



New Puppy Information Packet

Congratulations! You are about to embark on a fun and rewarding journey of raising a puppy! Whether you are experienced with dogs or a first-time dog owner, this packet will supply you with the most current information and advice about how to raise your new friend. If you have any questions during or after your visit, please feel free to ask one of our doctors or staff members. We are always here to help!



Vaccines

Vaccines are a key part of your dog's preventative care plan, and are essential in preventing potentially fatal diseases, especially in puppies. At Sangaree Animal Hospital, we use the most recent research and AAHA guidelines to individually tailor your dog's vaccination schedule according to his or her health status, lifestyle, and risk of exposure.

Core Vaccines

Core vaccines include canine distemper, parvovirus, and rabies. Core vaccines protect against diseases so devastating and so common that we believe every dog should receive protection. If not vaccinated, all three of these diseases may cause major illness, if not death, in infected dogs.

Canine Distemper Virus is not prevalent in South Carolina, but it can cause gastrointestinal issues, severe respiratory disease, and/or neurologic issues, such as seizures. It can be fatal in all 3 disease forms. There is no cure; we just try to treat the signs.

Canine Parvovirus causes wretched, unrelenting vomiting and literally gut-sloughing bloody diarrhea. It also suppresses the immune system often leading to sepsis and death. Even with aggressive and expensive treatment, the disease will cause death in about 25% of infected puppies. There is no cure, we simply treat the signs and try to prevent secondary infections.

Distemper and Parvovirus Vaccines are given in a combination shot starting at 6-8 weeks of age, and then every 3 weeks until the puppy is 18+ weeks of age. A booster is given a year later, and then the vaccine is given once every 3 years in adult dogs. It is of the utmost importance to follow the vaccination schedule in puppies because any missed vaccines can put your puppy at risk.

Non-Core Vaccines

Non-Core Vaccines are recommended on a case-by-case basis. At each annual wellness exam, we'll discuss your dog's lifestyle and risk of exposure, and choose the best vaccine protocols accordingly. A lapse in non-core vaccines greater than 2 years requires an initial vaccine and booster vaccine 3-4 weeks later.

Bordetella prevents kennel cough, a highly contagious disease that causes a dry hacking cough that can persist for 6 weeks or more. There are over 12 different causes of kennel cough in dogs, and we have vaccines that protect against the 3 most common and severe cases. Although it is possible for vaccinated dogs to still get kennel cough, the signs are typically milder in vaccinated dogs and simpler to treat. Our vaccine is given once yearly, and is recommended for all dogs that are frequently exposed to other dogs, such as at boarding facilities and dog parks. We recommend that all puppies be vaccinated for Bordetella, then as needed.

Leptospirosis is not a common infection in this area, but it can cause liver and kidney failure. Dogs who are exposed to natural standing water, such as ponds and puddles, are most at risk. The initial series is given with the last 2 puppy visits, then once yearly.

RABIES: By South Carolina law, the rabies vaccine must be given after 12 weeks of age. A booster is given one year later, then every 3 years so long as your dog's vaccine is still current. If a dog has no proof of previous vaccination, we are required to give a one year vaccine no matter how old the dog is. There are serious legal consequences for dogs that are not current on their rabies vaccine if they bite someone or if the dog gets bitten by another animal. Don't take that risk. Keep your dog vaccinated.



