



# NEW PUPPY GUIDE

## Congratulations!

Welcome to you and your new puppy. We are pleased that you have chosen our team to care for this newest member of your family.

In the coming weeks and months, as you watch your puppy grow, you will most likely have questions. In this puppy pack, we have compiled some information that we hope will help answer those questions. If you cannot find the information you are looking for, please do not hesitate to call us – we are an enormous resource for you.

We enjoy watching puppies grow and mature from little balls of fur into all their adult glory, so please bring your puppy in anytime for a weight check, treats or just for some love from us. We look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Breanne Galloway, Dr. Teresa Millar, Dr. Margaret Fisher and the team at Steveston Veterinary Hospital

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# VACCINES

## Protecting your best friend

One of the most important things you can do to give your dog a long and healthy life is to ensure that he/she is vaccinated against common canine diseases. Your dog's mom gave her puppies immunity from disease for the first few weeks of life by providing disease-fighting antibodies in her milk. After that period, it's up to you, with our help and advice, to provide that protection.

## When should my dog be vaccinated?

The immunity that a puppy has at birth begins to diminish sometime between 6 and 12 weeks of age. The first set is usually given by the breeder between 6 and 8 weeks. The general rule of thumb is a set of vaccines is required every 4 weeks until the puppy is 16 weeks of age or older. Thereafter, your dog will require vaccines at a regular interval, typically once yearly. Some of the vaccines we give only need a booster every 3 years once the dog has reached full maturity. You will need to follow our puppy vaccine schedule quite closely; if you wait too long between vaccine boosters, you may have to start all over again.

## Which vaccines should my dog receive?

We believe that dogs should be protected against those diseases which are most common, highly contagious and can cause serious illness or death. We recommend vaccination against Canine Distemper, Infectious Canine Hepatitis, Canine Parvovirus, Leptospirosis, and Rabies. Other vaccines, such as Kennel Cough, may be recommended based on risk factors.

## How do vaccines work?

Vaccines contain small quantities of altered or killed viruses or bacteria. When administered, they stimulate your dog's immune system to produce disease-fighting cells and proteins (antibodies) to protect against disease.

## How effective is vaccination?

Like any drug, treatment or surgical procedure, vaccinations cannot be 100% guaranteed. However, used in conjunction with proper nutrition and clean housing, vaccination is your dog's best defense against disease.

## Are vaccines safe?

All vaccines undergo safety trials to receive licensing in Canada. While they are considered very safe, vaccines can still cause reactions in a very small number of pets. Most commonly, dogs may be a bit lethargic and may have a fever for a day following the vaccination. Some dogs may develop a small, non-painful lump at the site of the vaccine injection. Very rarely, a dog will

develop facial swelling or a generalized allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), with vomiting, diarrhea, breathing difficulties and collapse. Any of these symptoms need to be treated immediately.

## **Types of Vaccination**

### **a) Canine Distemper**

Vaccination against this often fatal, hard to treat disease is absolutely essential. Highly contagious, it is spread by discharge from the nose and eyes of infected dogs. Symptoms can include listlessness, fever, coughing, diarrhea and vomiting. Convulsions and paralysis may occur in the final stages before death. The virus attacks many organs, including the nervous system, which may be permanently damaged. While not common here in the Lower Mainland, an outbreak could devastate the local dog population if enough dogs are not vaccinated.

### **b) Canine Parvovirus**

Very contagious, debilitating and widespread, parvovirus has a high mortality rate in puppies. Spread through feces, the highly resistant virus can remain in the environment for many months. Symptoms include high fever, listlessness, profound vomiting and diarrhea. Vaccination is the only certain method of preventing this terrible disease.

### **c) Infectious Canine Hepatitis**

Caused by Adenovirus type I, this disease is transmitted by secretions such as infected saliva, urine or feces. Its symptoms are similar to those of the early stages of distemper. Causing liver failure, eye damage and breathing problems, the course of this disease can range from mild to fatal.

### **d) Rabies**

All mammals including humans are at risk of contracting rabies. This disease is almost invariably fatal. In some parts of Canada where risk is high, vaccination of dogs and cats is mandatory. In British Columbia, the primary source of rabies is bats. In 2004, the virus was found in Skunks in Stanley Park and in 2007, an unvaccinated cat died from rabies after it was exposed to a rabid bat that flew into its house. Even dogs that do not go outside should be vaccinated. It is required for travel across the Canadian-American border, as well as other international countries.

### **e) Kennel Cough**

Any dog that goes to dog parks, kennels, daycares, groomers, dog shows or interacts with other dogs should be vaccinated annually. We see many cases of Canine Cough each year. Canine cough is characterized by a harsh, hacking cough which often sounds like the dog has something stuck in his throat. It is an airborne, highly contagious disease which may develop into pneumonia without treatment.

#### f) Leptospirosis

The leptospirosis vaccine is given annually to dogs. We recommend it for most of our patients as there has been an increase in leptospirosis cases in the past 10 years in the Lower Mainland. Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that is spread by the contamination of water sources by the urine of raccoons and rats. Any dog who drinks out of puddles or ditches can be at risk. It is a serious disease that can also be transmitted to humans. The signs of the disease can vary, but usually include vomiting, diarrhea, anorexia, dehydration, lethargy and fever. The Leptospirosis bacteria cause liver and kidney failure and the disease can be fatal.

Ask us if you would like more information about vaccines and your dog.

