if they change hands /ownership or if they are a declared dangerous breed. Pets must also be registered both with microchip authority (which we do) and the council (which you do) within 7 days. A desexing tattoo in the left ear is also compulsory.

## Neutering

Neutering helps prevent unwanted puppies and also greatly protects against mammary cancer and uterine infection (pyometra) in bitches. Neutered males are less aggressive, wander less and do not hump the visitors leg. Neutering is generally performed around 6 months age as a day surgery. Sutures are usually dissolving and pain relief is given at the time of surgery and a few days thereafter.

## Fleas

Fleas are virtually unavoidable due to the warmth and humidity of the Queensland climate. Indoor conditions make it suitable year round for fleas so effective flea control needs to be year round and focused on prevention rather than when dogs are actually itching. Contrary to public opinion fleas breed in warm, dark, sheltered areas such as carpets, beddings, under houses and kennels rather than out on the lawn. Ideally flea prevention should target both the biting adult stage and the thousands of eggs laid waiting to develop. It needs to include all the dogs and cats in the household.

Spot on monthly treatments include Advantix, Advocate, Advantage, Revolution and Frontline. Oral prevention treatments like Sentinel Spectrum target the flea eggs.

Flea allergic animals need a much higher level of total prevention. We recommend using topical medications such as Advantix or Frontline fortnightly rather than monthly during Spring/Summer season and further combining with an egg killing agent like Sentinel Spectrum.

Frontline or Advantix used fortnightly will also give paralysis tick control. Please note flea shampoos work only a few days and cannot provide lasting protection. Finally, don't be embarrassed to ask the Vet or Nurse if you experience flea problems or you current treatment just doesn't seem to be working.

## Ticks

Paralysis or scrub ticks are endemic to the South East Qld area. The native Ixodes scrub tick is carried by bandicoots, possums and other wildlife which wander through our back gardens. The tick produces a potent nerve toxin which can be rapidly fatal to dogs and cats. Spring



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and summer are the most prevalent times, however can occur any time, especially after recent rain. Routine prevention is particularly advised from September through April. Symptoms of tick envenomation typically include a retching gagging cough, wobbly legs or general weakness. Tick poisoning is a true emergency and early treatment with antitoxin is needed to avoid fatalities. Affected animals may be unable to swallow or breathe normally for a week. Poisoning can still develop day or so after ticks have been removed. Tick antiserum therapy and intensive care can be expensive and not all cases survive. Prevention of a single tick case works out cheaper than a lifetime of tick prevention!

Treatment options include fortnightly waterproof topical agents like Advantix or Frontline, tick collars like Kiltix every 6 weeks or Proban tablets orally alternate days. Daily searching of the coat particularly around the head and neck area is recommended especially after walking in bushland. Ticks should be removed quickly if found (by twisting out) and the Vet alerted.

## Puppy Classes and Socialisation

Puppies have an early socializing and imprinting period where any social skills, pecking order and toilet preferences are learned. The 6-16 week period is critical. At this time the dogs comfort zone is being established toward things like other dogs, cats, humans, cars, handling of ears and feet, vacuum cleaners and thunderstorms etc etc. Many of the phobia and aggression problems we see relate to either a lack of early experiences or negative experiences. Puppy preschool sets your puppy up for success and our wonderful puppy preschool teacher Andy is simply the best. Contact the surgery or Andy directly on 0427 684703 for details.

## Feeding and Teeth Care

Dogs are carnivores, omnivores and scavengers by nature. Nutrition is a too huge a subject to cover here suffice to say we are expecting a lot from any single product to be able to fed alone daily and still provide all known nutrients and also those non essential but beneficial agents which prevent cancer, boost immunity and help keep teeth clean. All dogs benefit from having some raw chewy meaty bones or cartilage regularly (2-3 weekly) in the diet to clean teeth and exercise the jaw, alleviate boredom and unwanted chewing of furniture. Chicken wings and necks or rootails are suitable for pups and smaller breeds. For larger breeds try pigs trotters, knuckles, shank bones etc.

It is also worth including some phytonutrient rich dark coloured vegetables like carrot, broccoli, peas, beans, corn, capsicum or sprouted beans/seeds. Fruit like apple, orange, banana, pears or berries are also good. Avoid onion, garlic or chocolate as they may be toxic to dogs. Cereals like weetbix have little place in dog diets and are used as cheap fillers in poorer quality foods. Cereals also interfere with zinc or calcium uptake and frequent causes of food allergies. When selecting a quality food for pups, features to look for are :

1. Primarily meat not plant protein and meat not derivatives
2. Some (proven) dental benefit properties
3. Good fatty acid (omega 3) and DHA profile



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4. Gut health promoters (prebiotics)
5. Joint health formulas for rapid growing breeds.

We think Eukanuba and Iams dry food best cater for these and represent best overall value. Of the frozen foods, Dr Billinghursts "BARF" (Bones And Raw Food) diet is a good raw (frozen) wholefood diet and also good as a treat.

Growing puppies are like adolescents and should be lean not flabby. They will fill into their lanky frame at around 18-24 months. Flappy pups have quadrupled incidence of hip dysplasias and other joint cartilage diseases. If the growing pup is already overweight before maturity and neutering have occurred it will only get worse as adults.....

Ask the Vet or Nurse for help if you are unsure about correct weights.

## Hydrobath and Grooming

The hydrobath operates Sat and Sunday 10-1. Dog or cats clipping can also be arranged here at the surgery or contact Nose to Tail at Oxley on 3716 0643.

## Insurance

Vets like insurance because it allows us to practice the high quality medicine we were trained to provide. It also allows us to make specialist referrals where indicated. We can advise on best value policies like Petplan or Pet Secure. If you are insured already with RACQ or Suncorp it may be possible to add the dog onto your existing policy.

## Emergencies

25 years of after- hours emergency work generally working through the next day does take its toll. In the interests of health and sanity we have decided to refer our after-hours caseload to the Qld University Emergency centre St Lucia. Cases are stabilised, monitored through the night, then returned to us - usually the following day. While there is always some inevitable loss of continuity it allows us to be fully functional, un-sleep deprived and able make best clinical decisions by day! The UQ contact number is 3365 2110 or you can find it on the after-hours answer machine.

## Petshop

Our fully stocked pet shop is open 7 days for all pet advice supplies and aquarium needs on the same number.