

MANCHESTER VETERINARY CLINIC

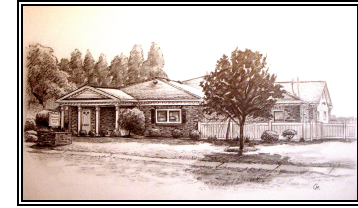
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Congratulations on the arrival of your new “family” member. This is usually a very busy time as you try to stay one step ahead of your new canine. Even owners with “dog” experience will often learn something with each new dog. This handout outlines the basic information that we think is important for dog owners. It should help you establish a good relationship with your new dog and a healthy environment for the rest of its life. We hope to be able to discuss at least some of this information with you in the course of your dog’s first few visits. We encourage you to review this information and ask us any questions you may have.

I Preventive Medicine

1 Vaccinations Overview

- We give a series of vaccines to prime your dog’s immune system into providing year-long protection against multiple infectious diseases
- Avoid exposing your pup to places where potentially sick or contagious dogs may have been such as city parks, dog shows, dog parks or daycares until your pup’s vaccination series is complete

Recommended Vaccines

- DA2PP (acronym for the vaccine that protects against Distemper, Adenovirus 2, Parainfluenza, and Parvovirus) is administered every 3-4 weeks starting at 8 weeks of age until your pup is at least 15 weeks old, then boosted a year later and then no more frequently than every 4 years after that
- Rabies is administered between 3 and 6 months of age, repeated one year later, and then given every 3 years after that

Optional Vaccines

- Lyme, a bacteria spread by deer tick bite with the potential to cause joint, nerve and organ injury; two doses given 2-4 weeks apart are followed by annual re-vaccination
- Leptospirosis, a spiral bacteria transmitted from wildlife causing kidney and/or liver injury or failure; this bacteria can infect people and dog infections can lead to owner infection; two vaccine injections given 2-4 weeks apart are followed by annual re-vaccination

- Bordetella, the major bacterial component involved in causing infectious canine cough (Kennel Cough) is typically required for kennels and some daycare and grooming establishments; can be administered into the nose (typically used for initial immunization or when quicker immunity is needed) or as an injection (usually used for the annual booster)
- Influenza, a true flu virus, has become a threat primarily for dogs in the same situations that warrant Kennel Cough vaccination, namely kennels and day care facilities and is being required more frequently by them; typically causes mild to no signs but a small percentage of infected dogs can get flu-like symptoms and even significant pneumonia; the vaccine significantly reduces the severity and duration of symptoms and viral shedding; two doses given 2-4 weeks apart are followed by annual revaccination

2 **Intestinal Parasites**

These are extremely common in puppies and can sometimes infect people. Testing and deworming treatments are therefore routine.

- Have a stool sample analyzed for microscopic evidence of parasites like Roundworms, Hookworms, Giardia and Coccidia
- Pick up after your dog as promptly as possible to prevent any worm egg contamination of the soil (eggs can remain infectious for years)
- Keep your pup's rear end clean, especially if there is any diarrhea, since unclean rear ends can harbor parasite eggs and be sources for infection for dogs and people alike
- Repeat stool exams at least every 2 years, more frequently if tests were previously positive or if required by your boarding kennel or day care facility

3 **Heartworm Disease and Prevention**

This disease has always been easier and safer to prevent than it is to treat.

- See the brochure detailing the life cycle of this mosquito-transmitted blood vessel parasite
- Prevent the disease by giving a once a month dose of medicine like chewable Heartgard Plus, which also protects against Hookworms and Roundworms; this is our most commonly recommended heartworm prevention medication
- Protect your dog year-round since mosquito and parasite exposures can be unpredictable and continual administration allows Heartgard to work better
- Perform a blood test for heartworms (and 3 tick-transmitted diseases) every two years, starting at 1 ½ to 2 years of age

4 **Fleas and Ticks**

Control measures are an important way to prevent infestations and to reduce exposure to the diseases these

- Expect your dog to have contact with a flea or tick at some point; few dogs are lucky enough to never come across either
- Limit your dog's risk of exposure by using some kind of control measure such as a spot-on product like Frontline Plus that is applied monthly

blood suckers can transmit.

5 **Spaying & Neutering**

The benefits of this surgery outweigh any conceivable down side.

- Use control measures at least between late March and the end of November though year round use may be appropriate depending on weather
- Performed, typically, at 6 months of age
- Maximize health benefits for female pups, including avoiding potentially fatal mammary cancer and uterine infections, if done before their first heat; there are health benefits for males neutered at any age though young dogs heal faster
- Consider breeding only if you are a dedicated breeder due to all the time, effort and expense that goes with that commitment

6 **Oral Care**

Now is the time to teach your puppy to accept brushing as well as to accustom you to paying attention to your dog's teeth.