## YOU, YOUR DOG AND PARASITES

Like any member of your family, it is important to keep your dog healthy and free of parasites. It is fairly common for a dog to become infected with an internal or external parasite at some point in its life. Parasites can affect your dog in a variety of ways, ranging from simple irritation to causing life-threatening conditions if left untreated. Some parasites can infect and transmit disease to people. Here are some of the common parasites found in this area.

### Roundworms

Roundworms are the most common of the parasitic worms found inside a dog. Your puppy may be infected from the time it is born because often the mother passes the worms to the puppy through the uterus as well as through the milk. Roundworms can also be transmitted from the tissues of mice or other small mammals. Puppies need to be treated with a dewormer several times to ensure that all the stages of the worms can be treated and they should then receive regular preventive treatment as adults. Roundworms can pose a risk to humans also. Contact with contaminated soil or dog feces can result in human ingestion and infection. Once infected, the worms can cause eye, lung, heart and neurologic signs in people. It is essential to keep your dog's living area clean and remove feces regularly.

### Giardia

Giardia is a single-celled parasite that lives in your dog's intestine. It infects older dogs but more frequently infects puppies. Dogs become infected when they drink contaminated water sources or eat substances that have been soiled with feces. Many dogs infected with Giardia do not get any disease but some dogs will develop diarrhea that can be difficult to treat. People can also get Giardia, causing diarrhea or other problems but rarely is the disease spread from dogs.

## Tapeworms

Tapeworms are long, flat worms that attach themselves to your dog's intestine. A tapeworm body consists of multiple parts or segments, and tapeworm infections are usually diagnosed by finding segments, which appear as small white worms that may look like grains of rice or sesame seeds, on the rear end of your dog or in their feces. There are several different kinds of tapeworms and several sources of infection. *Dipylidium caninum* is the most common tapeworm and it uses fleas as its intermediate host. *Taenia* and *Echinococcus* species use small rodents, rabbits or deer as their hosts. To prevent tapeworm infection, try to keep your dog from coming in contact with intermediate hosts. Because fleas are the most common intermediate hosts, consistent safe and effective flea control is an essential preventive measure. If you think your dog is infected with tapeworms, we can do a stool test to accurately diagnose the problem and then provide safe and effective treatment options.

## Fleas

Fleas are the most common external parasite found on dogs. Although fleas are more likely to be a problem during warm-weather months, they can also cause problems during cooler seasons due to their ability to continue their life cycle indoors. Fleas can cause irritation resulting in your dog scratching and chewing at his skin. Fleas can also cause skin allergies and can transmit other parasites, such as tapeworms, to your dog. To check to see if your dog has fleas, you can look for the small brown insects but they may be difficult to find. You can also look for flea dirt (flea feces) by briskly combing or rubbing the hair and watch for black flecks that fall off. If you transfer these black flecks to a damp piece of paper towel, they will appear red or rust-coloured. Most flea problems can be managed by treating and preventing fleas on your dog. There are many safe and effective treatments available. Talk to us about how to best break the flea life cycle on your pet.

## Ticks

Ticks are fairly common ectoparasites of dogs. Tick exposure will depend on where you live, the time of year and the habits of your dog. Ticks attach to your dog by inserting their mouth parts into your dog's skin. Many ticks also produce a sticky, glue-like substance that helps them remain attached. After attaching, ticks begin feeding on your dog's blood. The places where ticks attach can become red and irritated. Ticks are also capable of transmitting other diseases to your pet, such as Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever. Ticks can attach to your dog when he or she goes with you on walks, hikes or other outdoor activities. You need to be careful if you are trying to take a tick off your dog. You don't want to leave the mouth parts in the dog's skin. We have some tick removers available or we can remove the tick for you so that this doesn't happen. The best way to prevent ticks from attaching to your dog is by the use of a tick control product. We can advise you on the best product for your dog.

## Heartworms

Heartworms are common in many places in the United States and in Canada. While they are not a big problem in the Lower Mainland, if you are travelling for holidays with your pet you should be using a preventive treatment to avoid this damaging parasite. Heartworm larvae are transmitted to dogs by mosquito bites. The larvae migrate to the heart or lungs and mature into worms that can grow to 16 inches in length. Heartworm infection can affect many different organs of the dog including heart, lungs, kidneys and liver. Early in the disease, dogs are often asymptomatic but if left untreated, heartworm infection can be fatal. Prevention is the key for this disease as treatment can be difficult. Any dog that is travelling to the US, eastern Canada or even to the Okanagan should be put on preventive medication. Let us know your summer travel plans so that we can help you keep your dog safe.

# SPAYING OR NEUTERING

## Why should I spay my pet?

Surgical sterilization of the female dog, commonly referred to as spaying, is one of the most significant aspects of female dog care an owner can provide. Spaying involves removal of the uterus and ovaries. It is a major surgery, but a commonly performed one, ideally performed while a female dog is still in puppyhood, prior to her first heat cycle. There are many reasons to spay your female dog.

### **Reduce the number of unwanted pets**

In every community there are homeless pets that end up in an animal shelter. Many healthy, adoptable dogs sit in shelters waiting for a “forever home” and many end up being euthanized. By spaying and neutering our pets, we reduce the number of unwanted dogs and cats in our communities and in our animal shelters.

### **Mammary Cancer prevention**

A female dog spayed before her first heat will have a near zero chance of developing mammary cancer.

### **Pyometra Prevention**

Pyometra is the life-threatening infection of the uterus that generally occurs in middle-aged to older female dogs in the six weeks following heat. The uterus with pyometra swells dramatically and is filled with pus, bacteria, dying tissue and toxins. Without treatment, pyometra can be fatal.

