



HEALTH CARE FOR YOUR NEW PUPPY

Vaccinations

Once a puppy is weaned from its mother's milk, it no longer has immunity against infectious diseases. This is why it is very important to make sure your puppy completes his entire series of puppy shots, and then gets a yearly booster thereafter.

- The puppy's immune system needs repeated stimulation from the vaccines before it is competent, therefore a puppy should receive his first vaccine at 6 to 8 weeks, then boosters every 3 to 4 weeks until 14 to 16 weeks of age. If a puppy gets started late on his vaccine series, he should still receive a total of 3 to 4 boosters for optimal protection.
- We vaccinate for:
 - Distemper virus: a virus that can cause gastrointestinal, respiratory, & neurological disease.
 - Hepatitis virus: causes liver disease
 - Leptospirosis: causes kidney disease
 - Parainfluenza: causes respiratory disease
 - Parvo virus: can cause a deadly gastrointestinal disease
 - Corona virus: causes a less severe gastrointestinal disease
 - Rabies: causes neurological disease. We vaccinate for rabies at 14 to 16 weeks of age. This vaccine is required by law.
- If your dog is exposed to ticks, we also recommend vaccinating against Lyme disease, which can cause lameness and respiratory disease.
- We also recommend vaccinating for Bordetella (Kennel Cough) and Canine Influenza Virus if your dog will be at risk for exposure to either of these diseases. At risk situations include use of a boarding facility, attending doggy day care, going to a grooming facility, interstate travel, going to the dog park or any other location where you might encounter other dogs.

PARVO VIRUS is the most common of all these diseases.

- It is highly contagious
- It causes severe bloody, watery diarrhea and vomiting
- It causes deadly dehydration and overwhelming secondary bacterial infection
- It can be spread through direct contact with an infected dog (usually another puppy) or through infected feces or vomit which may be virtually invisible in the environment
- It is usually fatal if untreated
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- Puppies remain highly susceptible to Parvo until 2 weeks after the last injection in the vaccination series; therefore, it is very important not to allow your puppy to come into contact with any other puppies or unvaccinated adults, and not to allow him to go to any public places where he may unknowingly contact infected feces or vomit (i.e., park, beach, lake, pet store, etc) until one month after he has fully completed his vaccination series.
- If your puppy loses his appetite or develops vomiting or diarrhea, please bring him in immediately for evaluation. If he has contracted Parvo virus, early treatment may be the difference between life and death.

Heartworm Disease & Prevention

- Heartworms are actual worms that live inside the dogs' heart.
- This disease is transmitted by mosquitoes. A mosquito bites an infected dog, ingesting the heartworm larvae (egg) from the dogs' bloodstream, and then bites another dog and injects larvae into the dogs' body. The heartworms migrate to the dogs' heart where they grow into adults and reproduce.
- Heartworms can cause disease in many organs; especially the heart, lungs, liver and kidneys.
- Placing your puppy on monthly heartworm prevention can PREVENT heartworm disease. You may start your puppy on prevention as early as 6 to 8 weeks of age and continue giving him his heartworm pill once a month for the rest of his life. This is very important since Tennessee has mosquitoes all 12 months of the year.
- Heartworms can infect indoor dogs just as easily as outdoor dogs, so all dogs should be on heartworm prevention. After all, you live inside and we know you've been bitten!
- If your puppy is over 6 months of age, we will run a heartworm test before placing him on heartworm prevention. After the puppy/dog tests negative, we can begin the heartworm prevention.
- The American Heartworm Society, the manufacturer of the heartworm prevention and our doctors recommend having your dog tested for heartworms annually, even if they are on prevention. If even one pill has been forgotten in that time, the door has been left open for heartworms. We follow these guidelines and require annual testing.
- We carry and recommend Interceptor, Heartguard, Sentinel, and Trifexis for monthly heartworm prevention. These all also contain added medications for the prevention of several common parasites. Sentinel and Trifexis are both also used for fleas. Please ask one of our staff which product is the best one for your dog.



Intestinal Parasites

- Common parasites such as hookworms, roundworms and whipworms can cause debilitating disease and weight loss in your puppy. We can eliminate these parasites by routine de-worming.
- Your puppy may be introduced to several other intestinal parasites such as coccidia, giardia and tapeworms. These can also be treated with oral de-worming medications.
- We recommend checking your puppy at his first visit for intestinal parasites, and then annually thereafter.

Fleas

- Fleas are annoying external parasites which are abundant in the Southern parts of the U.S. Aside from making the animals uncomfortable and leading to allergies and skin infections, they carry the tapeworm ova and, if ingested, can cause your dog to develop a tapeworm infestation. In very small dogs with a high population of fleas, they can cause anemia (low circulating red blood cells), which is extremely dangerous.
- Before bringing your puppy into your home, make sure you have treated your house and that it is “flea free.”
- Topicals may be used if you find your new puppy already has fleas or gets fleas after you bring him home. Please ask one of our staff members about our products. They can direct you to one that is both safe and effective.
- We carry and recommend FrontlinePlus, Advantage II, and K9 Advantix II, for topical flea control, or Comfortis for oral flea control. We DO NOT recommend any of the “over the counter” brands that are commonly available at retail stores. Please ask one of our staff which product is the best one for your dog.

Routine Puppy Maintenance

- Keep toenails trimmed twice a month
- Brush their teeth on a regular basis to prevent tartar buildup, gum disease, tooth loss, and bad breath.
- Clean ears with antiseptic cleaner weekly to prevent infections.
- If you start working with your puppy early, the experience will be more pleasurable for both of you.



Spay and Neuter

- Unless you plan to breed your dog as an adult, we recommend having your male dog neutered or your female dog spayed in order to prevent common reproductive disease:
 - **Males:** Unneutered males have a high incidence of prostate disease (infections, enlargement, cancer)
 - **Females:** Females that are not spayed have a higher incidence of ovarian and uterine disease (infections, cancer) as well as breast cancer.
- We can spay or neuter your dog as early as 4 to 6 months of age. This is typically 2 to 4 weeks after the completion of the puppy series of vaccines.

Checkups

- We recommend that your dog have a yearly visit to his veterinarian for a full physical, yearly vaccines, heartworm test, and parasite check.

Please feel free to call us with any further questions at 865-693-8212