

PUPPY PACK WELCOME!

We're glad you're here!

Our goal is to provide a high standard of excellence while nurturing the human-animal bond.

We strive to work within client constraints and focus on providing exceptional, empathetic customer service.

We understand the special role your pet plays in your family, and we are dedicated to becoming your partner in maintaining your pet's health throughout their life.

***We're here for your pets for the duration of their life.
Don't hesitate to contact us with any question or concern.***

630-552-7804
crittercare@nva.com



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PUPPIES

Introducing a puppy to their new home

ESSENTIAL ITEMS FOR A NEW PUPPY

- Health records, including date of vaccinations and deworming.
- High-quality puppy food, large breed puppies should be fed large breed puppy food.
- Food and water bowls that can be easily sanitized.
- A kennel or crate.
- Shampoo and proper grooming tools.
- An adjustable collar, leash, and plenty of chew toys!

THE SECRET TO A HEALTHY START

Some puppies ease through the transition to their new homes, while others may have a harder time. If stress related problems are ignored, secondary problems can become serious, even life-threatening.

DIET

When puppies are young, it is very important to get them to eat. Small breed dogs are more susceptible to hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), and may need additional feedings in small quantities.

They should eat three times a day until 12 weeks of age, at which point, they can be transitioned down to twice daily. Their diet should never be changed rapidly. A new diet may cause stomach upset, vomiting, and diarrhea, which can result in dehydration and other complications. Diet changes should be made over the course of 6-7 days to prevent digestive upset.

Day 1 & 2: $\frac{3}{4}$ old food + $\frac{1}{4}$ new food

Day 3 & 4: $\frac{1}{2}$ old food + $\frac{1}{2}$ new food

Day 5 & 6: $\frac{1}{4}$ old food + $\frac{3}{4}$ new food

Call us any time your puppy seems lethargic or refuses to eat for more than 12 hours.

WATER

Water is more important than food during the first few days in their new home. When not kenneled, puppies should have free access to clean water. If the puppy is kenneled overnight, provide it with a drink before and immediately after kenneling.



ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

Changes in environment can cause stress-related problems such as:

- Intestinal parasites that can cause diarrhea.
- Upper respiratory infections.
- Low blood sugar from reduced appetite (especially concerning in small breeds).
- Dehydration
- Diarrhea

REST

Rest is very important for puppies and helps them to grow and develop, both mentally and physically. Puppies generally sleep throughout the day, waking only to play for a short time, eat, and eliminate. As a puppy grows, its wake times will become longer and closer together.

TRAINING

Training is essential for every puppy. It can put an end to undesirable behaviors and lead to a lifetime of joy for the entire family! *For more information on training your puppy, contact Sonya's Good Dog Services at 630-408-6837.*

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HOUSE- TRAINING

Take advantage of your puppy's natural instincts

Source: Kathryn Primm, DVM

LIFE IN THE WILD

Wild canines instinctively bed down in a clean space to sleep and care for their young. When they're really small, their mom cleans up after them, but as they grow, cleaning up becomes daunting. At first, puppies will go everywhere without concern for cleanliness. As their brain matures, they start to instinctively resist soiling in their clean space, or "den".

You can take advantage of this natural tendency to keep their safe space clean and help them successfully become housetrained!

A PLACE TO CALL HOME Simulate a "den" experience for the puppy with a crate that is big enough to lie down and turn around, yet small enough to cause it to lie in any mess it makes. The crate should grow in size as the puppy grows.

Make the crate a happy place with special toys and treats. Whenever the puppy is not supervised, it should be in its safe space.

RULES TO LIVE BY

Your puppy's elimination can be predictable. These tips will help you achieve house-training success:

- Puppies should go out about 10 minutes after they eat or drink. A full stomach can trigger the bowel and bladder to empty.
- Schedule regular meal times for food and water to prevent unexpected accidents.
- Puppies should be walked immediately before and after any crate time.
- If it looks like elimination is about to happen, scoop the pup up and place it in the spot you prefer.
- Be proactive – at minimum, your puppy should go out every two hours. Eventually, it will learn to let you know when it needs to go.