### **Convenience**

The female dog comes into heat every 8 months or so. There is a bloody vaginal discharge and local male dogs are attracted.

### **Cost effective**

The cost of a city license is lower for a spayed female dog than for an intact one.



The cost of spaying is less than the cost of looking after a litter of puppies.

## **Why should I neuter my pet?**

Neutering is the removal of the testicles from your male dog. There are a number of reasons we recommend neutering your pet.

### **To reduce the number of unwanted pets**

#### **To reduce roaming**

- An intact male dog will do just about anything to find a mate. Once he is free to roam, he risks injury in traffic or in fights with other males.

#### **Reduce sexual behaviours**

- Intact male dogs are more likely to hump other dogs and people's legs
- Neutering reduces aggressive behaviour

#### **Health benefits**

- Prevents testicular cancer
- Reduces the risk of prostate disorders such as prostate cysts and infections

#### **Neutering is cost effective**

- It is a lot less than the cost of treatment if your dog escapes and suffers trauma
- The cost of a city license is less for a neutered dog than it is for an intact dog

# **MICROCHIPS AND TATTOOS**

Animals with permanent identification are reunited with their owners more frequently than animals with no identification. Types of permanent identification include tattoos and microchips. At Steveston Veterinary Hospital, we recommend either type of identification. Each has its pros and cons. More and more we are using microchips as the most frequent form of identification.

## **Microchips**

A microchip uses passive Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), where a unique code on the chip is read by a microchip scanner. Microchips are not tracking devices, but they are permanent identification for your pet. A microchip is implanted by using a needle to place the chip under the pet's skin, usually between the shoulder blades. It takes only seconds to place and can be done while the animal is awake. Often we place a microchip at the same time as the spay or neuter surgery while the pet is under anesthesia but it can also be done at a regular appointment. Microchips can be tracked world-wide. When the microchip is implanted, there is a registration form that the company receives that provides the information on the pet and the owners. It is important to keep this information up-to-date so that if a pet is lost, the owners can be contacted. You can also choose to have the microchip information registered with the BC Pet

Registry Program which is a centralized pet identification database managed by the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA). For more information on this program, check out the BC SPCA website under Programs and Services.

## Tattoos

Before microchips were used in pet identification, we always used tattoos. Breeders also often tattoo their litters of puppies. There is a province-wide Tattoo Identification Program in place which was started by the College of Veterinarians of British Columbia (CVBC) in 1987. This program is now within the BC Pet Registry Program of the BC SPCA. Tattoos are done only when the animal is under anesthesia. Tattoos are only registered in BC and they can become difficult to read as the pet gets older. Again, as with microchips, it is important to keep your contact information current so that you can be contacted if needed. The tattoo information is kept at your veterinary hospital and you can also choose to have the information registered with the BC Pet Registry.

# HOUSETRAINING

Housetraining is not only about training your puppy where to go. It is also about making it clear that other places are inappropriate, until eliminating in the right location becomes a habit. Housetraining is more than just taking your puppy out every few hours. It requires you control the puppy's environment and schedule so it does not have the chance to have accidents.

The key to housetraining is taking your young puppy out frequently (on average every 2 hours for an 8-week-old puppy) and never giving it the opportunity to have an accident.

To avoid giving your pup the opportunity to eliminate inside, when it's in the house it should always either be

- In a crate
- In a puppy-safe and accident-safe playpen with a toilet area that contains a preferred bathroom surface (such as fake grass or pee pads)
- Attached to you by a leash so it can't wander off to eliminate in the house
- Or under your direct supervision in an enclosed area. Direct supervision means you are looking at it at all times. The minute you turn away, it'll have an accident

Stick to this plan for a month straight and they'll reliably develop the habit of going outside and holding it inside. Then continue keeping a close eye on her for another couple of months, especially when you take her on outings to other people's homes, before declaring it completely housetrained.

Housetraining requires a regular schedule and getting puppy to their bathroom spot quickly.

### **First thing in the morning**

- When you let your pup out of its crate, rush it to their potty spot before it has a chance to squat and pee. If you're not sure that they can hold it long enough to make it outside, carry it out.
- Walk briskly or run it to their potty spot so it doesn't have a chance to stop.
- Stand around until they finish. Keep them on a leash so they can't wander and get distracted. Stand quietly until they are finished and then praise, pet them or give them a treat as they are finishing.
- If after five minutes they don't eliminate, put them in their crate for 15 minutes and then try again.
- After it has gone to the bathroom, then you can play with the puppy.

### **How often should you take your puppy out?**

- Eight week old puppies can be crated for up to two hours during the day and through the entire night when they are sleeping.
- Take the puppy out whenever they wake up from sleeping or first comes out of their crate or playpen.
- Take them outside after a play session. If it doesn't eliminate, you can put them in the crate for 15 to 30 minutes and then take it out again.
- Take them out when the body language says it's searching for a spot to pee. Signs may be subtle. Typically they start sniffing the ground, circle or wander away.
- Take them out to potty 10 to 20 minutes after they've had a drink of water. Remove the water about an hour before you take them out for the last potty trip of the day, so it can go through the night without an accident.
- Learn from your mistakes. Each time your puppy has an accident, you should learn from the experience and avoid making the same mistake again. Housetraining is about establishing a habit of going to an elimination spot whenever the dog has to go potty and never giving them the opportunity to have an accident inside.

