



**Animal Clinics *of*
The Woodlands**

**How To Take Care Of A New Puppy
Puppy Information Booklet**

Animal Clinics Of The Woodlands

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Introduction

We would like to congratulate you on the acquisition of your new puppy. Owning a dog can be an extremely rewarding experience; but it also carries with it quite a bit of responsibility. We hope this document will give you the information needed to make the best decisions regarding your new puppy. When you bring home a new puppy into your home there will be a period of adjustment. Your goals are to help your puppy quickly bond to its new family, and to minimize the stress associated with leaving its mother, litter-mates, and former home. If there are already dogs in the new home transition may be a little easier as the puppy is able to identify with its own kind.

We are grateful that you have chosen us to help you with your puppy's health care. The following recommendations tell you what you need to know to take care of your new puppy. If you have any questions concerning any subject related to your puppy's health, please feel free to call our office. Our entire professional staff is willing and happy to help you.

What Type Of Playing Should I Expect From A Puppy?

Stimulating play is important during the first week. Stalking and pouncing are important play behaviors in puppies and are necessary for proper muscular development. If given a sufficient outlet for these behaviors with toys, your puppy will be less likely to use family members for these activities. The best toys are lightweight and movable. These include wads of paper and rubber balls. Any toy that is small enough to be swallowed should be avoided.

Should I Discipline A Puppy?

Disciplining a young puppy may be necessary if its behavior threatens people or property, but harsh punishment should be avoided. Hand clapping and using shaker cans or horns can be intimidation enough to inhibit undesirable behavior. However, remote punishment is preferred. Remote punishment consists on using something that appears unconnected to the punisher to stop the problem behavior. Examples include using spray bottles of water, throwing objects in the direction of the puppy to startle (but not hit) it, and making loud noises. Remote punishment is preferred because the puppy associates punishment with the undesirable act and not with you.

When Should My Puppy Be Vaccinated?

There are many diseases that are fatal to dogs. Fortunately, we have the ability to prevent many of these by the use of very effective vaccines. In order to be effective, these vaccines must be given as a series of injections. Ideally, they are given at about 6-8, 12, and 16 weeks of age, but this schedule may vary somewhat depending on several factors.

The routine vaccination schedule will protect your puppy from 7 diseases: distemper, hepatitis, para-

injection that is given at 6-8, 12 and 16 weeks old. Leptospirosis is given at 8 weeks and 12 weeks. Rabies vaccine is given at 12 weeks of age. Our puppy package includes all the necessary vaccinations for your puppy.

There Are Lots Of Choices Of Dog Foods. What Should I Feed My Puppy?

Diet is extremely important in the growing months of a dog's life, and there are two important criteria that should be met in selecting food for your puppy. We recommend a NAME- BRAND FOOD made by a national dog food company (not a generic or local brand), and food that is MADE FOR PUPPIES. This should be fed until your puppy is about 12-18 months of age, depending on its size. We recommend that you only buy food which has the AAFCO certification. Usually, you can find this information very easily on the label. AAFCO is an organization which oversees the entire pet food industry. It does not endorse any particular food but it will certify that the food has met the minimum requirements for nutrition. Most of the commercial pet foods will have the AAFCO label. Generic brands often do not have it. In Canada, look for foods approved by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA).

Feeding a dry, canned, or semi- moist form of dog food is acceptable. Each has advantages and disadvantages. Dry food is definitely the most inexpensive. It can be left in the dog's bowl without drying out. The good brands of dry food are just as nutritious as the other forms. As a rule, most veterinarians will recommend dry food for your puppy. Feeding dry food helps maintain your pet's dental health. Chewing the dry dog food helps to scrape the plaque off their teeth.

Semi-moist and canned foods are also acceptable. However, both are considerably more expensive than the dry food. They often are more appealing to the dog's taste; however, they are not more nutritious. If you feed a very tasty food, you are running the risk of creating a dog with a finicky appetite. In addition, the semi-moist foods are high in sugar.

Table foods are not recommended. Because they are generally very tasty, dogs will often begin to hold out for these and not eat their well-balanced dog food. If you choose to give your puppy table food, be sure that at least 90% of its diet is good quality commercial puppy food.

How do I prevent my puppy from doing damage or getting into mischief?

