

10

TIPS FOR RAISING A HEALTHY PUPPY

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1 Regular visits to your veterinarian

- Your veterinarian is your pet's best advocate for proper health and behavior care
- Your puppy should see the veterinarian several times during the first months of life, then at least yearly for the rest of his life

2 A complete set of vaccinations

- Many diseases can threaten your puppy but are preventable with a vaccination from your veterinarian
- The American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) vaccine guidelines establish vaccines as core (universal), noncore (optional) or not recommended¹
- Your veterinarian can determine a timeline to administer vaccines to your puppy to provide proper immunization based on his individual exposure risk

3 Spaying or neutering

- Spaying or neutering can prevent some diseases later in life, such as certain reproductive cancers and infections
- This also can help to avoid unwanted behaviors related to hormones
- Spaying or neutering helps to reduce pet overpopulation
- Discuss the proper time to spay or neuter your puppy with your veterinarian

4 Proper socialization

- Providing regular socialization for your puppy during the first 12 weeks of age is very important to his development²
- The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior recommends enrolling your puppy in a socialization class as early as 7 weeks of age²

5 House training

- Commit to taking your puppy outside after every meal, when he wakes up and after a session of play
- A regular schedule will help teach your puppy the appropriate places to potty
- Consistency, repetition and persistence are key

6 Dental care

- Periodontal disease is one of the most common afflictions in dogs, affecting many by as early as 3 years of age³
- Bacteria from teeth can affect other body systems
- Discuss a good method for maintaining your puppy's teeth with your veterinarian — and stick with it

7 Diet & exercise

- Choosing a proper diet for your puppy is essential for proper nutrition — consult your veterinarian for a recommendation
- Provide access to fresh water at all times
- Proper daily exercise can avoid obesity and help facilitate good behavior
- Have a properly fitted collar or harness, identification tag and leash to walk your puppy safely

8 Protection from household dangers

- Puppy proof your house — puppies are curious and will investigate everything!
- Never leave your dog in a hot car — can cause overheating and can be a medical emergency
- Keep electrical cords out of reach of puppy teeth
- Keep all chemical and food toxins away from your puppy
 - Chemicals: Antifreeze, bleach, other household chemicals
 - Food: Grapes, raisins, onions, xylitol (in sugar-free gum and certain brands of peanut butter) or chocolate

9 Companionship

- Remember, your puppy would rather be playing with you than just about anything else
- Show your puppy attention and praise proper behavior
- Ensure your puppy has appropriate toys to keep him busy when you are away

10 Year-round parasite prevention

- The Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC), the American Heartworm Society (AHS) and the AAHA/ American Veterinary Medical Association Canine Preventive Guidelines recommend year-round parasite control to protect against heartworms, intestinal parasites and fleas for all pets^{4,5,6}

FLEAS

- A. Fleas can cause severe discomfort for dogs, including scratching, chewing, biting and restlessness
- B. Fleas are the source of flea allergy dermatitis (FAD), the most common skin allergy⁷
- C. Severe flea infestations can cause anemia, especially in puppies or debilitated adult dogs

INTESTINAL PARASITES

- A. Intestinal parasites can affect your dog in various ways: weight loss, diarrhea, vomiting and even intestinal inflammation or blockage. In the most severe cases, intestinal parasite infection can kill your pet⁸
- B. These parasites are found throughout the United States. They live and reproduce in animal feces, bodies of dead animals and in infected soil dogs can access
- C. Moreover, certain intestinal parasites can be contracted by humans through contact with an infected environment, potentially resulting in serious health issues⁹

HEARTWORMS

- A. Heartworm infection is acquired from the bite of an infected mosquito and if left untreated can be life threatening
- B. Clinical signs of heartworm disease may be absent but can include coughing, exercise intolerance and difficulty breathing

References

¹American Animal Hospital Association Canine Vaccination Guidelines, 2011. https://www.aaaha.org/professional/resources/canine_vaccine.aspx#gsc.tab=0, Accessed 30 Nov 2015.

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³American Veterinary Dental College. Periodontal Disease. <http://www.avdc.org/periodontaldisease.html>. Accessed 30 Nov 2015.

⁴Companion Animal Parasite Council, General Guidelines. <http://www.capcvet.org/capc-recommendations/capc-general-guidelines>, Accessed 30 Nov 2015.

⁵American Heartworm Society. Current Canine Guidelines for the Prevention, Diagnosis, and Management of Heartworm (*Dirofilaria immitis*) Infection in Dogs, Revised July 2014. <https://www.heartwormsociety.org/images/pdf/2014-AHS-Canine-Guidelines.pdf>, Accessed 30 Nov 2015.

⁶American Animal Hospital Association/American Veterinary Medical Association Canine Preventive Healthcare Guidelines, 2011. https://www.avma.org/KB/Resources/Documents/caninepreventiveguidelines_ppph.pdf, Accessed 30 Nov 2015.

⁷Wilkerson, MJ, Bagladi-Swanson, M, et al. The immunopathogenesis of flea allergy dermatitis in dogs, an experimental study. *Veterinary Immunology and Immunopathology* 99 (2004) 179-192.

⁸Companion Animal Parasite Council. Intestinal Parasites — Hookworms. <http://www.capcvet.org/capc-recommendations/hookworms>. Accessed 18 Aug 15.

⁹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Toxocariasis FAQs. http://www.cdc.gov/parasites/toxocariasis/gen_info/faqs.html, Accessed 09 Sep 15.



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