

Care of your NEW Puppy



Congratulations on the arrival of your new puppy! We are sure this new addition to your family will bring you many years of fun, love and companionship.

The following information is provided to answer some common questions, address common myths and help your puppy grow into a happy, well-adjusted member of your family.

FEEDING

Dogs are considered puppies until they have finished growing and developing, after which they are classified as adults. This age varies depending on the size of the dog:

Size of dog	Mature age
Small dog <10kg	10 months
Medium dog 10-20kg	12 months
Large dog 20-35kg	15 months
Giant breed >35kg	24 months

Puppies require a higher level and different balance of protein, calories, vitamins and minerals compared to adult dogs in order to develop strong and healthy bones, joints and teeth. For this reason, it is important that your puppy is fed an appropriate 'puppy' food and not an 'adult' dog food. Commercial puppy formulas are available to ensure the correct balance of nutrients and for ease of feeding. Giant breeds in particular have special nutritional requirements due to their rapid growth rates, and 'giant puppy' formulas are available to cater for their needs.

The quality of commercially available food varies widely, so buy the best you can afford as when it comes to pet food you do really get what you pay for. We recommend Royal Canin: all the foods are 100% balanced, contain high quality human grade protein, and come with a 100% satisfaction

guarantee. Size/age/breed specific and prescription diets for certain medical conditions are also available.

If you wish to feed your puppy a home cooked diet, it is extremely important to discuss this with your veterinarian who can assist you to develop a complete, balanced diet. A diet consisting solely of meat, or meat+vegetables+rice/pasta, meat+weet-bix+milk, etc is completely unbalanced and inadequate for a growing pup and can result in severe nutritional deficiencies, growth problems and bone deformities. Fresh, clean water should be provided at all times.

Age of dog	Number of feeds per day
6-12 weeks	3-4
3-6 months	2-3
6-12 months	1-2
>12 months	1-2

Any changes or additions to a diet should be made gradually over 5-7 days to minimize the chances of an upset stomach and to allow the dog to adjust to the new food/s.

It is not recommended or necessary to feed dogs milk once they have been weaned; many dogs are lactose intolerant and milk can cause diarrhoea.

DENTAL HEALTH

We recommend giving your pup something significant to chew on once or twice weekly. This will help with teething (3-6 months of age) and help maintain good dental health. Appropriate things to feed include raw bones (size appropriate), pigs ears, dentasticks, rawhide chews, roo tails, emu sticks and Greenies.

Never feed or allow your pup access to cooked bones, fatty human foods, onion, garlic, nuts, grapes, raisins/sultanas, chocolate, coffee or anything that can be swallowed whole and cause an obstruction (corn cobs, avocado seeds, satay skewers, etc). Puppies are very inquisitive and may also chew or ingest other non-food items such as socks, underwear, human medications, fertilizer, weed killer, rat/mouse/snail baits, small toys, etc so it is important to prevent access to potential hazardous items. Please see our 'Common Toxins' handout for further information.



PARASITES

Intestinal Worms

Worms are common parasites that can also affect humans, especially children. Washing hands, maintaining good hygiene and regular worming of dogs will reduce transmission of worms.



Roundworms – most common in puppies



Hookworms



Whipworms

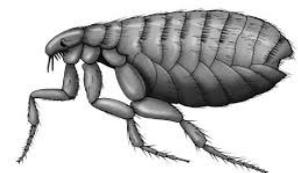


Tapeworms

Treatment and prevention is easily achieved with a good quality allwormer. We recommend Milbemax or Drontal allwormer tablets, or Drontal puppy syrup for younger pups. If buying a wormer from the supermarket, make sure you read the label to ensure that all 4 types of worms are treated – many of the cheaper, common products are older, less safe and less effective than those available through veterinary clinics. Puppies should be wormed every 2 weeks until 12 weeks of age, then every month until 6 months of age, then every 3 months for the remainder of their lives. Always weigh your dog and dose accordingly.

Fleas

Fleas are the most common external parasite and can also bite humans if present in sufficient numbers. The life stages of the flea consist of egg -> larva-> adult and can be completed within 2 weeks if conditions are favourable (warm, dry weather, no flea control). Therefore, fleas reproduce extremely rapidly and can cause rapid infestations that can be difficult to control. Fleas also spend most of their life in the environment (soil, carpet, bedding etc) and only spend 10-20% of their time on the dog, so just because you do not see them does not mean they are not present. If you see fleas on your pup, you already have a



high population present. Fleas are best controlled by using a product that rapidly kills adult fleas, breaks the flea lifecycle and also treats the environment of the pet. We recommend Activyl or Revolution which are both liquid topspots for ease of application and are applied monthly for long term flea control. These products are non-toxic to both humans and pets. Flea collars do not work as they only kill adult fleas present on the dog at the time and do not provide sufficient population control to keep flea numbers down. They also contain chemicals and pesticides that are poisonous if ingested.