### **Housetraining requires constant supervision**

- Until they're reliable, the puppy must be directly supervised or attached to you with a hands-free leash or near you on a leash or resting in a playpen.
- Puppies should not have free access to the entire house until they are completely housetrained.
- Make sure your pup has plenty of toys and things to chew on to keep them entertained.
- An alternative to crating when you're gone longer periods of time is a puppy-safe playpen. The goal with a crate or a playpen is that the puppy will prefer to keep their bed clean and potty on the surface that is different from their bed.

### **What happens when there's an accident:**

- Interrupt your puppy with a sharp sound. Don't yell or punish them or even scare them.
- Get them outside as quickly as possible.
- Reward good behaviour. As soon as they goes to the bathroom in an appropriate area reward them with something they likes.
- Clean up the accident so the area does not smell like pee or poop to your puppy.

## **CRATE TRAINING**

Crate training, or confinement training, refers to teaching your puppy that he has a safe and secure area of his own in which to relax. Confinement keeps your puppy safe when you cannot directly supervise him. It is used to manage your puppy so that he doesn't have opportunities to learn inappropriate behaviours. Confinement is not to be used as punishment

Potty training starts with learning to love and sleep in a crate (or other small, enclosed area). The crate is also a valuable tool for other areas of management such as traveling or staying at a hotel. Your puppy's crate is a place for him to get away from the crazy human world.

An exercise pen can prevent destructive behaviour while giving your puppy a bit more freedom. The crate may be placed within or attached to the exercise pen. Toys and water should be made available in this area.

The crate can be wire or plastic. Some puppies prefer the closed in den-like area of a plastic crate while others like to see what's going on around them. The crate should be large enough for your puppy to get up, stretch, turnaround and lie down. If you plan to travel with your dog, you should inquire with the airline as to what it requires.

### **Teach your puppy to love confinement**

- Confinement areas should be located in commonly used areas of the home.
- Always give your puppy a treat for going to his confinement area.
- A food-stuffed storage device will entertain your puppy for a longer period of time. Offer it to your puppy when he is in his crate.
- Hide treats daily in the confinement area. When your puppy explores the area he will begin to believe in the crate fairy.
- Going into the confinement area should always be fun. Use an upbeat tone and attitude rather than a threatening or scolding manner when confining your puppy.
- Never punish your dog by sending him to his confinement area.
- Feed your puppy his meals in the crate with the door opened or closed.
- If your puppy is vocalizing in his confinement area, wait for him to quiet down before you let him out or give him any attention.

- Place your puppy in the crate at times even when you are home. This will teach your puppy that the crate does not always signal that you are leaving the house.
- Minimize the length of time your puppy is in his confinement area by offering scheduled breaks. Excessive confinement will result in hyperactivity.

## FEEDING GUIDELINES

Your puppy needs a balanced diet, which can be found in store bought puppy foods or can be prepared at home with the advice of your vet. A balanced diet gives your puppy energy, keeps his brain and body humming, and helps him grow. Puppies are growing rapidly, building bone and muscle, and developing organs. Adult dogs are maintaining their bodies. Your puppy need extra nutrients to fuel his growth.

### The key nutrients your puppy needs are:

**Proteins:** Proteins help build your puppy's tissues.

**Fats:** Fats help keep his skin and hair healthy. They also help your puppy develop a healthy brain and vision.

**Carbohydrates:** Help give your puppy energy.

**Vitamins and Minerals:** "Complete" and "balanced" puppy foods have the right amounts of vitamins and minerals.

**Water:** Although canned/wet puppy food contains up to 78% water and can provide some of your puppy's water needs, it's not enough. Dogs of all ages should always have a source of fresh, clean water available to them.

While it's ok to feed your puppy occasional treats, they should not account for more than 10% of your puppy's daily calorie needs.

### How often should puppies eat?

Puppies should eat three times a day from weaning through four to six months. After six months, twice-a-day feedings are fine.

### How much should puppies eat?

Puppies need to take in a lot of calories to fuel their rapid growth. At the start, that means about twice as many calories per pound as an adult dog of the same breed. Puppies grow the fastest in their first five months. Look for feeding charts on commercial puppy food labels. You can use them as a guide. Adjust as necessary to keep your puppy in the best condition.

Puppies should be relatively thin, and their ribs may be visible. The tops of the back bones will generally be easily seen. You shouldn't be able to feel any fat on its ribs. You should see a waist when looking down at your puppy and an abdominal tuck when looking from the side.

## **Does my large-breed puppy need a special food?**

Some large breed dogs can develop skeletal and joint problems, including hip dysplasia. Although these conditions have an inherited predisposition, overfeeding can worsen the situation.

Large-breed puppy foods are designed for controlled growth and may be lower in calcium and phosphorus than other puppy foods. Large-breed puppy food may also contain more fibre to add bulk to the diet without calories. Keeping your large breed puppy slim throughout his life will help to reduce the development of arthritis.

## **When should I switch from puppy food to adult dog food?**

Once puppies have reached 90% of their expected adult weight, they should switch from a growth diet to one suitable for maintenance. Small breeds may finish growing by 9 to 12 months; for larger breeds, it may be more like 12 to 18 months.

## **What foods can't my puppy eat?**

Some foods that people enjoy can be harmful to dogs. These include avocados, chocolate, grapes, raisins, macadamia nuts, and raw bread dough made with yeast. Also avoid onions, garlic and chives; milk and large amounts of dairy products; alcohol; coffee and caffeine; and food sweetened with xylitol, such as gum, baked goods, and candy. Xylitol, also used in products such as toothpaste, can cause liver failure in dogs.