- Putting the puppy in the crate when it falls asleep. This low-stress experience will reinforce that the crate is a safe space.
- When in the crate, let the puppy cry or fuss. By giving it alone time in the safety of its crate, it will learn that being alone can be nice and separation anxiety can be prevented.
- Leaving puppies in the crate for longer than they can hold it is asking for accidents. Every time an accident happens in the crate, its brain is receiving the wrong message.
- Reward the puppy each time it eliminates where you want.
- Do not discipline the puppy if you did not see the accident occur.

ACCIDENTS HAPPEN

Clean up mishaps with an enzyme cleaner to keep the puppy from going back to the spot.

PUPPY TRAINING

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CHEWING!

Top tips for teething puppies

PUPPIES ARE CHEWING MACHINES!

Dogs use their mouths in the same way that toddlers use their hands: to investigate and learn about their surroundings.

The instinct to chew and “mouth” are in working breeds such as: retrievers, terriers, and cattle dogs.

Your success in preventing chewing problems depends upon how efficiently you channel your puppy’s natural tendency to chew.

TEETHING

You will likely notice an increase in chewing between four and twelve months of age when your puppy is teething.

Have plenty of toys on hand that can handle aggressive chewing and massage sore gums. Freezing them before giving them to your puppy helps soothe the pain from teeth breaking through their gums.

TIPS FOR TEETHING

- Never leave puppies unattended with a toy.
- Keep an abundance of acceptable toys around that the puppy can grab when it is looking to chew on something.
- Take a look at the surroundings from the puppy’s level. Are there items it may be tempted to grab like the TV remote control or a cell phone?
- If the puppy chews on something it shouldn’t, immediately take the item away and redirect their attention to one of their own toys.
- When the puppy still has it’s baby teeth, toys should not be so hard that they can fracture a tooth.
- Freeze peanut butter (free of xylitol) in a favorite Kong-type toy to help the puppy soothe sore gums while teething.

TOYS TO LIVE BY

- Kong, Westpaw, and Nyla-bone brand toys – especially those designed to stimulate a puppy’s brain.



- A stash of toys should include a wide variety of textures, colors, sounds, and smells. As the puppy becomes bored with one, it will be more likely to move to one of it’s own toys rather than your favorite shoe.

TOYS DESIGNED FOR TROUBLE

- Toys that resemble unacceptable items such as an unwanted sock or shoe.
- Plastic containers that once held toxic materials. No matter how well you have cleaned the container, toxins remain in the plastic.
- Stuffed animals with tiny beads or batteries.
- Toys that easily break apart or become stingy can pose a serious health risk if your puppy ingests the broken or stringy material.

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FOOD GUARDING

Help build trust to alleviate the negativity surrounding dinnertime

Source: Sarah Wooten, DVM; Julia Albright, MA, DVM, DCAVB

When dogs get aggressive while they eat, it can be detrimental to other pets and you!

WHAT IS FOOD GUARDING?

Food guarding is when a dog becomes very defensive while eating food, chewing on a bone or toy, or eating a treat. It can also be called food aggression, resource aggression, or resource guarding. While the exact cause of food guarding has not been determined, one theory suggests that puppies fed from a communal bowl predisposes dogs to developing food guarding behavior.

Signs of food guarding range from very mild, such as growling or running away with the food, to severe cases where biting occurs. Many pet parents elect to not treat mild food guarding and instead make sure the dog is left alone while eating, or they use a door, baby gate, or kennel to separate the dog from people or other pets during meal time.

DON'T LET THEM BITE THE HAND THAT FEEDS THEM

The best way to deal with food guarding is to prevent it in the first place with a puppy or dog that doesn't yet guard the food bowl. In this scenario, when you bring your new dog home, you should hand feed the first few meals to your dog, making the experience as calm and positive as possible.