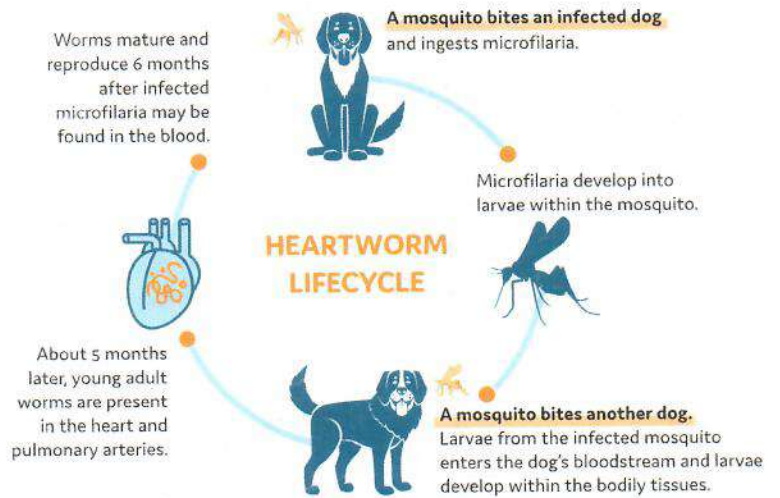
Heartworm Prevention

Heartworm disease is a serious and fatal condition that affects dogs, cats, and up to 30 other species of animals. It is caused by parasitic worms (heartworms) living in the major blood vessels of the lungs and often within the right side of the heart. Although heartworms begin as microscopic forms called larvae, the adult worms can grow to a length of 10 to 12 inches.

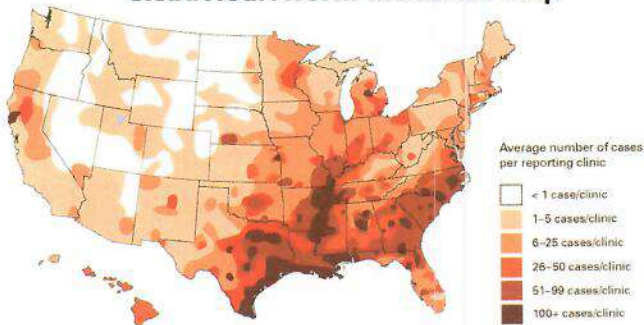
Heartworms can cause a variety of serious medical concerns in dogs, including irreversible lung, heart, liver, and kidney damage. Any of these problems, alone or in combination, can be fatal. Treatment to kill heartworms is available, but it is more costly than prevention and not without risk to your pet. Despite the fact that heartworm disease is virtually 100% preventable, many dogs and cats are still diagnosed with this disease each year.

WHO IS AT RISK?

Dogs and cats of any age or breed can be infected with heartworms. Dogs are natural hosts and most at risk. Heartworm disease has been found in all 50 states, and South Carolina is ranked in the top 10 for states with the highest rates of heartworm infection. Pets become infected with heartworms (known scientifically as *Dirofilaria immitis*) when they are bitten by an infected mosquito. And, as we well know, mosquitoes are a real problem in South Carolina. Even if your pet only goes outside to potty or walk to the car for a ride, they are still at risk!



U.S.A. Heartworm Incidence Map



© American Heartworm Society

PREVENTING HEARTWORM DISEASE

Prevention is much safer for your pet, and less expensive for you, than treatment – and it is simple to do. If your new puppy is older than 7 months of age, your veterinarian will likely want to test for heartworm disease prior to starting a new preventative medication. All dogs should be tested yearly from there on as part of normal preventative care. At Sangaree Animal Hospital, we recommend several different products to protect your puppy. Ask your veterinarian which preventative product is best for your puppy's lifestyle.



Parasite Prevention

FLEA & TICK PREVENTION

Fortunately, today we have very effective flea and tick preventatives that have a wide margin of safety and are easy to administer. **According to your dog's lifestyle, we recommend the use of monthly oral preventatives such as Simparica, Nexgard, and Revolution.**

Flea collars, with the exception of Seresto collars (which also prevent ticks), sprays, baths and flea-bombs are generally ineffective and employ harsh chemicals that are irritating and even toxic to your dog. Preventative tick collars, such as Seresto collars, however, can be used to repel and have a wider margin of safety.

continued



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INTESTINAL PARASITE PREVENTION

Many puppies are born with intestinal parasites from an infected mother (in-utero), via milk, or feces ingestion. The only way to diagnose intestinal parasites is by microscopic examination of your dog's feces for the eggs shed by the adult worms. In severe infestations, some adult worms can be observed in your dog's bowel movements, or after he or she vomits. Dewormers can be given orally but we first need to diagnose which parasites your dog has. We recommend having your puppy's feces checked at each puppy booster appointment and yearly thereafter.



Spay & Neuter Procedure

The old adage that "if you are not part of the solution, you are part of the problem" is particularly applicable to unwanted pregnancy in dogs – and that includes purebred dogs!