# **FIRST AID FOR YOUR PET**

Always remember that any first aid administered to your pet should be followed by immediate veterinary care. First aid care is not a substitute for veterinary care, but it may save your pet's life until it receives veterinary treatment.

If your pet is injured, it could be in pain and is also most likely scared and confused. They may not even recognize you. You need to be careful to avoid getting hurt, bitten or scratched. Never assume that even the gentlest pet will not bite or scratch if injured. Pain and fear can make animals unpredictable or dangerous.

Don't attempt to hug an injured pet; this might only scare your pet or cause them more pain. Always keep your face away from its mouth.

Perform any examination slowly and gently. Stop if your animal becomes more agitated.

Call your veterinarian or an emergency veterinary clinic before you move your pet so they can be ready for you when you arrive.

## Poisoning and Exposure to Toxins

In general, any products that are harmful for people are also harmful for pets. Some examples of common poisons include cleaning products, rodent poisons and antifreeze. There are also some common food items that may be harmful to your pet.

If your pet's skin or eyes are exposed to a toxic product, follow the product label instructions for people exposed to the product. If you know your pet has consumed something that may be harmful, or if the animal is having seizures, losing consciousness, is unconscious or is having difficulty breathing, telephone your veterinarian, emergency veterinary clinic or the Animal Poison Control Center hotline (1-888-426-4435) immediately. There is a fee for the consultation.

If possible, have the following information available:

- Species, breed, age, sex, weight and number of animals involved
- Symptoms
- Name/description of the substance in question; the amount the animal was exposed to and the length of time since the exposure
- Have the product container/packaging available for reference

If you can't reach anyone for help and the poisoning occurred within the last 3 hours, consider inducing vomiting. Do not induce vomiting if your pet is unconscious, seizing, unable to stand or is having trouble breathing. Also do not induce vomiting if the poison is a petroleum product, a cleaning solution, or a strong acid or alkali.

## Seizures

- A seizure is any sudden and uncontrolled movement of the animal's body caused by abnormal brain activity. Seizures may be very severe and affect all of the body, or quite mild, affecting only a portion of the pet.
- Seizure activity that lasts longer than 3 to 5 minutes can cause severe side effects, such as fluid in the lungs or brain. A dramatic rise in body temperature can also result, causing internal organ damage.
- Seizures can be caused by epilepsy, toxins, low blood sugar, brain tumors and other medical conditions.
- Protect your pet from injury during or after the seizure. Keep them from falling from a height and keep away from water.
- Remove other pets from the area as some pets become aggressive after a seizure.
- Protect yourself from being bitten.
- Do not try to restrain the pet.
- Time the seizure (they may last from a few seconds to a couple of minutes).
- If the seizure lasts over 3 minutes, cool the pet with cool water on the ears, belly and feet, and seek veterinary attention at once.

- If your pet has two or more seizures in a 24-hour period, seek veterinary attention.
- Do not put your hands in the pet's mouth. (They do not swallow their tongues.) Do not slap, throw water on, or otherwise try to startle your pet out of a seizure. Stay calm and quiet and be ready to help them when the seizure ends.

## **Fractures**

- You may need to muzzle your pet in order to stabilize or move them. Stop bleeding with direct pressure.
- Open fractures, where there is an open wound, should be covered with a sterile gauze dressing if possible.
- Gently lay your pet on a flat surface for support.
- Splinting the fracture at home without any pain medication increases the risk of being bitten, and actually may make the fracture worse. Some fractures cannot be splinted.
- Prevent further damage by having your pet secured with a towel or blanket.

## **Eye Injuries**

- If you notice your pet squinting or protecting the eye, an abnormal redness to the white part of the eye, any abnormal appearance of the eyeball or you suspect a trauma to the eye, you should seek veterinary attention immediately.
- If an eye has been dislocated from the socket or the lids cannot close over the eyeball, keep the eyeball moist with contact lens wetting solution, K-Y jelly, water or moist compress.
- If an irritating chemical or other product accidentally gets into the eye, flush it with running water, contact lens saline or homemade saline solution squeezed from a compress or a sponge for a minimum of 15 minutes. (Saline: dissolve 2 teaspoons of table salt in 1 quart of water.)
- Do not attempt to remove a foreign object yourself.
- Do not try to push a dislocated eyeball back into the socket. This must be done under anesthesia so as not to cause damage to the eyeball's interior structures.

## **Bleeding (external)**

- Always avoid injury to yourself so take appropriate precautions.
- Press a clean, thick gauze pad over the wound, and keep pressure over the wound until the blood starts clotting. This will often take several minutes. Do not disturb blood clots after they have formed. If blood soaks through, simply add additional layers of bandage and continue the direct pressure.
- If a severely bleeding wound is on the foot or leg, gently elevate the leg so that the wound is above the level of the heart.
- If external bleeding continues after you have used direct pressure and elevation, use your finger or thumb to place pressure over the main artery to the wound. Apply pressure to the femoral artery in the groin for severe bleeding of a rear leg; to the



- brachial artery in the inside part of the upper front leg for bleeding of a front leg; or to the caudal artery at the base of the tail if the wound is on the tail.
- If bleeding is severe, apply a bandage with pressure over the wound and get your animal to a veterinarian immediately.

## **Bleeding (internal)**

- Symptoms may include pale gums, bleeding from the nose, mouth or rectum. Coughing up blood or blood in the urine, weakness, collapse and rapid pulse, or unusual lethargy may also be seen.
- Often the blood pools in the abdomen or the chest but does not result in any bleeding that is seen on the outside.
- Keep the animal as warm and quiet as possible and transport immediately to a veterinarian.