- Familiarize your dog with a tooth brush and handling of its mouth at an early age; for small dogs this is extremely important since dental disease (including periodontitis, tooth loss and systemic infection from oral bacteria) often takes a huge toll on their health in their later years
- Encourage your dog, regardless of size, to chew on things that may help clean the teeth; this includes rawhide, bully sticks, dental treats like Greenies, Nylabone products, etc. (note that dry dog food or "Milk Bones" don't clean very much; do your teeth feel cleaner after eating a pretzel?)
- View oral health as a life long maintenance process and do not expect a few dental cleanings under anesthesia to control oral problems for a life time

7 **Handling and Examining Your Pup**

Practice techniques now that make it easier to work with your dog in the future.

- Handle your pup's mouth, ears, eyelids, legs, paws, nails, belly and under the tail as much as possible and reward your pup for allowing you to do so
- Train your pup to accept these manipulations to make future handling easier

8 **Microchipping**

Consider this to be a 21st century electronic tattoo.

- Implanted by injecting a grain-of-rice-sized chip between the shoulders
- Sends out a numeric signal when energized by a chip scanner
- Register your dog's chip through a microchip registry so that if your dog is lost, its chip number can be traced back to you

II **Puppy Management**

1 **Elimination Training ("House-breaking")**

Supervision, consistency and patience are required. Don't count on it happening on its own.

- Provide a set feeding and exercise schedule and then observe and learn the timing of your puppy's elimination pattern
- Bring your puppy to the same area outside, on leash, and wait for results
- Reward the pup immediately when the job is done (don't wait until back inside)

- Do not punish accidents you don't see happen; only if you see it happening should you startle the pup and try to get the rest of the job done outside
 - Try leashing your dog to you when inside if you are unable to directly supervise
 - Crate your dog when you cannot watch it at all; this will help avoid accidents and teach your pup to "hold it" longer (see below)
- 2 **Crate Training** This is recommended as a house-breaking tool and a life-long behavioral aide.
- Plan on it to be used as a safe "den" when the pup cannot be supervised or needs quiet time and not as a place of punishment
 - Choose a location your puppy will recognize as a regularly used living space, especially if your pup will be alone for much of the day (the crate is not exile)
 - Design an appropriately sized space to encourage "holding it" (dogs don't want to soil where they sleep)
 - Determine the appropriate length of time to be left alone (and expected to "hold it") and schedule puppy care around that; the accepted rule of thumb is that the hours pup is expected to hold it equals its age in months plus one
 - Downplay departures and homecomings
 - Set up alternatives such as puppy pads or newspaper in a gated space or oversized playpen if you choose not to use a crate
 - Decide where your dog will sleep at night if not in a crate
- 3 **Socialization** The more pups experience, the happier, more confident, and less fearful they may become.
- Introduce your pup to other dogs (healthy, vaccinated, known to be friendly with other dogs), people and new environments including other homes and cars
 - Enable your pup to experience time away from you and your home
- 4 **Leashes, Collars and Harnesses** These are good tools for safety and training. Most pups would rather run free, of course, but it is not their decision.
- Get your puppy used to this form of control regardless of expected adult size
 - Be aware of collar problems with small dogs and those with flat faces (more prone to neck and windpipe injury and breathing issues with misuse) and dogs that pull all the time
 - Consider choke collar alternatives for exuberant dogs, such as head halters and squeeze harnesses; for dogs that pull all the time a choke collar becomes a choking collar and not a correction device
 - Do not forget the risk, albeit small, of severe injury from non-breakaway collars left on unattended dogs; choke collars should always be removed after an outing
- 5 **Exercise** You need to keep all dogs, but especially puppies, busy or they tend to find their own
- Make the time to exercise your puppy both mentally and physically, including play time and training time
 - Provide opportunities for your puppy to stay busy and entertain itself

entertainment.

- Keep your puppy as busy as possible by day and it will be more apt to sleep through the night
- Understand that “tiring” you pup won’t happen just by physical activity alone

6 **Additional information**

The more information you gather the better. You will have more options from which to decide what works for you and your dog.

- Review our handouts
- Ask your trainer or puppy school teacher
- Ask us for additional references; books (and even YouTube videos) by well-known trainers like Cesar Millan, Sophia Yin or Victoria Stilwell are always a good place to start

III Nutrition

1 **How Much to Feed**

The best way to judge is by how skinny or plump your pup is; skinny is better than plump.

- Use rules of thumb (e.g., for pups under 6 months of age, feed 1 cup of dry food per 7-10 pounds per day) only as a rough starting point, and expect to adjust it based on weight gain and how the puppy looks
- Underfeed when in doubt rather than overfeed; you’ll never affect your puppy’s adult size by underfeeding while overfeeding can cause growth to occur too rapidly, increasing the chance for bone and joint trouble, like hip dysplasia

2 **Calorie Control**

This is absolutely the NUMBER ONE life long health concern for all dogs. How much you feed is even more critical than what you feed. Dogs are hardwired to look for food so don’t let them tell you how much to feed.

- Remember, always, that overweight dogs get sick sooner and die younger than dogs kept thin; controlled studies have shown this so please don’t shorten your dog’s life by feeding too much
- Create a feeding system that takes into account meals and treats so that overfeeding won’t occur; make sure everyone follows the feeding rules
- Give treats that are small or broken into small pieces (Cheerios make good treats because of their size) to minimize calories; dogs care more about getting a reward than its size so break that 2 inch dog bone into 10 individual rewards

3 **What to Feed**

We cannot offer simple answers but we do offer: guidelines; acknowledgment that old beliefs seem to defy common sense; and questions to help make you think more about what you feed your dog.