The rule of thumb for dog training is "set up for success." Supervise the puppy at all times until it has learned what it is allowed to chew, and where it is supposed to eliminate. Keeping the puppy on a 10 foot remote leash is an excellent way to keep it in sight, and to train it not to wonder off. This is particularly helpful with a highly investigative puppy or for a very busy household.

At any time that the puppy cannot be supervised, such as throughout the night or when you need to

go out, house it in a secure area. An escape proof crate, a dog run, or collapsible pen is simple, highly effective, and most important, safe. When selecting your dog's confinement area it is useful to consider a number of factors. The dog will adapt fastest to the new area if it is associated with rewards. Have the puppy enter the area for all its treats and toys the area should have some warm dry, comfortable bedding and should never be used for punishment. Each time the puppy needs to be confined it should be first well exercised and given the opportunity to eliminate.

What is the best way to deal with stealing?

Most puppies love to explore and chew, so it's no surprise when a young puppy steals household objects. When you try to get these items back from your dog, a chase ensues. When dealing with an unwanted behavior look for the motivation. Some puppies steal objects when they are left unsupervised, because they have not been directed to an acceptable activity. Puppies may continue to steal because the game of chase is so much fun. Each of these motivations has a different treatment.

If left to their own devices, puppies will get into trouble. It is important to supervise your puppy at all times. Keep the puppy with you and in sight. Be sure that you schedule adequate play times daily so that you are helping your puppy engage in the proper behavior. Arrange the environment so that the puppy cannot get to items. For example, close doors, use barrier gates, crate training or motion sensor devices to monitor where your pet can go.

If your puppy continues to steal in your presence, the best means of monitoring and prevention is to leave a long leash attached, preferably to a head halter. Then as the puppy begins to wander, or puts its nose into "out of bounds" areas a quick pull on the leash will teach it to stay away.

If your puppy is stealing things because the game is so much fun, then don't play. Instead of chasing your puppy all over the house, try crouching down in a happy voice - with open arms call your puppy to you. When the puppy looks towards you, say "good puppy, come show me!" Keep up the praise as the puppy approaches. With a treat, entice the puppy to come, show the treat and when the puppy drops the stolen object, say "good dog". Make it come closer, sit, and then give the reward.

Most importantly, never reach for your puppy in anger after it has taken something. Remember, the behavior you want to change is the stealing, not the cowering under the table. When you threaten your puppy in that way, you risk fear and later an aggressive behavior. For some puppies if you ignore them when they steal things and try to engage them in something else instead, they may "give up" the object voluntarily.

What is the best way to punish by puppy for misbehaving?

Every effort should be made to avoid punishment for new puppies as it is generally unnecessary and can lead to avoidance of family members, at time when bonding and attachment is critical. By

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preventing problems through confinement or supervision, providing for the entire puppy's needs, and setting up the environment for success, little or no punishment should ever be required. If a reprimand is needed, a verbal "no" or a loud noise is usually sufficient to distract a puppy so that you can redirect the puppy to correct behavior.

What must I do to provide for my puppy's needs?

Chewing, play, exercise, exploration, feeding, social contact and elimination are basic requirements of all puppies. By providing appropriate outlets for each of these needs, few problems are likely to emerge. Puppies should be given chew toys that interest them and occupy their time. When supervised, the owner can allow the puppy to investigate and explore its new environment and can direct the puppy to appropriate chew toys (and away from inappropriate areas). Play, exercise, affection, training, and handling must all be part of the daily routine. New tasks, new routines, new people and new forms of handling can be associated with rewards to ensure success. And, of course, the puppy will need to be provided with an acceptable area for elimination, and will need guidance until it learns to use this area.

How can I house-train my puppy?

All it requires are a few basic rules to house-train puppies within a few days. This does not mean that the puppy will be able to be trusted to wander throughout the home without eliminating. What the puppy should quickly learn is where it should eliminate, and the consequences of eliminating indoors when the owner is supervising.

