



a lifetime of care



Puppy

Information Guide

ASK US ABOUT OUR
PET HEALTH
CLUB

A warm welcome to your new puppy!

At Eastcott Vets we are committed to help your puppy develop into a fit, healthy and well-rounded member of your family.

This pack is filled with useful information and tips. There is more information on our website, especially in our Pet Library.



Puppy's Details

Use this section to make a note of your puppy's details.

Puppy's Name

Breed

Sex

Puppy's Date of Birth

Vaccinations

Routine puppy vaccinations will protect your puppy against: Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus and Leptospirosis. These diseases can prove fatal or leave your dog with serious health complications. Your puppy should not visit public places until 1 week after their second vaccination. The exception to this rule is for puppy socialisation or training classes. Please seek advice from our vets or your training provider as to the suitability of the class for your puppy.

From 7 weeks of age: your puppy can be given their first vaccination. At this time, they will receive a free health examination.

The second vaccination: is given 4 weeks after the first vaccination.

At 16-20 weeks: we strongly advise an additional Parvo virus vaccination. Parvo virus has been an issue in the Swindon area over the years and this third vaccination is recommended. Parvo virus is a

particularly virulent virus and is often fatal.

Booster vaccinations: are given annually a year from the date of the second vaccination. Your dog will receive a full health examination when they visit for their annual booster vaccination.

Kennel Cough vaccination: can be given from 6 weeks of age and is administered via the dog's nose. Dogs do not have to have

been in kennels to catch Kennel Cough; it causes severe respiratory signs, most notably a harsh cough. Whilst rarely life-threatening we would suggest that all dogs receive this vaccination.

Rabies vaccinations: are given to dogs that are travelling outside the UK for holidays. Please ask a member of staff for details or visit www.gov.uk/take-pet-abroad/overview

Worming

Puppies can be born with roundworms (passed via the placenta) and can be further infected via their mother's milk. The larvae of the roundworm can cause health problems in humans, with children being particularly vulnerable. It is important that you worm your puppy regularly, both for their own health and for that of your family.

Puppies should be wormed with a veterinary wormer specifically designed for their age group:

Under 12 weeks: every 2 weeks with prescribed product.

12 weeks – 6 months: every month with prescribed product.

6 months onwards: every 3 months routinely with prescribed adult wormer.

If you are using a spot-on parasite treatment that controls roundworm, you will need to treat your dog annually for tapeworm.

The vet will prescribe a suitable wormer for your dog based on age, weight, type of worms that your dog can catch and ease of use. Some of our wormers will also treat lungworm. This is a disease

that has become more prevalent in recent years but is still much more common in some parts of the country than others. Thankfully Wiltshire currently has a low incidence but we have seen some cases. Please ask your vet if you are concerned that your dog may be at risk and a suitable treatment will be prescribed.

Fleas and Ticks

Fleas are irritating and stubborn parasites that can cause considerable discomfort to our pets. Regular use of a preventative flea product is especially important, as once they have established themselves in a home, they can be very difficult to eliminate.

Our vets will be able to provide you with guidance on the most appropriate flea and tick treatment for your puppy. We always advise that you use our prescription treatments rather than shop bought products. Our Spot-on treatments are effective and easy to use; however, some may not be suitable for the very small, or those under 8 weeks of age. Our vets can advise you on their use as well as the use of sprays and palatable tablets.

Spot-on flea treatments should be used every 1-2 months for fleas. Some may also kill ticks if used

monthly. They may also control other parasites. With some spot-on treatments that control ticks, the ticks may attach but will die quickly, preventing the opportunity to transmit disease.

You may be advised to use a household flea spray to ensure that all stages of the flea lifecycle are eliminated. Much of the lifecycle of the flea is lived off your dog and in your home.

Shop bought flea collars are popular with some, however many don't actually kill fleas and they are not as effective as prescription flea and tick treatments.

Some of our treatments will also treat and prevent lungworm and other parasites. You will be advised accordingly if you feel that your puppy is at risk.



Diet and Feeding

It is important not to make any sudden changes to your puppy's diet, especially during the settling in period. Any changes should be made gradually to avoid upsetting their digestion.

You may be surprised at how little or how much your puppy can eat. Meals should be split into 3-4 meals fed throughout the day.

As a **guide**, puppies should be fed:

8-12 weeks: 4 times a day

12-16 weeks: 3 times a day

16-24 weeks: twice a day

24 weeks onwards: Feeds can gradually be reduced to 1 meal a day by 12 months, however some dogs may still require their food to be given in 2 meals.

How much to feed:

Guidance is usually given with the food but this is guidance only. Individual puppies will vary in their requirements. As a general guide, puppies can be allowed to eat as much as they want in 15-20 minutes at each feed. This is only a rough guide; it may be much too long for some puppies, particularly breeds like Labradors that particularly like their food!





