

## Caring for your puppy

### Why are vaccinations so important?

Vaccinations form an important part of your puppy's preventative healthcare regime. Most of the diseases we vaccinate against can be fatal as they are caused by viruses which have no specific treatments. The puppy vaccination course consists of two vaccinations, two to four weeks apart and would normally commence at eight weeks of age.

The diseases we can protect your puppy from are:

- Distemper
- Parvovirus
- Infectious hepatitis
- Leptospirosis
- Kennel cough (bordatella & parainfluenza)

The kennel cough vaccination can be included in the primary vaccination course. This is an intra-nasal vaccine (it goes up your puppy's nose!) and is required by most kennels for boarding. We would also strongly recommend this if you are considering taking your puppy to training as kennel cough spreads rapidly anywhere that you have several dogs in a small area. Kennel cough is rarely fatal but in some cases can progress to a chronic bronchitis which can mean long-term breathing problems for the affected individuals.

These vaccinations will need to be boosted after 12 months and some (but not all) require boosters at 12-monthly intervals thereafter.



If you would like any further information about how to care for your puppy, please call the surgery on

**01379 852146**

or email

[admin@oakwoodvets.co.uk](mailto:admin@oakwoodvets.co.uk)

## What should I feed my puppy?

Feeding appropriately for your puppy's life-stage will ensure that he/she develops properly. Diets lacking in essential nutrients, or indeed an incorrect balance of nutrients, can affect development of all parts of the body, especially the bones and joints. For this reason, we at Oakwood Veterinary Group would always advocate the use of a commercial puppy food which is appropriate for the breed - giant breed dogs have different nutritional needs during their life than small breed dogs and most manufacturers should take this into account. We would never recommend feeding raw meat and bones to puppies as this can cause gastrointestinal problems including serious infections and blockages from sharp pieces of bone, both of which can have serious consequences for the pup involved.

## Do I need to treat against fleas and worms?

It is important to treat your puppy for fleas - not only to get rid of these nasty beasts but also to minimise the risk of them contracting worms which can be passed on by fleas.

Several prescription flea preparations are available in formulations safe to use on young puppies. Please ask at the surgery for advice on the most appropriate regime for your pet.

It can be upsetting to discover your puppy has worms but almost all dogs will be infected at some point during their life, and many will become re-infected if they are not treated routinely.

There are two main types of worms that infect dogs - roundworms which are caught by ingesting eggs (for example from wildlife and other dog faeces, and this can include licking traces off their paws after being out walking) or they can be passed from mother to puppies through milk. Tapeworms can also infect dogs - the most common type are spread by fleas but there is a second type which can be passed on via rodents.

Both roundworms and tapeworms can be treated by using a regular worming regime and this practice would recommend worming puppies every two weeks until they are 12 weeks old, then every three months after that. Several products are available but we would recommend the use of a wormer with a broad spectrum of activity (ie. they treat lots of different types of worms).