The next level of training must consist of building a positive association between people approaching the food bowl and something really good happening, like a treat getting dropped in the bowl. While your dog is eating, casually drop in a tasty treat.

Make sure to do this at least once or twice a meal until your dog seems comfortable and happy to have you around while it eats. If it shows any signs of discomfort or nervousness, stop and try again later. Signs of stress in a food-aggressive dog include food gulping, a stiffened body, raised hackles, growling, snapping, staring, panting, or widened eyes.



GET THE HELP YOUR DOG NEEDS

Behaviorists used to tell pet parents that to prevent food guarding, they must take the food bowl away over and over again while a dog is eating and mess with a dog while it's eating to get the dog "used to" it. This practice is outdated, potentially dangerous, and no longer recommended. Nobody likes to be messed with while they eat, including dogs!

If the dog bites while food guarding, or if there are children in the home, then the risk of not correcting food guarding is too high. Do not attempt to resolve food guarding on your own. If you wish to keep the dog in your home, then it's time to talk with either a certified applied animal behaviorist (CAAB or ACAAB certification), a board-certified veterinary behaviorist (diplomat of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists), or a certified professional dog trainer who has experience treating food-related aggression.

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VACCINATIONS

Why they matter

Vaccinations play an important part in keeping your pet healthy. Animals can be exposed to dangerous illnesses in their lives, but a standard course of vaccinations can prevent them.

CAN VACCINES CAUSE THE DISEASE?

Vaccinations do not cause the disease. The vaccine stimulates your pet's immune system to mount a response against the vaccine, thereby causing it to produce antibodies capable of protecting your pet against the disease. Antibodies fight disease by killing the disease-causing virus or bacteria within the body.

WHY DO I NEED TO REVACCINATE?

Antibody levels produced by a vaccination diminish over time. Revaccinating stimulates the immune system to "remember" the specific disease organism and manufacture more antibodies to continue to protect your pet.

DO VACCINATIONS GUARANTEE DISEASE PREVENTION?

The most important factor in disease prevention is your pet's individual immune system. Like people, animals have varying abilities to respond to vaccines and illnesses. The very young and the very old have diminished ability to respond. In such cases, it is critical for your pet to be revaccinated at the required interval. Furthermore, if your pet is exposed to a disease shortly before or after being vaccinated against it, it may not have sufficient time to develop the immunity and protection from the vaccination before it becomes sick.

WHY DO PUPPIES & KITTENS NEED BOOSTERS EVERY 3-4 WEEKS?

During nursing, puppies and kittens absorb antibodies from the mother's milk. These antibodies protect pets against disease until their own immune system is able to do so. Puppies and kittens need vaccinations to stimulate the development of their own immune system once the protective level of antibodies from their mother has diminished. Puppies and kittens need a series of vaccinations (boosters) because of the changes to their immune systems that happen as they grow.



CORE DOG AND PUPPY VACCINES

- **DHP** – Protects your dog from Canine Distemper, a contagious and potentially fatal virus that affects the respiratory and nervous systems. It also protects against Canine Parvovirus, a highly contagious, viral disease that affects the GI tract and is often fatal. Finally, it protects against Hepatitis, a severe and untreatable disease.
- **Leptospirosis** – The Leptospirosis vaccine protects your dog against bacteria spread through soil, water, and the urine of infected animals. Lepto is difficult to diagnose and, if not caught early, can be fatal. It is a zoonotic disease, which means that you can get it too.
- **Rabies** – Rabies is a deadly disease that can be transferred from animals to humans via bodily fluids.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED VACCINES

- **Bordetella** – The Bordetella vaccine protects against the bacteria commonly associated with kennel cough and other respiratory disease in dogs.
- **Lyme** – The Lyme vaccine protects against tick borne Lyme disease.
- **Canine Influenza** – This vaccine protects your dog against H₃N₈ and H₃N₂, two highly contagious strains of influenza virus that can affect your dog.