Housetraining

Don't expect your puppy to be fully housetrained until they are around 6 months of age. They should however, have a good grasp of the basics by 16 weeks. It is common to do very well early on and to then have a set back out of the blue. Don't panic, this is quite normal, just go back to basics for a short while and you will soon get back on track.

Housetraining basics:

Establish a routine. Take outdoors upon waking, after food, just after a play session or approximately every 2 hours. Stay with the puppy whilst outside. This is not much fun in the cold wet weather or at night, but it will pay dividends. Direct them to the area that you want them to use and use a command like 'be quick' or similar. Your puppy will soon associate the command with what is expected. Remember to praise them when there is a success.

Feeding at regular intervals can help you to predict when they might need to go out. Look out for changes in posture, a keen eye can spot the tell-tale signs of a puppy that needs to go out. Expect mistakes, especially overnight or if you go out. Newspaper can be used for potential accidents during these times. The area covered by paper can be reduced as the puppy becomes more trustworthy.

Don't reprimand for mistakes. Try not to change your puppy's

diet until they have settled in as a change of diet can cause digestive upset that will hinder housetraining.

Don't give your puppy free run of the house when it is not able to be observed or supervised. Never 'rub a puppy's nose in it', this is a very outdated practice and has no place in puppy training. Some people use dog crates (collapsible metal kennels) to house train puppies. There is more information on crate training on our website.

Excitement urination

This happens when a puppy becomes so excited that it leaves a puddle at your feet. This is common and reduces as a puppy's bladder control becomes stronger. Many puppies get excited when you return home or when a visitor arrives, so try not to encourage excitement when you return home. Ignore the puppy for the first few minutes, don't even make eye contact and then gently praise them when they are settled and calm. Do not scold your puppy as this could result in submissive urination (see next).

Submissive urination

This is when an otherwise housetrained dog crouches and leaves a puddle at your feet. This often happens when the owner returns home or when they are told off. This is a sign of submission and puppies usually grow out of this once they have mastered the rules of social engagement. Do not scold your puppy as this will only make it more submissive. If praised they become confused and may even think they are being praised for urinating. As with excitement

urination, it is best to ignore the puppy until they are settled and calm when you return home.



Socialisation

Socialising involves carefully exposing a puppy to a wide range of social situations. It should involve dogs, people, children and a variety of sounds. It is advised that the postman is introduced in a positive way in the early weeks. Socialisation in earnest should take place up to the age of 16 weeks (and of course continue beyond). Good socialisation = a confident well-mannered dog.

Until your puppy is fully vaccinated, socialising can be challenging. We suggest they can meet known, healthy vaccinated dogs on private property. Your puppy should not visit public places until 1 week after their second vaccination. The exception to this rule is for puppy socialisation or training classes. Please seek advice from our vets or your training provider as to the suitability of the class for your puppy.

We run free Puppy Parties at our Bath Road Clinic in Old Town where puppies can socialise safely and owners can meet and swap notes. Parties are run by a Veterinary Nurse and dog trainer. Puppies can attend after their 1st vaccination up to the age of 4 months. After 4 months puppies are welcome to join our Puppy Club which is a one to one appointment with a nurse where you can check your puppy's progress and ask any questions. Puppies can attend the Puppy Club

monthly until 6 months and then at 9 months and 1 year.

Puppies and Children

You may have to train your young children how to behave around your puppy! It is important that puppies are allowed some quiet time where they are allowed to rest undisturbed. Children should not encourage jumping up, rough games and play biting. Your puppy is going to grow and something that may be cute when

they are small may well be quite a problem when they are 6-8 months old. Worm eggs can easily be transferred from hands to the mouths in young children so they should always wash their hands after playing with the puppy and worming should be kept up to date. It is a good idea to involve children in training. Your puppy should walk nicely on the lead for them and obey commands. A puppy should also take treats gently from a child, allow food to be taken from them and allow themselves to be groomed. A good puppy training class will be able to help you with this.



Separation Anxiety

Many dogs get anxious and are destructive when left alone, but we are often inadvertently to blame for this behaviour. A contented dog should pay little attention to you leaving the house and should greet you with a gentle wag of the tail when you return. A dog with separation anxiety, however, will be in a state of heightened anxiety when you leave them. They will pace, chew, bark, dig and sometimes soil the house when alone. They will also be very excited when you return. This behaviour is not a sign of boredom or an act of 'spite' at being left. Much of the damage is done within either the first few minutes of an owner's departure or, if the dog is left alone at a regular time, just prior to their return home. This destructive behaviour is very different to the mischievous behaviour where a dog waits patiently for their owners to leave before turning out the bin for the morsel of food that they saw deposited in there earlier!