## **Bee stings and insect bites**

- Any insect or spider can cause problems if they bite or sting your pet. A bite or sting can cause swelling, redness, and itching. Some animals can have an allergic reaction to a sting or bite that may result in mild hives, facial swelling, vomiting, difficulty breathing or even collapse.
- If the stinger can be found, scrape it out with a credit card or other stiff material. Or you can use tweezers by grasping the stinger.
- Apply cool compresses to the area.
- To help neutralize some of the acidic venom, apply a paste mixture of baking soda and water to the sting area.
- If there is any facial swelling, breathing difficulty or collapse, your pet needs to be seen immediately by a veterinarian.

## **Burns**

- Extinguish all flames.
- Use appropriate measures to avoid being bitten.
- Avoid touching any pet that has been electrocuted until the power has been turned off.
- For thermal or electrical burns, immediately apply cool water compresses with a clean cloth to the site of the injury, changing them frequently as necessary to keep the site cool and wet. Continue this for at least 30 minutes.
- Do not apply ointments or butter. Do not attempt to remove burned hair or skin.
- For chemical burns, wash the contaminated area with large volumes of tepid flowing water for at least 15 minutes.
- In the case of dry chemicals, brush them away carefully, taking care to protect the eyes, nose and mouth of both you and your pet.
- If the chemical is in the eye, flush the eye with large volumes of water or contact lens saline for 15 minutes. Pure water can be quite irritating to the eyes and raw skin. It is

- much more comfortable for your pet if you use saline. Simply dissolve 2 teaspoons of table salt in one quart of water.
- Do not apply neutralizing agents to the skin or eyes.
  - Any cases of burns will need immediate veterinary attention.

## Choking

- Choking is interference with breathing caused by foreign material in, or compression on, the trachea. Coughing can be confused with choking but with choking, the pet has difficulty inhaling and with coughing the pet can inhale almost normally. Be careful to distinguish the two: attempting to give first aid to a pet who is merely coughing can cause injury.
- Symptoms include difficult or noisy breathing, pawing at the mouth, choking sounds, blue-tinged lips/tongue.
- Use caution. A choking pet is more likely to bite in its panic.
- If the pet can still breathe, keep it calm and get it to a veterinarian.
- Look into the pet's mouth to see if a foreign object is visible. If you see an object, gently try to remove it with pliers or tweezers, but be careful not to push the object further down the throat. If the object is not easy to reach, don't delay, get your pet to a veterinarian immediately.
- Warning! There is a structure deep in the throat called the larynx that feels like a smooth bone. Do not attempt to pull it out!
- If you can't remove the object or your pet collapses, place both hands on the side of your pet's rib cage and apply firm quick pressure, or lay your pet on its side and strike the rib cage firmly with the palm of your hand 3 to 4 times. The idea is to sharply push air out of the lungs and push the object out from behind.

## Diarrhea and Vomiting

- Diarrhea is the frequent evacuation of watery stools. Vomiting is the forceful expulsion of stomach contents through the mouth.
- Remove all food and water.
- Check for signs of dehydration.
- If the diarrhea and /or vomiting continues or the pet acts ill, seek veterinary attention. Diarrhea and vomiting can quickly lead to serious fluid loss and electrolyte imbalance, especially in very young and very old animals.
- If no vomiting occurs for 6 to 8 hours, begin to frequently give small amounts of clear liquids (water, Gatorade, Pedialyte, or other electrolyte solution. If your pet does not vomit the fluid, the following day offer small frequent meals of boiled hamburger and rice or boiled chicken and rice. If your pet does not want to eat, starts to vomit or continues to have diarrhea, go to your veterinarian for medical care.

## Heatstroke

- A dog's normal body temperature is 38°C to 39°C.

- Never leave your pet in the car on warm days. The temperature inside a car can rise very quickly to dangerous levels, even on milder days. Pets can succumb to heatstroke very easily and must be treated very quickly to give them the best chance of survival.
- Heat stroke can also be seen when an animal is left outdoors in hot/humid conditions without adequate shade or when exercised in hot/humid weather.
- Other predisposing factors may be obesity and/or disease affecting a pet's airway.
- If you cannot immediately get your pet to a veterinarian, move it to a shaded area and out of direct sunlight. If possible, determine the rectal temperature and record it.
- Place a cool or cold, wet towel around its neck and head. Do not cover the eyes, nose, or mouth.
- Remove and wet the towel again and rewrap the pet every few minutes as you cool the animal.
- Pour cool water or use a hose to cool water running over the animal's body.
- Directing a fan on the wet areas will help speed evaporative cooling.
- Do not overcool the pet.
- Do not force water into the pet's mouth. You may have fresh cool water ready to offer should your pet be alert and show an interest in drinking.
- Transport the pet to a veterinarian as soon as possible.

## **Shock**

- Shock is a condition resulting from a depressed state of many vital body functions caused by a lack of effective circulation. Shock is life-threatening and requires immediate attention and treatment.
- Symptoms include weak pulse, rapid heart rate, shallow breathing, nervousness, and dazed eyes. The gums may become pale and the pet will become cool to touch. Mental condition will deteriorate from depression to stupor to coma.
- Usually follows trauma, such as fights, being hit by a car, poisoning, insect sting, fluid loss or heart or airway failure.
- Keep the animal restrained, warm and quiet. Stop any bleeding and protect any obvious fractures from further injury. Cover with blankets to prevent further loss of body heat.
- If the animal is unconscious, keep the head level with the rest of the body.
- Transport pet immediately to a veterinarian.
- Do not pour water or anything else into the animal's mouth. Do not administer any medications unless instructed to do so by a veterinarian. Do not allow the patient to move into or out of the transport vehicle on their own. Internal bleeding may be increased with movement.