Spay Your Female Dogs

Aside from the very real pet overpopulation problem, there are valid health reasons for spaying female dogs. Spaying your dog will not change her personality, and there is no benefit to letting a dog "have just one litter." In fact, this only contributes to overpopulation when those puppies have litters of their own. Additionally, it's a myth that spaying your dog will cause her to gain weight.

There are numerous benefits to spaying your dog including:

Eliminates chances of pyometritis. Pyometra is an infection of the uterus that is fatal if emergency surgery is not performed immediately. This is a life-threatening condition and creates a great financial expense to the owner.

Decreased risk of mammary cancer. Ideally, to give a female dog protection against mammary cancer, she should be spayed prior to her first heat. In many large breed dogs, we also worry about the risk of early onset arthritis associated with developmental disruption. Each case is unique, but we often recommend waiting until after the first heat cycle in these cases. Each subsequent heat brings a greater chance of mammary cancer at a later time.

Eliminates risk of ovarian or uterine cancer. Spaying a dog involves the removal of the uterus and ovaries. No organs, no cancer; simple as that.

Did You Know?

If a female dog remains unneutered and allowed to reproduce unchecked, their offspring will multiply quickly!

1 YEAR: 16
2 YEARS: 128
3 YEARS: 512
4 YEARS: 12,288
6 YEARS: 67,000



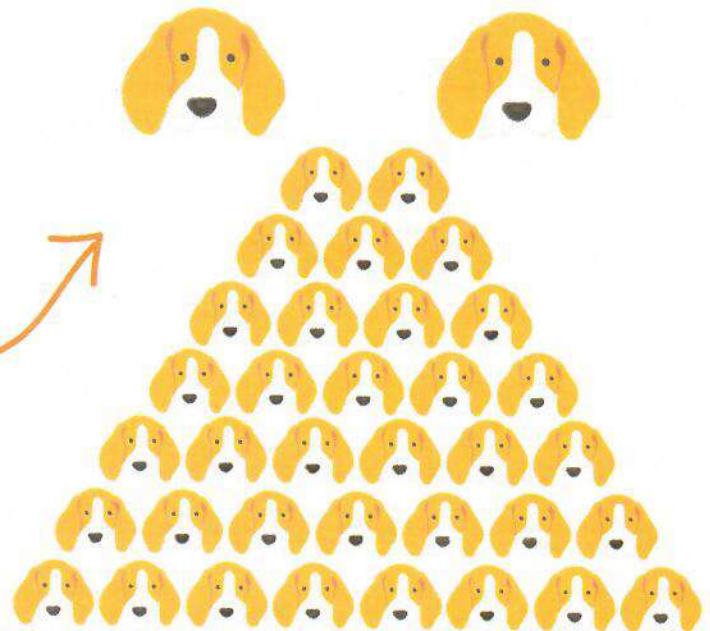
Neuter Your Male Dogs

This is the most proactive step. Neutering is a relatively simple surgery with a quick recovery period. Besides preventing unwanted pregnancies, neutering a male will help mitigate certain problem behaviors found in unneutered males and, in addition, it will help prevent certain medical conditions. Neutering will not take away your dog's personality or "manhood." The only thing he will miss is fighting and running away from home!

Neutered dogs are:

- Less likely to mark their territory by urinating
- Easier to obedience train and are better family pets
- Less likely to try to escape/run away
- Less likely to get attacked by other dogs
- Not subject to testicular cancer
- Less at risk of prostate cancer

In short, there are many good reasons to neuter male dogs. Your dog will be a much more pleasant companion, and will ultimately be happier and healthier.





Feeding Your New Puppy

Typically, tiny puppies (those under 12 weeks of age) should eat 3-4 times a day. Once a puppy is 3 months old, he or she can generally make the switch to eating 2-3 times a day. The frequency of feedings, however, will depend on the puppy's breed, size, and individual needs. This frequency should continue until the puppy has reached adulthood.

Growing puppies require significantly more food for their size than adult dogs. The feeding guidelines listed on your pet food bag are a good place to start, but you should monitor how well those amounts seem to be meeting your puppy's needs. A puppy that is leaving food in the bowl at mealtimes or becoming too pudgy may be eating too much; a puppy that seems lethargic or excessively thin may not be getting enough.