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SPAYING & NEUTERING

How it helps your pet live a longer, healthier life

Spaying and neutering prevents unwanted litters, helps protect against some serious health problems, and may reduce many of the behavioral problems associated with the mating instinct.

We recommend spaying or neutering most pets between 4-6 months of age.

BENEFITS OF SPAYING YOUR FEMALE PET

Spaying eliminates or significantly reduces the risk of the following serious health issues:

- Ovarian and uterine cancer
- Pyometra (infected uterus that can cause death if not surgically removed)
- Mammary tumors (nearly 50% of mammary tumors in dogs and 90% in cats are malignant)
- Spaying pets with diabetes and seizure disorders allows for better control of their diseases; hormonal changes can interfere with medication and disease management.

BENEFITS OF NEUTERING YOUR MALE PET

Neutering eliminates or significantly reduces the risk of the following serious health issues:

- Testicular cancer (the second most common cancer in male dogs)
- Testicular trauma
- Testicular torsion (the testicle twists on itself)
- Prostate inflammation, swelling, and cysts
- Perianal (anal gland) tumors

THE TRUTH ABOUT SPAYING & NEUTERING

Source: ASPCA

- **MYTH:** Spaying and neutering will cause my pets to gain weight.
FACT: Lack of exercise and overfeeding will cause your pet to pack on the extra pounds—not spaying and neutering.
- **MYTH:** Neutering will cause behavioral changes.
FACT: The effects of neutering are largely dependent on your pet's individual personality, physiology, and history. Neutering can help avoid some aggression problems or undesirable behaviors like spraying, roaming, and humping. That said, it is important to



note that there are no guarantees. Neutering does not eliminate the testosterone hormone completely, nor will it negate any behaviors that your pet has learned or that have become habitual.

- **MYTH:** Spaying and neutering is unhealthy for pets.
FACT: Just the opposite! Spaying and neutering will help your pet live a longer, healthier life.
- **MYTH:** Neutering will make my pet feel like less of a male.
FACT: Pets do not have any concept of ego or sexual identity, and neutering won't change that.
- **MYTH:** When my pet has a litter, there are lots of people who will take the cute puppies and kittens.
FACT: Each year, nearly 10 million dogs and cats crowd shelters with over 4 million of them euthanized; many are less than 6 months old.

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DENTAL DISEASE

Our pets may not smile, but they still need dental care

At around four months of age — and it can vary from breed to breed and even from dog to dog — a dog will begin to lose its puppy teeth.

As your dog ages and adult teeth come in, what starts with a little tartar buildup and bad breath, can progress to tooth loss because of periodontal disease.

Additionally, the bacteria associated with the disease can travel to other parts of the body and cause damage there. Daily brushing, regular dental cleanings, and special rinses and foods are your best line of defense against periodontal disease in dogs.

DENTAL DISEASE – WHAT IS IT?

Dental (Periodontal) disease happens when inflammation of the gums (called gingivitis) conspires with inflammation of the bone and tooth support structures (called periodontitis) to undermine a tooth's support system.

More than 80 percent of dogs over 4 years old are affected to some degree by periodontal disease. Here's how it happens:

The process starts when bacteria form plaque on the teeth. Within days, minerals in the saliva bond with plaque to form tartar that adheres to the teeth. The bacteria then work their way under the gums to cause gingivitis. Once under the gums, bacteria destroy the tissue around the tooth, leading to tooth loss.

Bacteria associated with dental disease can travel in the bloodstream to infect the heart, kidneys, and liver, causing widespread effects.