Puppies have a strong urge to eliminate after sleeping, playing, feeding and drinking. Prepare to take your puppy to its selected elimination area within 30 minutes of each of these activities. In addition, although some puppies can control themselves through the entire night, most puppies need to eliminate every 3 to 4 hours during daytime. With each passing month, you can expect your puppy to control itself a little longer between elimination times. The puppy should be taken to its elimination area, given a word or two of verbal encouragement and as soon as elimination is completed, lavishly praised and patted. A few tasty food treats can also be given the first few times the puppy eliminates in the right spot, and then intermittently there after. This teaches the puppy the proper place to eliminate, and that elimination in that location is associated with rewards. Some puppies may learn to eliminate when they hear cue words. Always go outdoors with your puppy to ensure that it has eliminated and so that rewards can be given immediately upon completion, and not when the dog comes back indoors.

When indoors the puppy must be supervised so that you can see when it needs to eliminate and immediately take it outdoors to its elimination area. Should pre-eliminating signs (circling, squatting, sneaking off, and heading to door) occur, immediately take the dog to its elimination site, give the cue words, and reward the puppy for elimination. If the puppy begins to eliminate indoors, use verbal

reprimand or shake can, and immediately take the puppy outdoors to its proper site, so that it can complete the act. Rather than using punishment, it is best to always supervise your puppy. One of the best techniques is to leave a remote lead attached.

When you are not available to supervise, the puppy should be confined to its confinement area. Be certain that your puppy has had a chance to eliminate, and has had sufficient play and exercise before and lengthy confinement. If the area is small enough, such as a pen or crate, many puppies will have sufficient control to keep this area clean. This means that when you come to release the puppy from confinement, it must be taken directly to its elimination area.

What do I do if I find some stool or urine in an inappropriate area?

There is no point in punishing or even pointing out the problem to the puppy. Only if the puppy is in the act of elimination will it understand the consequences (rewards or punishment). In fact, it is not the puppy that has erred; it is the owner who has erred by not supervising.

How can I teach my puppy to signal that it needs to go out and eliminate?

By regularly taking the dog outdoors, through the same door, to the same site, and providing rewards for proper elimination, the puppy should soon learn to head for the door each time it has to eliminate. If you recognize the sign of impending elimination and praise the puppy whenever it heads for the doorway, the behavior can be further encouraged. Puppies that have been interrupted or reprimanded on one or more occasions as they begin to eliminate indoors, may begin to try to sneak away, whine or show some anxiety, when they feel the urge to eliminate, but cannot escape from the owner's sight. If you can pick up on the cues, and take the puppy directly to the outdoors for elimination and then give the puppy a reward, the puppy will consistently begin to show these signals when he or she needs to eliminate, and may even begin to take you to the exit door.

When will I be able to trust my puppy to wander loose in the home?

Generally you will want your dog to have been error free around the house for about a month before you can begin to decrease your confinement and supervision. The first time you leave the puppy unsupervised should be just after taking the dog outdoors for elimination. Gradually increase the length of time that your dog is allowed to roam through the home without supervision. If the dog has been able to go unsupervised for a couple of hours without an "accident", it might then be possible to begin going out for short periods of time. Of course, if the dog still investigates and chews, then confinement and supervision may still be necessary.

Socializing your new puppy. What is socialization?

socialization is the process during which the puppy develops relationships with other living beings in its environment. The other important terms in a pup's development are "habituation" and "localization".

What is habituation?

As all animals develop there are numerous stimuli (sounds, smells, sights and events) that when unfamiliar can lead to fear and anxiety. Habituation is the process whereby dogs get used to repeated stimuli, and stop reacting to them provided that there are no untoward consequences.

What is localization?

Localization is the process by which the puppy develops attachment particular places.

Why are these terms important?

To reduce the possibility of fearful responses as a puppy grows and matures, it is essential to expose young puppies to many stimuli (people, places and things) when they can most effectively socialize, localize, and habituate to these stimuli. Early handling and events occur during the first 2 to 4 months of life, are critical factors in the social development of the dog. Dogs that receive insufficient exposure to people, other animals and new environments during this time may develop irreversible fears, leading to timidity or aggression.

Introduce your puppy to as many new people and stimuli as possible beginning in its first three month of development. People in uniforms, babies, toddlers, the elderly, and the physically challenged are just a few examples that might lead to fear and anxiety, unless there is sufficient early exposure. Similarly, car rides, elevators, stairs, or the noises of cars, trains, and airplanes are some of examples of events and experiences to which the puppy might be usefully exposed.