- Decide what you can afford, knowing that you won’t get what you don’t pay for
- Understand that less expensive food features less expensive ingredients like corn, wheat, soy, meat byproducts, grain byproducts (e.g., brewers rice, soybean mill run, corn gluten meal); also realize more expensive food doesn’t always omit these inexpensive ingredients; research the negative aspects of these ingredients - or you can believe what we tell you
- Learn to pay attention to package ingredient labels, not the marketing on the bag, because you cannot judge a book by its cover; unfortunately, even if you know the ingredients, you can’t be totally sure of their quality and wholesomeness

- Look into the foods we recommend
 - Provide variety; we wouldn't think it's healthy for us to eat the exact same thing our whole life, so why should it be okay for our dogs?
 - Recognize that dry dog food is about convenience; despite what the packaging says, there's nothing totally natural about pureeing, cooking and extruding ingredients into a dry nugget; consider feeding more than just dry food
- 4 **Is People Food Bad For Dogs?** Is it "bad" for us?
- Avoid feeding so much people food, especially meat, that it creates dietary imbalances or adds excess calories; limiting the volume of people food to less than a quarter of the diet should be fine
 - Avoid potentially toxic foods (grapes, raisins), junk food, and overly fatty scraps (if it's not that good for us, our dogs don't need too much of it either)
 - Avoid bones, especially cooked, which can become irritants, obstructions, and impactions in some dogs
 - Encourage your dog to enjoy vegetables and fruits as treats; that piece of carrot, green pepper, or broccoli is a much better choice than a Pup-Peroni stick

IV Guiding Behavior

- 1 **Basic Obedience and Beyond** Behavioral problems are a leading cause of owner dissatisfaction, pet abandonment and worse. Guiding your dog's behavior is a lifelong process.
- Be your dog's leader first, friend second, much like parenting children
 - Give your dog rules to live by; this creates a framework of expectations for your dog that reduces uncertainty and anxiety; this makes for a happier pet
 - Sign up for puppy and obedience classes; we cannot overemphasize the benefits of working with a trainer in a distracting environment
- 2 **Deference / Nothing is Free** This is the single MOST important leadership and training technique.
- Teach your dog to sit and wait for everything; your dog will then learn to sit and wait when it wants something
 - View this just like a child asking "Please" for something rather than just demanding it (and even worse, getting it)
 - Refer to our handout on deference training for more details
- 3 **Appropriate Play and Entertainment** Dogs need things to do or "jobs" or they may come up with activities you may not like.
- Provide adequate physical exercise as well as mental stimulation
 - Teach hide and seek and other games
 - Play fetch
 - Offer "busy toys" such as rawhide and other consumable chews (with supervision),

- food-filled Kongs and other food-containing toys, when you can't be entertaining
- Maintain a toy basket and rotate what's out to keep toys novel and interesting
- Recognize the downside of any tug of war game or mouthy roughhousing

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| 4 | Rewards | Timing is everything. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reward good behavior immediately (within seconds) or your dog will have moved on and you'll be rewarding the next activity• Supply plenty of praise and positive attention as readily available rewards• Furnish food rewards which can be extremely helpful in getting and keeping the attention of pups and even older dogs• Pick food rewards that are small and handy like Cheerios |
| 5 | Consequences For Unacceptable Behavior | You can't always just ignore bad behavior and reward the good but make any consequences fit the crime. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Do not hit or resort to other physical punishments; dog brains are not programmed to learn anything more than fear and anxiety from such acts• Make sure consequences are well-timed to be effective; if it didn't literally just happen, you can't effectively punish it• Consider appropriate consequences such as: take away attention (don't even look down at the puppy jumping on you, turn away); redirect to a positive behavior (if the pup is chewing on your hand yelp loudly and hand over an appropriate chew object); time out (puppy running around out of control can be leashed and made to lie down or confined in a small room or crate with a toy) |
| 6 | Bad Habits | What your dog is allowed to do one day he/she will do better the next, especially if they think they've been rewarded for it. Make training easier by deciding early on what is or is not acceptable and then have everyone be consistent. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recognize how bad habits develop and how bad behavior can be inadvertently rewarded; we've listed some of the more common bad habits• Jumping up (reaching down to pet or push away can both be rewards)• Mouthing, biting, nipping (don't let pups teethe on you unless you don't mind them possibly being mouthy when they're big)• Begging at table or in kitchen (once you start the association between kitchens and food, it's hard to break so be careful with offering treats when you are cooking or even just in the kitchen)• Getting on furniture (decide early on what's okay or not okay)• Sleeping in bed (decide early on where your dog will sleep)• Attention seeking (think child screaming at you while you're on the phone)• Getting into garbage or other places they don't belong (part of puppy-proofing)• Playing keep away (if you have to chase, the dog wins)• Pulling on the leash as they walk (who's leading who?) |