SIGNS OF DENTAL DISEASE INCLUDE:

- Bad breath (halitosis)
- Redness or bleeding along the gum line
- Drooling, which may be tinged with blood
- Difficulty chewing or messy eating
- Pawing at the mouth
- Loss of appetite
- Loose or missing teeth
- Facial swelling
- Nasal discharge
- Gum recession



Since most periodontal disease occurs under the gums, the only way to truly assess the degree of periodontal disease is to perform an examination under anesthesia. Once the dog is anesthetized, a dental probe is used to measure loss of attachment around each tooth.

PREVENTION

Luckily, this is one disease that can be managed with plenty of preventative approaches. Here are a few:

- Daily brushing can help remove plaque before it turns into tartar. **DO NOT USE human toothpastes because most contain substances that pets shouldn't swallow in significant quantities.**
- Mouth rinse solutions that target plaque bacteria
- Dental diets and/or treats can also help keep plaque and tartar to a minimum.
- Routine prophylactic dentistry is recommended for all dogs. This procedure is perhaps the most significant mode of prevention, as it allows veterinarians to thoroughly examine each individual tooth and prevent further deterioration.

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PARASITES!

Is my puppy bugged?

Source: Kathryn Primm, DVM

TINY LITTLE BUGGERS!

The most important thing for you to know about intestinal parasites is that you usually can't see them, and they can cause big trouble before you even realize they're there.

THE SECRET TO KEEPING INTESTINAL PARASITES OUT OF YOUR PUPPY!

DOES MY PUPPY HAVE WORMS?

Intestinal worms can cause signs like vomiting and diarrhea, but they can be present even if your pet seems unaffected. These parasites tend to damage the intestinal walls where they attach, and just their presence causes inflammation.

Young dogs seem to be the most severely affected, and puppies can die from worms. Occasionally, pet owners will see worms in the stool of an infected dog, but many of the worms only "appear" in the stool after you administer a dewormer.

Worms will seed the soil where your pet hangs out and serve as a source of reinfection for your pets and other animals. Worms have evolved to be very effective at infecting animals, and it takes you and your veterinary team to head off these intestinal invaders.

WHERE DO THE WORMS COME FROM?

- **Hookworms** - Newborn puppies can get hookworms through their mother's milk if she is infected. Hookworm eggs, and newly-hatched hookworm larvae, can be picked up in the environment from the feces of infected animals. They can be ingested through the mouth, such as when a dog licks its paws or grooms itself after coming into contact with infected fecal material. Dogs can also become infected when the parasites directly penetrate their skin and work their way into the bloodstream. *People can become infected with canine hookworms through these same two routes: fecal-oral, and direct skin penetration.*
- **Roundworms** – Dogs become infected with roundworm via ingestion of eggs from a contaminated environment, such as feces. The eggs



hatch and adult worms feed off of nutrients in the small intestines, causing digestive issues and damaging the intestinal wall. Since an infected pet can shed millions of eggs each day, and *the worms can also cause disease in humans*, it is important to deworm pets and wash hands regularly.

- **Tapeworms via Fleas** – tapeworm eggs are carried in mature fleas. During grooming or in response to a flea bite, a puppy can ingest the tapeworm infected flea and complete the life cycle. *Flea control is critical in the management and prevention of tapeworm infection.*
- **Tapeworms via Raw Meat** – Animals like cattle and pigs can ingest vegetation contaminated with the parasite and pass the parasite on to your pet when they consume raw meat.

WHAT'S THE BEST DEWORMER FOR MY PUPPY?

It's wise to let the veterinary team find out for sure which type of parasites you need to treat. Only prescription medications kill certain types of worms, and if there are other parasites that aren't technically worms (like Coccidia or Giardia), a completely different type of medication may be required. No one wants their puppy to die from a treatable problem or to get medication that's inappropriate or not needed.

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THE TRUTH ABOUT TICKS!

Myths vs. facts

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), DogsAndTicks.com

Disease-carrying ticks pose health risks to dogs and people, no matter where you live. The CDC reports that ticks in every U.S. state carry disease, and the number of tickborne diseases is increasing.