One way to facilitate the introduction of the puppy to new situations and people is to provide a reward such as a favorite toy or biscuit each time it is exposed to a new stimulus. Having a stranger offer a biscuit to the puppy will teach it to look forward to meeting people and discouraging hand-shyness.

Is it healthy to take my puppy out in public at such a young age?

There is always a concern about the risks of taking the puppy out of its home before it is fully vaccinated because it may be exposed to infection before the vaccines have had time to become

protective. However benefits gained from these new and early public appearances can be enormous and without them the risk of the puppy developing permanent fears or anxiety is a serious concern. One solution is to have people and healthy vaccinated animals visit the puppy in its own home, until it is sufficiently vaccinated to be taken out. A compromise is to take the puppy out to meet people and other pets in low risk environments. As long as vaccines are up-to-date, taking the puppy for walks along the sidewalk and avoiding neighborhood parks where stools and urine might accumulate is generally safe and effective.

A puppy needs many positive experiences before 5 months of age to promote a confident, friendly adult personality. The goal is for the puppy to show no fear or trepidation around new situations. If the puppy does show fear do not try to comfort, as this soothing talk and stroking is perceived as praise and may increase the fearful behavior. The correct response is to ignore the fear, and YOU approach the object and act relaxed. If still fearful, move away until the pet is acting friendly and confident again.

Puppy Training Basics. At what age should I start training my puppy?

You will be training your puppy from the moment you bring it home and start to house train. Puppies start learning from birth. Some training can begin as soon as the puppy can open its eyes and walk. You puppies have short attention spans but expect them to begin to learn simple obedience commands such as 'sit', 'down' and 'stay', from as young as 7 to 8 weeks of age.

How much time should I spend training my puppy on a daily basis?

You do not necessarily need to train in a set session daily. Rather, integrate these tasks throughout the day. A goal to strive for is at least 15 minutes of training everyday. Try to have all of the family members ask your puppy to do these tasks. Use these training tasks into your everyday life. For example, ask your puppy to sit prior to receiving her food, sit before you let her in or out the door, and sit before you pet her. There are times when your puppy wants something and is more likely to comply.

Preventing dominance in your pet

By utilizing the dogs natural pack instincts in a totally non-confrontational program; you can avoid aggressive and/or dominant behavior. Consider the following rules as suggested by canine trainer/behaviorist, John Rogerson.

Feeding: Feed on a schedule, giving 15-20 minutes maximum to clean up all food. Then remove what is left until next feeding time. Reason- Leaders control food. To carry this further, if you eat your own meals within 30 minutes of when you feed the dog, make sure that the family eats first (leaders eat first)

Sleeping and Resting Areas: Do not allow the dog onto human resting areas (beds, sofas, and chairs)
Reason- Leaders control the best sleeping areas.

Toys: When toys are not being unused, keep them picked up and out of reach. Reason- Leaders possess things. This way, you own the toys and loan them to the dog to play with. Toys do not include chews.

Safety: When passing through doorways or gateways, make sure the dog waits for you to go through, and then allow the dog through. We have dubbed this "safety": because it conditions dogs to wait for an okay before barging through open doors (house or car), perhaps saving them from being run over on the road. Reason- Leaders lead.

Territory: If the dog is lying in our path in the house, such as in the middle of the door way, make him/her move rather than stepping around. Stepping around him/her is what a submissive dog in a pack would do. Reason- Everyone gets out of the leader's way.

Petting: Withhold petting until the dog responds to a command. When the dog nudges you, reward him with petting only when he responds to the sit or down command. If the dog fails to respond to a command ignore him by turning, getting up and walking away. Only pet when the dog has done something to earn our praise. (Come and sit/down on command). Reason- Leaders decide when to give affection.

How to puppy proof your house

Kittens and puppies are naturally inquisitive, which can often lead to serious injury. Here are some tips on how you can make your house safer for the new arrival:

That's shocking

Young animals love to chew when they are teething. Keep electrical wires out of reach, or use a pet-repellent spray.

They'd die for some chocolate

Chocolate can be dangerous; it contains theobromine, a powerful stimulant that is toxic to pets. Sweets, cakes and cookies can also upset a young animals G.I. tract and lead to diarrhea and vomiting, which can be serious.

