

## **PUPPY INFORMATION LEAFLET**

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you and your new arrival to the practice. The following leaflet is designed to give you access to information that will help keep your new puppy fit and healthy!

### **Worming**

It is important for your puppy to be regularly wormed to ensure that they remain parasite free and healthy. It is recommended that your puppy is wormed every two weeks until he/she is 12 weeks of age, then every month until he/she is 6 months of age. From that age, they should be wormed every 3 months unless directed otherwise by your veterinary surgeon. As there is a large range of worming products available, your vet or veterinary nurse can advise you on the most suitable for your puppy.

### **Vaccinations**

Initially your puppy will need a course of two vaccinations, one and then another 2/3 weeks later depending on the vaccine. The diseases that your puppy is routinely vaccinated against are Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parvovirus and Parainfluenza. Once the initial vaccine course is complete, your puppy will only need a yearly booster injection. We will aim to send you a reminder for the month that the Booster is due so that your puppy can have a full check over and their injection.

### **Flea treatments**

Your puppy can be treated for fleas from 2 days of age with a suitable recommended product. There are many products available and as they all differ please ask your veterinary surgeon or veterinary nurse which product would suit the needs of both you and your puppy.

### **Identichips/Microchips**

Micro-chipping your puppy ensures that he/she will always be identifiable if he/she ever goes missing. It is a small chip (about the same size as a grain of rice) that is placed under the skin into the 'scruff' at the back of the neck, by means of a needle slightly larger than a vaccination needle with which the chip is injected under the skin. Each chip has its own unique number that is then registered into a database along with all of the relevant information about your puppy, its breed, colour, sex etc as well as any contact details that you wish to register. All Dog Wardens, Veterinary surgeries and Rescue Organisations have hand held scanners that enable them to locate the chip and its unique number and then trace ownership details from the database to reunite lost pet and owner.

Puppies can be micro-chipped at their second vaccination, but in certain cases such as a nervous puppy, or a small breed of dog, the vet may recommend that it is delayed until the puppy is settled enough or big enough for the procedure. The procedure can wait until the puppy is old enough to be neutered when it can be done whilst under anaesthetic.

## Feeding

There are many makes and brands of puppy food available on the market today. As puppies are all different, what suits one will not suit another and so careful thought needs to be put into what to feed them. The most convenient way of ensuring that puppy gets all of the nutrients that he/she requires to grow is to feed a dried 'Complete diet'. By weighing your puppy regularly and feeding to the weight chart on the feed concerned, you can be sure that they are receiving all of the vital ingredients needed for them to develop correctly.

There are other more 'natural' diets available, both in a ready made pouch/sachet/frozen meat varieties or in a home-made feed, but these diets need to be undertaken carefully with guidance from your Veterinary Surgeon to ensure that your puppy is receiving the correct nutrients to ensure there is no effect on them developmentally. Please feel free to discuss any nutritional concerns with your Veterinary Surgeon or Veterinary nurse.

## Dental Care

Even though your puppy might still have his baby teeth, consideration needs to be given to his future dental care. Getting your puppy used to brushing his teeth from an early age can dramatically reduce the need for your dog to have dental treatment in later life. Baby toothbrushes, or special finger/dual ended dog toothbrushes can be used alongside specifically designed 'dog toothpaste' (human toothpaste is unsuitable for use with dogs) and, put into a puppy's usual routine can make easy healthcare possible.

## Pet Insurance

There are many Pet Insurance policies available, offering a range of cover to pet owners. Insurance is worth considering even though your puppy might, and hopefully will be, fit and healthy for a long time, the cover will give you peace of mind in the event that something unexpected was to appear. There is a lot to consider when thinking about taking out insurance cover for your puppy, here are a few things to help you in your search for the best policy for you:

1. Does the policy cover your pet for life? Or, does the policy stop when they reach a certain age?
2. Does your policy cover you for an illness for life? Or, are you only able to claim for a condition for a year, and then after that it is excluded from the policy (This is not so bad if your puppy accidentally gets a fractured leg, but not so good if they get a heart condition or diabetes that will require lifelong medication).
3. Does your policy have an excess? Is it a yearly payment per condition or do they take a percentage each time you make a claim?
4. Does your policy cover you for all medical treatment, or are there exceptions which they do not cover such as dental care?

At the surgery we have a variety of leaflets advertising different Insurance policies so that you are able to choose the most suitable for you and your puppy. Unfortunately, we can not recommend specific policies, however we can supply you with the details of insurance brokers who may be able to help you in finding a policy that meets your needs.

## Neutering

This is general term used for both males and females.

There are many points to consider when deciding whether or not, and when is the right time to neuter your puppy. There are many differing points of view on this topic and it is advisable that you talk through any questions with your veterinary surgeon.

**Castration** – this is usually done at 10-12 months of age although it can be done from 6 months of age if they are showing signs of sexual maturity.

**Spaying** – There are now two procedures offered for neutering bitches, depending on the age of the individual.

1. Ovariectomy - This involves removal of the ovaries only and can be done before a bitch has had her first season although the majority of vets prefer to wait until 3-4 months after they have had their first season.
2. Ovariohysterectomy – This is the traditional method of spaying, which involves removal of the ovaries and uterus to the level of the cervix.

Currently, as a practice we recommend that an Ovariectomy is carried out as the procedure of choice.

Unless you are intending to breed from the bitch, we recommend all bitches are neutered to prevent unwanted puppies and hormone related problems (e.g. mammary cancer, uterine infections).

If you are considering neutering for Behavioural reasons please feel free to discuss these with your Veterinary surgeon or Veterinary nurse prior to the procedure.

## Socialization

This is an essential part of rearing a puppy to ensure that they have positive experiences within their early life with as many different people/other animals/situations/noises etc. This means that they will grow up to be a well-adjusted member of society without any fears/phobias or other problems.

At our surgeries, we encourage new puppy owners to give us a call and arrange to visit the surgery at a convenient time so that puppy can experience gentle handling, the sights and smells of a Veterinary Surgery and different people in a positive way without having to have a procedure done – most Veterinary Nurses are more than willing to cuddle a puppy or two!

As well as examining your puppy, we are able to offer you advice on the best way to introduce to your puppy the different types of handling that they might have to experience in a veterinary surgery during their lifetime. Being lifted onto a table for examination, having their feet lifted and looked at for the time they need their claws clipping and looking into their eyes, ears and mouth are just some examples.

Puppy Classes are another way of ensuring that your puppy gets a good introduction to the world of training and socialization in a controlled situation. These classes will help you to teach your puppy basic training including lead training, recall, 'leave', and 'stay', as well as encourage good manners including not jumping up or play biting. Classes should also encourage handling activities, such as vet examination practice but also including grooming/ clipping and other maintenance practice.

Any Puppy class that you choose should always use Reward based methods so that your puppy only receives positive experiences in his early and formative weeks of life. If you would like further information on reputable and recommended Puppy Classes, please ask a Veterinary Nurse or look on our notice boards for details.



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