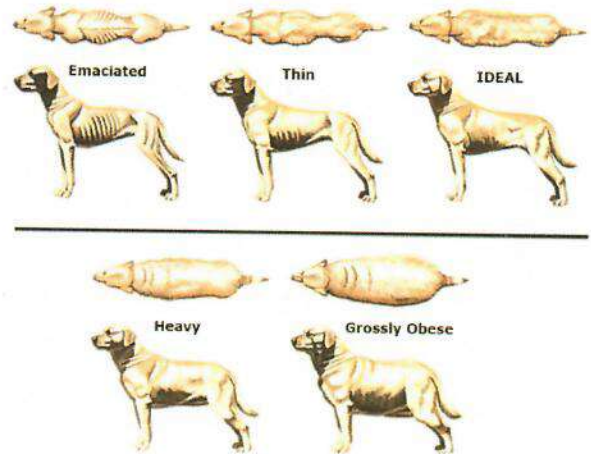
It is also important to set a regular schedule for feeding your puppy. A regular schedule helps to prevent stomach upset and supports house-training of your young pup.

Use treats only as a tool for training and never feed from the dinner table. This will become a learned behavior to beg for food. Overfeeding treats or table food can lead to a lifelong struggle with obesity, predisposing to conditions such as arthritis, diabetes, pancreatitis, and more.

For optimal health, it's best for all dogs (puppies and adults) to be a little on the lean side. That doesn't mean your pet should be abnormally skinny. It means you should be able to feel (but not see) ribs when you run your hands down your pet's sides. Your puppy should also have a definite "waist" when viewed from above. If you have any concerns about your puppy's growth rate, condition, or eating habits, we encourage you to schedule a weight check.

Healthy Puppy Weight Guide

- ✓ Ribs cannot be seen
- ✓ Ribs can be felt
- ✓ Puppy has a waist
- ✓ Puppy has a tuck



Microchipping

Even the most experienced and diligent pet owner is at risk for losing their dog. While collars and tags are important and certainly beneficial when worn by your pet, they are subject to breaking, fading, becoming scratched, and even falling off. If this occurs, there is no way to determine to whom your pet belongs. Microchipping is a permanent means of identification, and the best possible way of bringing your lost or stolen best friend back to you.

A microchip is a rice-grain sized electronic chip that is painlessly injected under the skin of your dog, similar to a routine vaccination. If your puppy is ever lost and brought to a veterinary hospital or shelter, one of the first procedures performed is to scan for a microchip. Though no one wants to suffer the heartbreak of losing a pet, microchipping helps create a happy reunion.



Insurance

Pet insurance is becoming more popular in the United States. In European countries, it is already well established. Pet insurance can help with unexpected costs associated with illness or accident.

If interested in insurance, it is best to go ahead and start when your pup is young. There are quite a few insurance companies. We have attached a chart comparing some of the more popular companies: ASPCA, Embrace, Figo, Nationwide, Petplan, Pets Best, Trupanion.



Dental Care

We clean our teeth twice a day (imagine what our mouths would be like if we didn't), and dogs are no exception. It's important to develop a dental care regime at an early age to get your puppy used to it. The gold standard of care is daily brushing with pet-safe toothpaste. If you're not sure you'll be able to keep up with this, we recommend using dental chews, such as Veggiedent treats. Unfortunately, all dental treats are not created equally. Certain products are much more effective than others, which is why it is important to ask your veterinarian what will be best for your puppy.



Prevent Accidental Poisons

Have you taken inventory of your medicine cabinets lately? Are you properly storing lawn and garden pesticide containers? When you tidy up around the house, do you put food, liquor, and tobacco products safely out of harm's way? These precautions are second nature to households with children, but homes with animals must be just as secure.

Many foods that are good for us, are toxic to our furry friends:

Foods



Avocado



Garlic



Grapes/Rasins



Onions



Eggplant



Macadamia Nuts



Chocolate



Tobacco

Plants

- Bird of Paradise
- Buttercup
- Elephant's Ear
- Holly Berries
- Tomatoes (leaves & stem)
- Marijuana (cannabis)
- Sago Palm
- Azaelea
- Hydrangea
- Mistletoe Berries
- Lily of the Valley
- Most Lilies

For a complete list, visit [ASPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control](https://www.aspc.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control)