Treats can be threats

Never give turkey, chicken or rib bones as a treat. They can splinter and cause serious injury.

Common household killers

Cleaning agents, bleach, ammonia, disinfectants, drain cleaner, oven cleaner, paint, gasoline, rat poison. Keep them locked up.

Check the antifreeze

Pets are attracted to the odor and sweet taste of antifreeze. Store it high and tightly sealed, wiping up any spills on the garage floor. Window-washing solution also contains antifreeze. Remember, engine warmth promotes catnaps, so honk your horn to wake up pets under the hood.

Killer house plants

Poisonous plants include, lilies, philodendron, dieffenbachia, elephant ear, eucalyptus, spider plants, azalea, ivy, amaryllis, pyracantha, oleander, boxwood, Jerusalem Cherry and plant bulbs.

Keep off the grass

If you treat your lawn with chemicals, keep pets away. Read and follow label directions carefully.

It fit yesterday

Puppies and kittens grow rapidly. Collars and harnesses can be rapidly outgrown, leading to serious wounds.

What you need to know about crate-training

The first few weeks you have your new puppy are the most formative in several regards. One of the primary behaviors that are essential for your puppy's life is proper potty/crate training. There are several steps to get your puppy trained as quickly as possible, but all steps have a common denominator- consistency.

1. Crate training relies on your puppy's natural desire to keep its bed clean.
2. Every successful experience is important.
3. Do not confuse your puppy with a modified approach, i.e. paper training.
4. At night, the crate should be in a responsible person's bedroom, and the puppy should be taken outside if it wakes in the night.
5. Carry the puppy to the same location every time and use the same phrase or command to encourage the puppy to eliminate. Praise every success. As the puppy matures it can walk to the door.
6. If the time is right and you know the puppy needs to go but he does not, return the puppy to the crate for five to fifteen minutes and then carry the puppy back outside to the correct site. Praise, praise, praise.

- 7.If there is an accident, clean up with enzyme-type pet odor remover. Do not discipline the puppy. Puppies learn to hide when they need to relieve themselves if they fear your reaction. Housetraining is first learned by people then puppies.
- 8.Watch for your puppy's body language. Circling, sniffing, walking backward and pausing in a straddle position are all common prior to elimination.
- 9.Puppies need to go outside after sleeping (even a short nap), after eating, before bed, and many times during play. Playtime is when most accidents occur. Restrict your puppy's access to most of the house. Be sure to put your puppy in its bed (crate) for naps to prevent "after sleeping" accidents.
- 10.Crate training is best for small breeds because they feel safe and secure in a small bed and it restricts their area enough to tap their internal desire to keep the bed clean. The laundry room or playpen is simply too much space.
- 11.Crate training is best for large breeds because as they grow older and their chewing needs really influence behavior, 8-18 months of age, your home will be protected from the damage and they are already adjusted and comfortable with the crate. A one-year old retriever can do massive damage to carpet, door moldings, wallpaper and wallboard. In this case, an ounce of prevention is worth hundreds of dollars of cure.
- 12.Crate training your pet allows you to include then in all aspects of family life and still maintain control of your home while demonstrating your role as the leader of the pack.
- 13.Avoid using the crate for punishment; it is your pet's safe haven.

Controlling your puppy's mouthing, chewing and biting

Why do dogs chew?

Dogs, especially puppies are extremely playful and investigative. While play with people and other dogs is an important part of socialization and social development, exploration and object play are important ways for dogs to learn about their environment. Therefore it is a normal behavior for puppies to investigate their environment by sniffing, tasting and perhaps chewing on objects throughout the home. Dogs that chew may also be scavenging for food (as in garbage raiding), playing (as in the dog chews apart a book or couch), teething (dogs 3 to 6 months of age that chew on household objects), or satisfying a natural urge to chew and gnaw (which may serve to help keep

teeth and gums healthy). Some dogs may chew because they receive attention (even if it is negative) or treats from their owners each time they chew, and the owners are inadvertently rewarding the behavior. Chewing and destructive behaviors may also be a response to anxiety. Dogs that are confined in areas where they are insecure may dig and chew in an attempt to escape. Dogs that are in a state of conflict, arousal or anxiety, such as separation anxiety, may turn to chewing and other forms of destructiveness as an outlet.