## **What to do if your pet is not breathing**

- Stay calm.
- If possible, have another person call the veterinarian while you help your pet.
- Check to see if your pet is unconscious.

- Open your pet's airway by gently grasping its tongue and pulling it forward (out of the mouth) until it is flat. Check the throat to see if there are any foreign objects blocking the airway.
- Perform rescue breathing by holding your pet's mouth closed and breathing with your mouth directly into its nose until you see the animal's chest expand. Once the chest expands, continue the rescue breathing once every 4 or 5 seconds.

## **What to do if your pet has no heartbeat**

- Do not begin chest compressions until you've secured an airway and started rescue breathing.
- Gently lay your pet on its right side on a firm surface. The heart is located in the lower half of the chest on the left side, just behind the elbow of the front left leg. Place one hand underneath the pet's chest for support and place the other hand over the heart.
- For dogs, press down gently on your pet's heart about one inch for medium sized dogs; press harder for larger animals and with less force for smaller animals.
- To massage the hearts of cats and other tiny pets, cradle your hand around the animal's chest so your thumb is on the left side of the chest and your fingers are on the right side of the chest, and compress the chest by squeezing it between your thumb and fingers.
- Press down 80 – 120 times per minute for larger animals and 100-159 times per minute for smaller ones. Alternate the chest compressions with the rescued breaths, or work as a team with another person so one person performs chest compressions for 4-5 second and then stops long enough long enough to allow the other person to give one rescue breath.
- Continue until you can hear a heartbeat and your pet is breathing regularly or you have arrived at the veterinary clinic and they can take over the resuscitation attempts.

Please remember that your pet's likelihood of surviving with resuscitation is very low. However, in an emergency it may give your pet its only chance.

# **SOCIALIZATION**

To help puppies become comfortable, confident, and emotionally stable adult dogs, they must be properly socialized before 16 weeks of age. Many future behaviour problems can be prevented through proper socialization. The socialization period occurs from 3 to 12 weeks of age. The socialization period is the most influential learning period of a dog's life. At this time, puppies can readily learn not to fear new things and to develop appropriate social behaviour.

## **Primary Socialization**

Primary socialization occurs during 3 to 5 weeks of age. Puppies identify their own kind and how to communicate with other dogs. Through social play, puppies learn how to inhibit their bite and practice social communication skills. Many social and emotional deficits are observed in adult dogs who are removed too early from the mother and littermates. Puppies should not be taken home before 7 to 8 weeks to avoid these emotional problems.

## **Secondary Socialization**

Secondary socialization refers to the time from 6 to 12 weeks of age. During this time, puppies become familiar and comfortable in the human domestic environment. Puppies are most willing to approach a stranger and investigate novel objects with vigorous tail wagging during secondary socialization. Profound fear or marked aggression displayed during secondary socialization is abnormal and suggestive of future behaviour problems.

## **Making Exposure Positive**

Socialization and exposure are an active and lifelong process. Puppies should be positively exposed to novelty daily during the socialization period. Repeated exposure is important because dogs do not generalize well. Socialization is not simply about exposure, rather, it is about making exposure fun and positive.

Expose your puppy to a multitude of environments. Puppies should be exposed to both urban and rural settings. Take a trip to the veterinary hospital or grooming facility just for fun.

Strive for your puppy to meet at least one new person a day during his socialization period. Encounters should occur in your home as well as in different environments. Postal workers and people in uniform approaching your home are important. Puppies should meet people of different ages, sex and ethnic backgrounds. It is important to socialize your puppy with children of various ages. At the same time, allowing a child to grab or hug your puppy will not be a positive experience. When exposing your puppy to crowds, it is important to control your distance from the crowd. Stay on the outskirts initially, and then partake in short sessions of walking through the crowd. At each step in the process your puppy should be receiving numerous small treats.

Puppies need to have exposure to other animals. A trip to a pet store can help facilitate this process. In a pet store you can control your distance from the animals' cages. Teach your puppy to focus on you when they encounter these "strange" animals. This will help prevent undesirable arousal problems in the future.

Your puppy should encounter grass, gravel, concrete, asphalt, sand, mulch dirt, metal, plastic, and wood surfaces during the socialization period. Be proactive and reward with treats to make these experiences positive from the start.

There are commercially available compact discs designed to expose puppies to a variety of sounds, including thunderstorms, fireworks, gun shots, children playing, household items, traffic, etc. Using a CD can be helpful because you are able to control the volume and exposure. Play the CD during meal times or playtimes. Begin with the volume on low and watch for any signs of fear. The goal is that your puppy is never frightened by the sounds.

## Health risks

Risk of illness from exposure to infectious disease is a concern because puppies have not completed their full series of vaccinations until after 16 weeks of age. However, lack of socialization in public places is behaviourally damaging and of greater risk to your puppy. Vaccinations and early puppy socialization are equally important.

Use common sense and minimize your puppy's exposure to infectious disease. Avoid public areas where stray or unvaccinated dogs roam. Know the health and vaccine status of dogs your puppy interacts with. Keep your puppy's vaccines current and avoid interactions with unvaccinated puppies.