MYTH #1 - The best way to remove a tick is with a lit match, fingernail polish, or petroleum jelly.

FACT: None of these methods cause the tick to “back out”, and all of them may actually result in the tick depositing more disease-carrying saliva into the wound, increasing the risk of infection. The best way to remove a tick is to grasp it as close to the skin as possible with tweezers and pull the tick’s body out with a steady motion. Wear rubber gloves, and clean the skin with soap and water after removal. Dispose of the tick by placing it in alcohol or flushing it down the toilet.

MYTH #2 - Lyme disease is the only illness that ticks can transmit to dogs and humans.

FACT: Lyme is the most widely-known and common tick disease, but there are many others that ticks carry and can transmit. These include rocky mountain spotted fever, anaplasmosis (sometimes known as “dog fever”), ehrlichiosis, and some newly emerging diseases with potentially devastating effects.

MYTH #3 - Ticks aren’t a problem in the winter when it’s too cold outside.

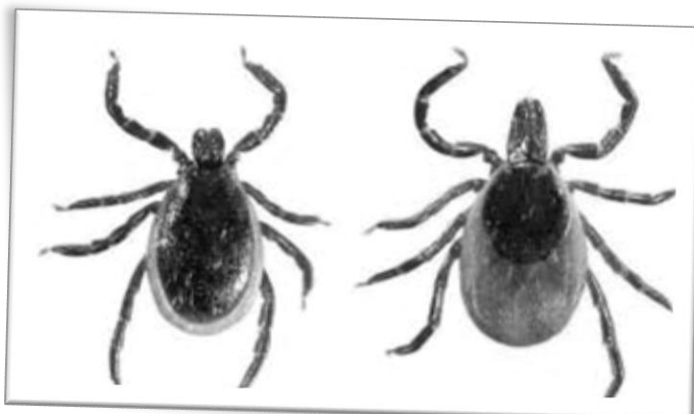
FACT: In most areas of the country, high season for ticks runs from April to November. Experts recommend the use of preventives year-round, however, as infection can occur at any time of the year. *In the winter, for example, some tick species move indoors and are in closer contact with pets and people, while others make a type of antifreeze to survive during the winter months.*

MYTH #4 - As long as I don’t live near or visit a wooded area, I don’t have to worry about ticks.

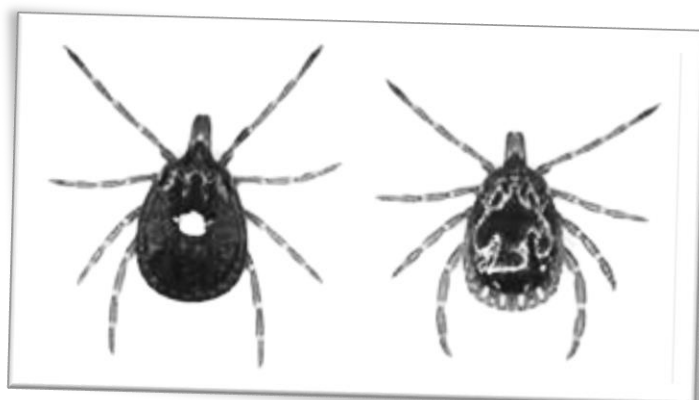
FACT: Ticks actually live on the ground no matter the location. They typically crawl up from grass blades onto a host and migrate upward, which is why they’re often found on the scalp.



American Dog Tick



Black Legged Tick (Deer Tick)



Lone Star Tick

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KEEP YOUR HOME FLEA-FREE

95% of fleas in your home are not on your pet

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

Even the cleanest home can be the target of a flea infestation. Infestations usually start because the fleas were picked up outside of the home and brought inside unknowingly.

Your pet may almost always stay indoors, but unless it strictly uses pee pads and never goes outside your home, it really isn't an "inside" pet. Even if this is the case, an indoor pet (whether dog or cat), is still at risk for a flea infestation. The chance is obviously lower, but there's no such thing as zero risk.