How can chewing be treated?

First, determine why the dog is chewing. If the dog is a puppy or young adult dog that is chewing at a variety of objects in the household, it is likely that play and investigation (perhaps teething) is the motive. Dogs that raid the garbage and steal food off counters are obviously motivated by the presence and odor of food. Some dogs are attempting to escape confinement while in others chewing may be an outlet for anxiety. Determining the cause and motivation for chewing is therefore essential in developing a treatment strategy. Directing the chewing into appealing alternatives, sufficient play and exercise, and prevention of inappropriate chewing are needed for the exploratory dog. You must ensure that you are not inadvertently rewarding the behavior. Inattention and disruption devices may be useful for these dogs. If the dog is a puppy this behavior may decrease in time, provided you direct the chewing to proper outlets. Dogs that are garbage raiding or food stealing need to be treated by supervision, prevention and booby traps, since the behavior itself is self-rewarding. Dogs that are destructive to escape confinement must learn to become comfortable and secure with a cage or room where they are to be confined. Alternatively a new confinement area may have to be chosen. Dogs that are destructive as an outlet for anxiety will need to have the cause of anxiety diagnosed, and the problem appropriately treated.

How can proper chewing be encouraged?

Before considering how inappropriate chewing might be diagnosed and the real key is to provide some appropriate outlets for your dog's chewing "needs." Begin with a few toys with a variety of tastes, odors, and textures to determine what appeals most to the pet. Although plastic, nylon or rubber toys may be the most durable, products that can be torn apart such as a rawhide or pig's ears may be more like natural prey and wood products that attract most dogs. The Kong is a durable chew toy, but its appeal can be greatly enhanced by placing a treat in it.

Puppies explore their worlds with their mouths. Like a one-year-old child, everything must be put in their mouth and tasted. Puppies begin to roughhouse with each other even before they leave their mother, and chewing and biting are a part of that play. It is a common interaction with puppies and that habit is transferred to their new human family.

Because many dogs, particularly retrievers and other hunting breeds retain this oral habit for life it is essential for puppies to learn proper bite control from the beginning. As with all aspects of puppy training, remember the key word- consistency.

- Puppies with good bite control use the mouth without inflicting harm to skin the skin.
- If a puppy has poor bite control, i.e. scratches skin or causes bleeding, a trainer should be consulted.
- Puppies have sharp teeth and weak jaw; they cause pain without damage. This is good because pain causes us to instruct our puppies to be careful with our skin.
- Humans should require puppies to be gentle, even if it doesn't hurt; puppies need to practice good control. Puppies may come in contact with people who are very young or very old; these people have thinner, softer skin and can be harmed by a puppy that is too rough with the mouth.
- Distraction is the most useful strategy when a puppy is mouthing too much. Distract with toys. Try a variety of toy types, balls of different size (not too small), soft floppy lamb's wool types, knotted rope (no tug of war), and soft squeaky latex. Rotate the toy selection to keep them interesting.
- Avoid play together without toys. Do not become your puppy's favorite chew toy.

THINGS YOU CAN DO

- Verbal reprimand, that is like the mother's yip or bark, meant to startle the pup
- Negative sounds can work well like AAAT, AAAT. A soda can with a few pennies or rocks to shake also are a good source for negative reinforcement.
- Praise your puppy when the appropriate behavior is given; if the puppy is playing nice, say "good puppy!"
- If your puppy is being too rough, stop playing, get up and leave or put the puppy outside. Your puppy wants to be with you. If he must behave in order to enjoy your attention, he will.
- Do not give your puppy and old shoe, or slipper or old anything that was once yours. Puppies cannot distinguish between a new shoe and an old shoe, and will not contain their chewing to old shoes only. Specific dog toys are much better.

Immunizations schedule and infectious disease overview

Immunizations are vaccinations administered with the intent to provide immunity to your pet. They

are used to protect your pet against particular diseases. The following diseases are briefly explained below:

Rabies-Rabies is a disease caused by a virus that attacks the brain. It can affect any warm-blooded animal, including dogs and humans. It is almost always fatal. The Rabies vaccines are required every three years by Texas State Law. A booster is given 1 year following its four-month puppy vaccine and then given every 3 years.