Heartworm

Heartworm is a worm that lives in the heart and surrounding blood vessels of dogs. It causes severe heart and lung disease and can cause death in affected individuals. It is transmitted between dogs by mosquitoes and therefore does not require direct contact with infected dogs. It is easily prevented but is difficult to treat. We recommend preventative treatment with a yearly Proheart injection (given at the same time as the annual vaccination) or combined with monthly flea treatment in the form of Revolution (topspot) or Sentinel (chew).



VACCINATIONS

Vaccinations are extremely important and are required to provide your puppy with early protection against common diseases that are often fatal. Puppies may have limited protection obtained through their mother's milk, but this is unreliable and rapidly wanes as they age. Early vaccination provides protection against Canine Parvovirus, Infectious Hepatitis and Distemper, all of which can be transmitted from infected dogs or contact with an infected environment. Of these diseases, Parvovirus is the main concern – it is extremely common, can live in the environment for up to a year, is resistant to most disinfectants, is highly contagious and almost **100% fatal in young puppies**. Vaccination against Parvovirus provides 100% protection after the initial course is completed, provided immunity is maintained via regular boosters. We also administer a Canine Cough vaccination which provides protection against the three most common and severe respiratory bugs and is required if staying at boarding kennels.

Our vaccination schedule for puppies is as follows:

6-8 weeks of age – Protech C3 (Parvovirus, Distemper, Infectious Hepatitis)

10-12 weeks of age – Protech C3 + Protech Bronchishield III (Parvovirus, Distemper, Infectious Hepatitis, Bordetella, Parainfluenza, Adenovirus Type 2)

14-16 weeks of age – Protech C3 (Parvovirus, Distemper, Infectious Hepatitis)

Puppies will not have 100% protection until they have had their 3rd and final booster. It is recommended to keep your young pup at home until the vaccination course is completed. Early socialization is recommended through puppy preschool classes (see section on Obedience Training). Do not allow your puppy to come into contact with sick or unvaccinated dogs, stay away from areas frequented by many dogs (eg dog park), carry your pup if going outside in public or coming to the clinic.

After the initial course of 3 vaccinations, an adult dog will require boosters every 12 months. The clinic can arrange to send you a yearly reminder in the mail.

DESEXING

We recommend desexing puppies between the ages of 5 and 6 months. Benefits of early age desexing include:

- Reduction/prevention of behavioural issues (aggression, marking, escaping/roaming)

- Reduction of mammary cancer in females by up to 91%

- Elimination of potentially fatal uterine infections (pyometron) in females

- Reduction of prostate and elimination of testicular cancer in males

- Prevention of accidental/unwanted pregnancies

- Reduction of unwanted puppies surrendered to shelters

- Faster recovery time compared to adults

- Easier pet ownership (no need to confine females for 3 weeks when on heat, no mess, no stray dogs coming to visit)

- Cheaper council registration fees

Please consider carefully before you decide to breed from your dog – we understand that every dog is special to their owner and their family, but many dogs and pups are euthanased every year because homes cannot be found for them, owners cannot keep them or change their mind. Breeding can also be a fairly expensive venture and is not without risk – there is always a risk to the bitch and owners must be prepared for a caesarian and to feed and raise pups if required.

If you wish to breed your dog, please consult with a veterinarian who can advise you of potential breed related problems, level of risk, potential costs and recommended testing procedures for certain breeds.

TOILET TRAINING

Toilet training is a matter of repetition, consistency and perseverance. Puppies only have small bladders and will need to urinate frequently. Praise is much more effective than punishment, as pups will not associate a telling off with the act unless caught in the middle of it. Puppies often do not develop full bladder control until 12 weeks of age, so some accidents are to be expected. Some puppies are easier to toilet train than others, but the following suggestions will help:

- Take puppy to toilet after sleeping, eating or playing

- Take puppy to the same area each time for toileting

- Praise and pat pup if it goes to the toilet in the correct place

- Only correct a puppy for a mistake if you catch it in the act, as otherwise it will not understand why it is being punished

Be consistent and repetitive

OBEDIENCE TRAINING

We always recommend obedience training as it is good bonding, will provide you with a well behaved, pleasant adult dog as well as giving the dog something to do with its brain.

Puppy preschool for young pups who are not fully vaccinated yet is an option to start socializing and training early. Older pups can join dog obedience classes and when fully grown can also participate in other activities such as agility, jumping, lure chasing/coursing etc. Please ask clinic staff for further information if you are interested in these activities.

MICROCHIPPING

All animals must be microchipped to be registered with Melton Council. Microchipping provides permanent lifelong identification and owner contact details in case a pet goes missing or is stolen. Registration is Australia-wide. Please ensure that your contact details are kept up to date – the register must be notified of any changes in address or phone number. If you have any queries please ask clinic staff for assistance.

COUNCIL REGISTRATION

All companion animals are required to be registered with Melton council by the age of 3 months. Registration fees are reduced for desexed animals. All animals must be microchipped prior to registration. Registration must be kept up to date and renewed yearly.