ARE FLEA PREVENTIONS NECESSARY?

When you never see a flea on your cat or dog, you might think a flea preventive just isn't necessary. But flea preventives do just that—prevent fleas. These products should be used before a flea infestation is seen so that it stays that way. Unfortunately, a flea problem can manifest before a single flea is even seen on a pet.

In the case of cats – who are notorious for their fastidious grooming – you might never see evidence of fleas. However, this doesn't change the statistics. A single adult flea can lay up to 50 eggs a day, so it's easy to see how fast an infestation can start. Once an infestation is present, each pet must be treated along with the home and yard. It's so much easier to prevent fleas than dealing with their consequences!

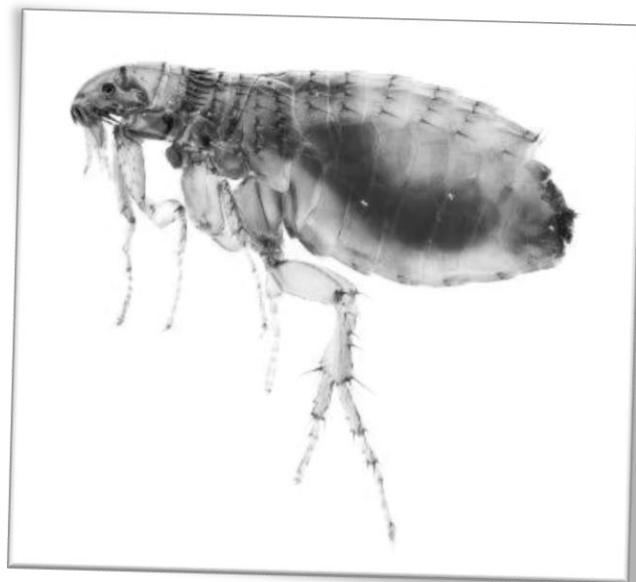
Critter Care carries flea prevention products that are safe and effective. Ask your veterinarian about the best flea prevention product for your pet.

WHERE DO THESE PESKY BUGGERS HIDE?

Flea eggs – Flea eggs are found in carpets, bedding, floorboards, and soil.

Flea larve and pupae – Inside, flea larvae and pupae are found in places where pets spend a lot of time, such as pet bedding, in carpets, on upholstered furniture, on bed covers, and in other areas where pets hang out.

Outside, flea larvae and pupae live in moist, shaded soil beneath shrubs, as well as the soil between the joints of concrete walks and porches.



Adult fleas – The adult fleas living on your pet make up about 5% of the fleas in your living environment. The rest are scattered throughout your home.

SIGNS OF FLEA INFESTATION

- Flea feces (pepper-like specks), flea eggs (light-colored specks), and/or fleas (tiny, dark brown insects) in your pet's coat, or on its bedding
- Itchy, scratchy skin and/or your pet is biting at its fur
- Patchy hair loss
- Lethargy – especially in severe flea cases

FLEA REMOVAL TIPS

Inside the house

Vacuum and steam clean carpets – paying special attention to places where pets spend a lot of time.

Outside the house

Mow, rake, and remove organic debris from flowerbeds and under bushes.

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HEARTWORMS

A serious and potentially fatal parasite

Source: American Heartworm Society

WHAT IS HEARTWORM DISEASE?

Heartworms are foot-long worms that live in the heart, lungs, and associated blood vessels of affected pets. They cause severe lung disease, heart failure, and damage to other organs in the body. This is called heartworm disease.

Dogs - Heartworms that live inside the dog mature into adults, mate, and produce offspring. If untreated, dogs have been known to harbor several hundred worms in their bodies. Heartworm disease causes lasting damage to the heart, lungs, and arteries, and can affect the dog's health and quality of life long after the parasites are gone. For this reason, **heartworm prevention is critical**.