Bordetella-One form of "Kennel Cough" which causes severe coughing and illness. The infection spreads rapidly from dog to dog in close quarters, such as boarding kennel or grooming facility. Following the two vaccines they receive as puppies, this vaccine is given every 6 months.

Leptospirosis- or "lepto" is a deadly bacterial disease spread by wildlife and domestic animals. Common lepto carriers include raccoons, skunks, possums, squirrels, rats and sometimes other dogs. The lepto bacteria are shed in the urine. Dogs become infected when they come in contact with fresh urine of the infected animals. Lepto is a zoonotic disease meaning it can be passed from dogs to people. There are several variant strains of the lepto. Following the two vaccines they receive as puppies, this vaccine is given every year.

DHPP-This is an immunization that protects against multiple infectious diseases. These diseases include Distemper, Hepatitis, Parainfluenza, and Parvovirus. The vaccine is given as young as 6 weeks of age, in a series of 3-4 injections. A booster is given 1 year following the final puppy booster and given every three years.

Distemper-A highly contagious viral disease of the domestic dogs that is usually fatal. "It affects the respiratory system causing severe flu like symptoms at first." The virus eventually infects the brain causing severe neurological damage.

Hepatitis-Canine infectious hepatitis is a specific disease of the liver that is caused by a virus.

Parainfluenza-A viral respiratory disease.

Parvovirus-"Parvovirus is a contagious disease of the puppy that causes severe, often fatal, bloody diarrhea.

Heartworm disease and prevention

A life-threatening parasite

Heartworm disease causes serious damage to a dog's heart, and can be fatal if left uncontrolled. Living

in the heart of the dog, the adult heartworms can grow up to 14 inches long. They clog the heart and major blood vessels, reducing the blood supply to the lungs, liver and kidneys. Heartworms put stress on the heart and can cause organ failure, which can lead to death. Mosquitoes transmit this harmful parasite from one dog to another. Female heartworms living in a dog's heart reproduce and release microscopic worms into the dog's bloodstream. When a mosquito bites an infected dog it picks up these tiny worms and then passes them along to other dogs. Since the mosquito can bite any dog, virtually all dogs are at risk.

Consider This:

- Heartworms are transmitted by mosquitoes
- Heartworm disease can lead to heart failure and death
- Heartworms are easily to prevent!!!!
- All dogs in Texas are at risk and must be on prevention year round
- Even a dog who does not step outside can get heartworms, mosquitoes do come into your closed in environment.

Protecting your dog is easier than ever

There is no need to expose your dog to the risk of heartworm disease when it is so easy to prevent. We recommend a monthly heartworm preventative. The following product is available to prevent heartworms and other intestinal parasites:

Sentinel: Prevents heartworms, controls hookworms, and aids in the removal and control of roundworms, and whipworms.

Fleas, Ticks And Prevention Options

Fleas are parasitic blood-sucking insects that can transmit many diseases in your pets. Adult fleas live on the pet; however, immature forms are in the pet's environment. There are many different forms of flea preventatives from topical to oral treatments. Ticks are ectoparasites (external parasite), by living on the blood of mammals, bird and occasional reptiles and amphibians. Ticks are important vectors of a number of diseases, including Lyme disease.

The following are brief descriptions of preventions we recommend:

Sentinel- As well as being a monthly Heartworm and intestinal parasite prevention; Sentinel contains a drug that controls the flea egg development.

Capstar- Capstar is an oral treatment that begins working in thirty minutes to kill adult fleas. This product remains in your pet's system for twenty- four hours, so it can be a quick solution to flea

infestation. It can be given daily. We recommend giving Capstar, as directed by a Veterinarian, with monthly heartworm prevention Sentinel to maintain flea problems.

Preventic Collar- Provide safe and effective control of ticks for up to three months. Prevents new ticks from attaching and feeding within 48 hours after application. Provides over 97% effectiveness against ticks for up to three months. Kills and detaches ticks. Are water resistant. They are for use in dogs only. Fits dogs of almost any size. Are safe when used as directed.

Conclusion

Animal Clinics of The Woodlands prides itself on providing the most advanced and compassionate, canine friendly health care. Please don't hesitate to call our offices should you have any questions or concerns about your puppy's health throughout their lifetime. We are here to ensure your pet lives a long, healthy life as a member of your family.