

## **CARING FOR YOUR PUPPY**



### **Worming**

Puppies should be wormed from 2 weeks of age at fortnightly intervals until 12 weeks of age. They should then continue to be treated every month until they are six months old. Treatment should then continue at 3 monthly intervals unless advised otherwise. Monthly worming is advised for families with young children.

### **Vaccinations**

The first vaccine can be given at 8 weeks of age, with a second vaccination given at around 10 weeks. It is then recommended to keep the puppy away from other dogs for a further 14 days to allow the vaccine to take effect and for the puppy to be safely considered immune. Puppies can play with other dogs with a known up to date vaccine status after the first vaccine. The puppy will then just need a booster vaccination once a year.

Where earlier protection is required a first dose may be given to puppies from six weeks of age. The second dose cannot be given until ten weeks of age.

## **Flea treatment for puppies**

Flea treatment can begin from as early as 2 days of age, depending on the product used.

### *Frontline Combo (Spot on)*

- Can be used from 8 weeks of age
- Lasts up to 2 months

### *Frontline Spray*

- Can be used from 2 days of age
- Lasts up to 3 months

### *Program*

- Can be used from weaning onwards
- Monthly tablet

Many others are available but these are the ones that we recommend.

## **Neutering**

### *Bitches*

Bitches can be speyed at six months of age or 3 months after the first season. They can be speyed at an older age but it needs to be done between seasons.

Main advantages:

- Elimination of heat/season
- No false pregnancies
- No unwanted pregnancies
- Speying at six months is a slightly more straight forward procedure
- Will not develop pyometra
- Reduced incidence of mammary tumours, especially if speyed before the first season and has to be before the second

Disadvantages:

- Due to hormonal changes may be more likely to gain weight
- Urinary incontinence may have a higher incidence in older spayed bitches than entire bitches. This is usually very treatable
- Changes in coat texture/colour may occur, e.g.:- fluffy coat in spaniels

Male dogs

It is advised to have male dogs castrated from the age of six months onwards.

Main advantages:

- Elimination of unsociable sexual tendencies
- Less inclined to wander
- Will not sire unwanted puppies
- Testicular and prostate problems eliminated
- Reduction in incidence of anal adenomas in older dogs
- May reduce aggression, but not always

Disadvantages:

- Due to hormonal changes may be more likely to gain weight
- Coat changes may occur

**Feeding puppies**

Needless to say, a mother's milk makes the ideal first food as it is naturally rich in all the required nutrients. Although puppies are ready for weaning between six and eight weeks old, most will take an interest in solid foods at 3-4 weeks. This is the ideal time to start offering a puppy food formula. If you choose a dry food, it should be moistened, gradually reducing the amount of moisture up to about 8-10 weeks.

How much to feed?

Puppies have small stomachs and large appetites, so should be fed little and often.

- ✓ 2-3 months: 4 meals a day
- ✓ 4-6 months: 2-3 meals a day

- ✓ Over 6 months: 2 meals a day

### **Exercising puppies**

Puppies do not need as much exercise as adult dogs. Over-exercising a puppy can overtire it and damage developing joints, resulting in early arthritis. A good guide is a ratio of five minutes per month of age, up to twice a day until the puppy is fully grown, i.e.:-

- ✓ 15 minutes at three months of age
- ✓ 20 minutes at four months of age
- ✓ Once fully grown, they can go out for much longer

*Never exercise your dog on a full stomach as this can contribute to bloat.*