Many diseases are passed via contact with feces from an infected dog. When visiting public areas with a very young puppy, restrict your puppy's contact to concrete or asphalt surfaces. Avoid high traffic dog areas, such as dog parks until after the third vaccination series.

# TRAINING BASICS

Puppy training isn't an option, it's a necessity. Luckily, training your puppy isn't all about lessons and rules and there are dozens of 'teachable moments' every single day. Your puppy needs to learn include appropriate housetraining habits, good manner, basic obedience command, socialization, and how to behave in an acceptable way in the human world.

Puppy training is very simple if you follow some straightforward steps and guidelines. Positive, rewards based dog training methods are the **only** ones that should be used. Obedience training helps to improve your puppy's quality of life and can keep him safe. A well-behaved puppy or dog can accompany you on day trips, road trips, vacations, attend sports functions and so on. This makes life more fun and gives you more time to spend together. Dogs are very intelligent and there's a huge range of commands that you can teach your new puppy.

Daily at-home training sessions are important, but keep them short while your puppy is young. Three to five minutes is ideal when he's under 12 weeks old, and you can gradually increase this time as he matures.

Formal puppy training classes are also hugely important and every single puppy should attend at least one course of basic puppy obedience lessons. Your puppy can get valuable socialization experience and learns to work in an unfamiliar environment with other puppies and people around him. You get some expert help and hands-on assistance with problem solving,

as well as some socializing with other like-minded puppy parents. You both benefit from the stronger bond which develops between a pup and his owner when communication is improved.

## PUPPY DENTAL CARE

Puppies usually have all of their “baby” teeth by the time they come home with you. There are a total of 28 very small and sharp teeth in a puppy’s mouth. These teeth will not last forever and the adult teeth will start to appear between 4 and 6 months of age. You will see these adult teeth starting at the upper central incisors (the two front teeth) and finishing with the canines (fangs). Eventually, your puppy will have 42 adult (or permanent) teeth.

### Retained baby teeth

Sometimes the incoming adult teeth aren’t successful in totally dislodging the baby ones that are already in place. When this happens, there will be a double set of teeth in some places. Your puppy’s mouth wasn’t designed to hold two sets of teeth at the same time and it can get a bit crowded if the baby ones don’t fall out. This can cause discomfort and food can get stuck between them more easily. There is also a risk of malocclusion if the baby teeth prevent the adult ones from fitting in the mouth in the proper location. That can cause a permanent problem and be quite painful. Any baby teeth that remain when the adult teeth are present should be extracted to prevent further problems. Any baby teeth that remain when the adult teeth are present should be extracted to prevent further problems.

### Teething

Puppies who are teething like to chew – a Lot! Making sure your puppy has safe, sturdy, and appropriate toys to chew on aids the correct development and growth of his teeth and gums.

### Keeping your puppy’s teeth clean and healthy

Good puppy dental care means helping your little one’s shiny new adult teeth stay clean, white, and strong. Feeding a dry puppy kibble won’t prevent tartar build-up. There are lots of products available to help you keep your puppy’s mouth healthy. These include dog toothpastes and toothbrushes, mouthwashes or sprays, and food or treats designed to help keep tartar at bay.

Brushing your dog’s teeth is one of the best ways to keep them healthy. Getting your pup comfortable with having his teeth brushed now is important. It only takes a few minutes to do but it can be a very important part of the health-care routine.

To start with, you need a soft toothbrush. We have some toothbrushes available that are especially made for dogs. There are also ‘finger toothbrushes’ for dogs that work well for young puppies and small- to medium-sized dogs. You need to get special toothpaste designed for dogs. Human toothpaste can upset your puppy’s tummy and/or make him vomit. Remember, dogs don’t spit.

You need to be gentle and patient with your puppy. It's going to be a strange sensation and many puppies don't like having their mouths handles. Choose a quiet spot and a time when your puppy is feeling calm and isn't too tired or overly energetic. Sit down with your pup. Speak gently and quietly and don't get impatient. Spread a small amount of the toothpaste on the brush and gently pull back your puppy's upper lip at the front of his muzzle. Use the other hand to gently brush or rub his canines. At first you may only get 1 or 2 seconds on the teeth, and that's ok. Continue to brush the teeth toward the back of the mouth and then work down onto the teeth of the lower jaw. You can likely only brush the outer side of each tooth, which is where most of the problems occur. If you follow up the brushing with a tasty treat each time, your puppy will learn to accept the brushing more readily.

Besides brushing, having your veterinarian check your pup's mouth regularly for any problems is another way to make sure your pet's teeth and mouth are kept healthy and pain free.



# RESOURCES

## Books

Perfect Puppy in 7 Days: How to Start Your Puppy Off Right by Sophia Yin

Puppy Start Right by Kenneth M. Martin and Debbie Martin

Don't Shoot the Dog: The New Art Of Teaching And Training by Karen Pryor

## Websites

Drsophiayin.com – look in the Philosophy section and also at resources on dog behaviour at the bottom of the page.

Veterinarypartner.com – Lots of information on a variety of health questions.

## YouTube videos

### How Dogs Learn

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=dr+sophia+yin+videos&qpv=dr+sophia+yin+videos&view=detail&mid=AF5315B7277ACD1D7D9BAF5315B7277ACD1D7D9B&&FORM=VRDGAR>

### Getting your dog to come when called: The Bacon Recall

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1T1a3\\_1ouqY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1T1a3_1ouqY)

### Brushing your dog's teeth

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kIEwkQ9EfCE>

### Trimming your dog's nails

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G3MFEbkcvYg>