



Keeping Your Dog Healthy

When you get a puppy, it's important to establish a relationship with a veterinarian right away. Regular visits should begin immediately.

- During your puppy's routine examinations, your veterinarian will:
 - Listen to his chest for heart and breath sounds.
 - Feel his abdomen.
 - Check the coat condition.
 - Inspect the eyes, ears and mouth.
 - Perform a dental checkup.
 - May examine the feces for worms and parasites (you may be asked to bring a stool sample).
- Because diseases are easily transmitted between pets, it's important to follow your veterinarian's recommended vaccination schedule. This is usually determined at the initial visit.
- Your puppy should have an annual medical exam.
- If your veterinary clinic is not open for emergencies, ask for a recommendation for nearby care that is available 24/7. Familiarize yourself with the location in advance (you don't want to go searching for this information in the middle of a crisis). Keep the phone number and directions on file in case of emergency. Make sure everyone in the family is familiar with the information.

Neutering: It's the right thing to do.

Neutering is a generic term which refers to the sterilization of male or female dogs. Unless you have a purebred for breeding purposes, neutering is recommended. Millions of dogs are euthanized each year because there are not enough homes for all of the unwanted pets. There are other positive reasons for neutering. A neutered dog:

- Is easier to train.
- Is less concerned with marking his territory with urine (indoors and out).
- Has less desire to run away or roam in search of a mate.
- Makes a calmer, gentler pet.
- Avoids certain health risks, such as pyometra, a life-threatening infection in females.
- Is at lower risk of breast cancer in females and prostate problems in males.