



Congratulations on your new puppy! We are committed to keeping your new family member both physically and mentally healthy.

Please bring a fecal sample to your puppy's first appointment. A pecan sized sample is ideal. Intestinal parasites including hookworms, roundworms, giardia and isospora are very common in puppies. They may be asymptomatic, but if left untreated in young patients can cause big problems or even be passed to people. Refer to the attachment on intestinal parasites for more information.

Contagious diseases, most importantly, parvovirus and distemper are a serious threat to the health of puppies and can be life-threatening. Vaccines typically begin at 7-8 weeks of age and are given every 3-4 weeks until 16 weeks of age. It is very important to continue boosters until 16 weeks of age as maternal antibodies can interfere with the effectiveness of some vaccines.

Parvovirus: A gastrointestinal virus causing bloody diarrhea and immune system depression. Can be life-threatening without aggressive treatment.

Distemper: An airborne virus that starts as an upper respiratory infection with fever, anorexia and GI symptoms that can progress to seizures and other neurologic abnormalities. About 50 % of dogs with distemper will die from the infection. Dogs that do survive typically have life-long nervous system damage.

Kennel Cough: Upper respiratory illness that is typically self-limiting in adult dogs but can lead to pneumonia in puppies. One vaccination as a puppy and a booster given annually.

Rabies: (12-16 week of age) Texas requires all dogs be vaccinated for rabies by 16 weeks of age. Rabies is contracted from bite wounds from an infected animal, most frequently wildlife. Rabies can be passed to people and is almost always fatal in animals and in people.

Leptospirosis: (12-16 weeks of age with 1 booster then annually) Spirochete found in contaminated water (ponds, wet yards, puddles) that can cause serious kidney and liver damage. Leptospirosis can also infect people.

Canine Influenza: (12-16 weeks with 1 booster and then annually) Upper respiratory infection commonly seen in high density populations like boarding, grooming, doggie day care or training classes.

We will develop a vaccine plan considering your puppy's life style and risk factors. Vaccines titers may be performed starting at 4 years of age for Distemper and Parvovirus.

Vaccine reactions are rare, however they can occur. Please monitor your puppy for a few hours after vaccination for any facial swelling, vomiting or diarrhea. If any abnormal symptoms arise please contact us or a local emergency clinic.

Keeping your new puppy away from places with high doggie traffic (pet stores, parks) and away from unvaccinated dogs is recommended until the full series of vaccinations is complete.



Heartworm Disease: Heartworms are a life threatening infection transferred by mosquitos. Heartworms are effectively prevented by administering monthly oral heartworm prevention that is combined with flea/tick and intestinal parasite prevention. We recommend **Simparica TRIO** and will send home your puppy's first dose. If you cannot give an oral monthly prevention, **Pro-Heart** injectable provides a full year of protection against heartworms and can be started after one year of age. If Pro-heart is given, adding a once monthly flea and tick prevention is recommended.

Diet: Feeding your puppy a high quality puppy food until 12 months of age will ensure proper growth and development of your pup. We recommend **Royal Canin, Purina ProPlan** or **Hill's Science Diet**. Avoid raw diets due to bacterial contamination with E. coli, salmonella and listeria. These bacteria can cause severe illness in pets and people. Grain-free diets have been implicated with heart disease in dogs and should also be avoided. Large breed puppies should be on a large breed diet.

House training: Take your puppy outside with the following guidelines:

2 months every 2 hours, 3 months every 3 hours, 4 months every 4 hours, 5 months every 5 hours, 6 months 4 times daily.

Using key words (do your business, go potty) and praise when the puppy goes outside will help reinforce the behavior. Never reprimand your puppy for an accident.

Bathing: Your puppy can be bathed once a week with mild dog shampoo. If your pup stays clean there is no need to bathe. Keep ears dry with cotton balls and clean after swimming or if they become wet to prevent ear infections.

Teeth brushing is recommended starting at 4 months of age. Finger brushes and doggie toothpaste are available. Dental friendly chews and treat recommendations can be found at www.vohc.org

Fear Free: We are **Fear-Free certified professionals**, meaning our doctors and staff have extra training to help our patients be as stress free as possible during their visits. Working with your puppy at home by touching their paws, ears and mouth will help them become accustomed to being touched. More information on fear free techniques can be found at www.fearfreehappyhomes.com.

Additional behavior websites to ensure a healthy start: www.ultimatepuppy.com, www.thepuppyacademy.com, www.petsafe.com

Spay/Neuter:

General recommendations based on the size of the patient:

Females:

Small breeds less than 40 pounds, spay before or right after first heat cycle, around 6 months of age.

Medium/large breeds, greater than 40 pounds, spay after skeletal maturity, usually after 1 year of age.

Males:

Less than 40lbs, recommend neuter after skeletal maturity, usually after 1 year of age.

Male more than 40lbs, neuter after 18-24 months of age.

Spaying or neuter can help prevent the following conditions:



Female:

- a. Uterine infection (pyometra) is common in intact females.
- b. Risk for pregnancy, escape, false pregnancy, heat cycles twice yearly (up to 2 weeks).
- c. *****Mammary tumors are more common in female dogs that are either not spayed or were spayed after 2 years of age. The risk of a dog developing a mammary tumor is 0.5% if spayed before their first heat (approximately 6 months of age), 8% after their first heat, and 26% after their second heat.*****More than a quarter of intact female dogs will develop a mammary tumor during their lifetime. The risk is much lower for spayed female dogs. In female dogs, 50% of mammary tumors are benign and 50% are malignant.

Males:

1. Behavior issues: Marking (urinating in the house), aggression, sexual behavior towards furniture or other pets, risk for escape from home or yard.
2. Medical issues: Prostatitis, perineal hernias, anal gland neoplasia, testicular cancer, prostatic cancer.

Recent concerns with early spay and neuter:

Early Neuter/Spay may be associated with increased risks of joint disorders and some cancers. The joint disorders include hip dysplasia, cranial cruciate ligament tear or rupture, and elbow dysplasia. The cancers include lymphoma, mast cell tumor, hemangiosarcoma, and osteosarcoma.

In previous studies in Golden Retrievers, Labrador Retrievers and German Shepherd Dogs, neutering before a year of age was associated with increased risks of one or more joint disorders, 2–4 times that of intact dogs. The increase was particularly seen with dogs neutered before 6 months of age.

Small-dog breeds do **not appear to have an increased risk in joint disorders with neutering compared to the breeds of larger size.

Health Insurance: We highly recommend purchasing health insurance for your new puppy. Major medical and surgical coverage is reasonable and will reimburse typically 80-90 % of costs. The advances in veterinary care are truly amazing, but repairing a fractured leg or treating pneumonia can be expensive. Health insurance can provide peace of mind for unexpected illness or injury.

Trupanion: www.trupanion.com, Pumpkin: www.pumpkinicare.com

AAHA pet insurance information: www.aaha.org/resources/pet-insurance

Emergency Care:

We hope that you never have a medical emergency with your pet, however if there is an emergency that requires immediate assistance head to your nearest emergency or urgent care veterinary facility for help.

If you have any questions or concerns after hours that are not urgent you may page us by calling our regular office number, 972-690-6900, and leave a message for the doctor on the case. We will be paged and return your call as soon as possible. Messages left after 9pm may not be returned until the following day.

Emergency hospitals:



MedVet Dallas - (972)994-9110
11333 N Central Expy, Dallas, TX 75243

Veterinary Emergency Group (VEG) Allen - (214)764-7702
1975 N. Central Expy, Allen, TX, 75013