Tips for preventing separation anxiety:

Do not make a big deal of leaving the house. Don't fuss trying to settle your dog before you go - just leave! Long drawn out goodbyes serve only to heighten the anxiety prior to leaving. Ideally your dog needs to barely realise that you have left. If practical, in the early days, leave your puppy for short times, 5-10 minutes initially and then build up the time gradually. This teaches your dog that you will come back and that there is no need to worry.

Taking a dog for a long walk before being left is not always a good solution. If this method is used, it is best to let the dog relax and 'cool down' before it is left; otherwise it is left alone whilst still on a post walk 'high'.

Do not make a fuss when you return. An over enthusiastic greeting on return also makes a dog anxiously anticipate

your return. Be very matter of fact and ignore exuberant greetings from your dog. It can be very hard as you will be pleased to see them but you need to wait until they are calm and settled before engaging with them quietly.

Do not encourage your dog to follow you everywhere when you are at home. i.e. if you get up to get a cup of tea, encourage the dog to remain until you return, this teaches the dog to be comfortable not being at your heel all the time and that you will come back without anything traumatic happening. It is lovely to have that loyal shadow but it is not good for the puppy to be so bonded all of the time.

Do not punish your dog for any mishap, however cross you are at the devastation that may greet you upon your return home, this serves only to make the dog more anxious.

Do not allow full access to your home while you are out until your puppy is confident and happy being alone.

Begin with a small room or area that is safe, with a suitable bed, some dog toys that don't pose a choke hazard and a bowl of water. The puppy should be used to and happy to sleep in this area whilst you are at home, don't just use it when you go out otherwise it could be viewed as the 'sin bin'. It could be the area that you use for your puppy at night. Gradually increase the area or number of rooms as your dog becomes more settled. You may wish to consider the use of a dog crate. This is a suitably sized portable collapsible metal 'kennel' that restricts the area that the puppy has access to until it is more trustworthy and confident.

An Adaptil or Pet Remedy Diffuser Plug-In can help reduce anxiety in the house. Each diffuses calming vapours into the environment which can help reduce stress and help settle puppies and adult dogs. Please ask for more details.

Car Travel

Take your puppy for short frequent rides in the car. Many are travel sick to begin with but improve quickly with perseverance. Choose a time when your puppy has not just eaten and ensure that the car is well ventilated and the puppy secured. If they become overly anxious, try sitting it in the car without the engine running to begin with and then run the engine but keep the car stationary. You can also try feeding in the car whilst it is stationary and then taking the puppy out again without actually going anywhere. Try to take your dog on car journeys that don't always end up at the vets or the kennels! A dog that goes for a walk at the end of a car journey will be much happier in the car. It is advisable to use a dog guard, crate or suitable car harness to keep your dog safe and secure during journeys.

Obedience Training

This can start immediately and a very young puppy will quickly pick up basic commands such as 'sit' and 'stay'. Keep training sessions short and lavish good behaviour with praise and treats. Remember to keep it fun and be consistent. Involve all members of the family. A dog should follow the commands of an adult and child alike. We would always advise even the most experienced dog owner to go to a local training club where they can socialise with other puppies as well as benefitting from training. Puppies can behave beautifully at home but can be easily distracted in public. Attending a training class allows you to train your young dog with distractions in a controlled environment. Our Client Care team will be able to give you the details of suitable puppy classes.

Your Dog and the Law

Legislation states that from 2016 all dogs and puppies over 8 weeks of age must be microchipped. This is when a small chip is inserted under the skin in the neck. It enables a dog to be scanned revealing who the dog belongs to. Microchipping can be carried out from 8 weeks onwards. It is relatively pain free and the procedure is similar to that of an injection.

It is against the law to let a dog be dangerously out of control in a public place or in a private place where the dog isn't allowed to be (e.g. a neighbour's house or garden without permission). Your dog is considered dangerously out of control if it injures someone or

makes someone worried that it might injure them.

It is a good idea to build a healthy relationship with your postman from an early age.

A court could also decide that your dog is dangerously out of control

if it injures someone's animal or if the owner of the animal thinks they could be injured if they tried to stop your dog attacking their animal. A farmer is allowed to shoot a dog if it is worrying their livestock.

Neutering – Female (Spay)

It is generally advised to spay a female dog 2-3 months after their 1st season. There are no health benefits in allowing your dog to have a litter of puppies before having them spayed. We are happy to spay dogs before their first season and this option is best discussed with our vets.

We would always advise spaying as it not only prevents seasons, pregnancy and womb infections but if spayed early in life it will also significantly reduce the risk of mammary (breast) cancer. Your dog will require a full anaesthetic and will spend the day at the surgery. She will require approximately 10 days rest after the operation.

As a practice, we strongly recommend a laparoscopic (keyhole) approach as this reduces postoperative pain and speeds recovery time. Please ask for more information on this procedure.

Neutering – Male (Castration)

It is best to discuss with a vet whether they feel that your dog may benefit from castration. Some entire or un-castrated dogs are more inclined to be aggressive, sexually motivated, difficult to control and vagrant during their adult life. This is primarily due to the hormone 'testosterone' released from the testes. If your dog is already aggressive, or there is conflict between 2 entire male dogs within a household, it is important to discuss this with the vet before deciding on the operation. Castration is not an effective way to calm an exuberant and excitable young dog. This is something that should be tackled with the help of a good trainer. Castration will reduce the occurrence of testicular cancer and prostate infections but not prostate cancer.

Dogs can generally be castrated from 10 months of age. Your dog will require a full anaesthetic and will spend the day at the surgery. He will require 10 days rest after the operation.

Routine Home Health Checks

Performing routine regular health checks on your dog at home will alert you to any health issues quickly. In addition, a dog that is used to being examined should find trips to the vets for examinations less stressful.

Things to include in your home checks:

Ears – Your dog’s ears should be clean and odour free. Lift the ear flap and check a minimum of once a month, more often if your dog has heavy floppy ears (e.g. Spaniels). A black discharge or strong odour indicates there is a problem. Long haired dogs can have hair that grows down into the ear canal. Speak to the vet and they will discuss with you the best way to keep their ears well ventilated and in good health. There is no need to clean your dog’s ears unless a vet has advised that you do so.

Teeth – Regular brushing with a veterinary toothpaste will, along with a

good diet, help keep your dog’s teeth clean and their breath fresh. Whilst your puppy doesn’t necessary need its teeth clean from a young age, familiarising your new puppy with a toothbrush and paste will make tooth brushing much easier when they are adults.

Eyes – Eyes should be clear, bright and free from discharge. Redness, discharge, watering and squinting or rubbing of the eyes warrant investigation.

Nose – It is quite normal for noses to drip clear liquid, providing there is no discharge or excessive sneezing, this is quite normal. A dry nose providing it is not cracked is quite normal too.

Nails, Paws & Tail – Checks can pick up overgrown, split or torn nails. If you

have a dog with lots of hair between their toes, it is important to check them regularly in the summer months for grass seeds that can become stuck in the hair. If left they can enter the skin and travel up inside the foot. A dog should be gently taught to be comfortable having their paws checked and their tails lifted and handled.

Grooming – Puppies should be groomed from an early age, particularly if long haired. Grooming keeps the coat tangle free, removes excess hair and also gives you a chance to keep a close eye on your dog’s general health and body condition and check for parasites such as fleas and ticks.

Pet Insurance

Veterinary medicine, like human medicine has become increasingly sophisticated. The inevitable negative of these medical and surgical advances is their cost.

Pet insurance can help towards the cost of your veterinary bills, providing peace of mind for you and ensuring the best veterinary care for your pet when the need arises.

The same rules apply to buying a pet policy as your own health insurance policy - buy it when your pet is young and healthy and there are no existing conditions to report. Read the small print carefully and take particular notice of the terms and conditions that will explain what is and what is not covered together with the excess payments that are required.

In general, diagnosis and treatment for any accident, injury, or illness, will be covered by the policy. However **pre-existing conditions** (conditions that existed before insurance was taken out) will almost certainly be excluded. Routine and preventive care will be excluded together with any treatment classed as “cosmetic”.

Some policies include **Third Party Liability**, this is an important benefit to protect pet owners against legal action if their pet causes damage or injury. Other benefits such as advertising and rewards should your pet go missing, complementary treatment, and holiday cancellation insurance (should your pet become ill) can be added to your cover.

We strongly advise that you choose a Lifetime or ‘Covered for Life’ policy. This means that your pet will be covered for an ongoing condition for its entire life providing that you renew your policy each year without any break in cover. This avoids certain conditions being excluded after one policy year which can be the case with other policy types. We can make claims to selected insurance companies for direct settlement to us. We hope that by doing this we can take away some of the stress from you when a claim has to be made. Please ask our Client Care team or visit our website for more information on insurance and our free Direct Claims Service.



Open 24 hours

Clinic & Hospital

Edison Park, Dorcan Way,
Swindon SN3 3FR

Bath Road Clinic

59 Bath Road, Old Town,
Swindon SN1 4AU

Cricklade Road Clinic

6 Clive Parade, Cricklade Road,
Swindon SN2 1AJ

Tel: 01793 528341 **Email:** enquiries@eastcottvets.co.uk

www.eastcottvets.co.uk