Cats - The cat is an atypical host for heartworms, and most worms in cats do not survive to the adult stage. Heartworm disease often goes undiagnosed in cats and it's important to understand that even immature worms cause real damage in the form of heartworm associated respiratory disease (HARD). Moreover, the medication used to treat heartworm infections in dogs cannot be used in cats, so **prevention is the only means of protecting cats from the effects of heartworm disease**.

WHAT CAUSES HEARTWORM DISEASE?

When a **MOSQUITO** bites and takes a blood meal from a heartworm-infected animal, it picks up immature worms. Then, when the infected mosquito bites your pet, the infective larvae are deposited onto the surface of the skin and enter your pet's bloodstream through the mosquito's bite wound. Once inside your pet, it takes approximately 6 months for the larvae to mature into adult heartworms. Once mature, heartworms can live for 5 to 7 years in dogs and up to 2 or 3 years in cats. Because of the longevity of these worms, each mosquito season can lead to an increasing number of worms in an infected pet.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PREVENTATIVES

Prevention is an important part of providing essential care. Consider this:

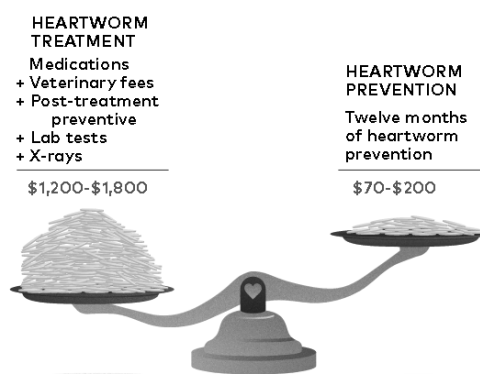
- The American Heartworm Society estimates that more than a million dogs in the U.S. have heartworm disease—and heartworm disease can be fatal.
- Heartworm disease is in every state in the U.S.



- Heartworm preventives are safe, relatively inexpensive, and easy to give. However, if a dog becomes infected, heartworm treatment is extremely costly and difficult, requiring multiple veterinary visits and months of exercise restriction. This is why heartworm prevention is key.
- American Heartworm Society recommends year-round heartworm prevention even in colder climates.

PREVENTIONS vs TREATMENT

WEIGH THE COSTS (Based on a 40-pound dog)



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AT-HOME NAIL TRIMS

9 nail trimming tips to make at-home nail trimming a breeze

Source: Mikkel Becker, CBCC-KA, CPDT-KA, CDBC, CTC, KPA Graduate, BA Communications

Fear and anxiety associated with nail trimming can be hard for you and your pet.

1. PAIR WITH POSITIVES

Provide ample and super-flavorful treats throughout the entire nail trim. Treats are optimally given continuously with the licking of a tasty soft treat or delivered in fast repetition. (Hint: Cut the treats into pea-sized pieces).

2. DON'T FORCE THE ISSUE

Holding your dog down against its will for a nail trim can increase fear and resistance. Instead, build your canine's confidence gradually by earning trust and associating paw and nail handling with good things the dog enjoys.

3. MAKE IT MANAGEABLE

Divide the nail trim into smaller segments. Start with a spot on the dog that's well within your dog's comfort zone. Make sure that your pooch's body language is happy, relaxed, and loose, and that he's readily accepting treats before continuing.

4. DON'T START WITH CLIPPERS

Handle your dog's paws and nails with your fingers. Then move to other items, like the closed end of a ballpoint pen or a spoon, to mimic the sensation of something touching the nail. This is essential for puppies to prevent problems in the future.

5. REINTRODUCE TRIMMERS AS A FRIEND, NOT A FOE

Hold nail trimmers in hand and allow the dog to approach, instead of bringing the trimmers to your dog. Encourage approach by placing a soft, spreadable treat like dog-safe peanut butter on the handle. Or place clippers on the ground with a Hansel-and-Gretel-like trail of treats leading up to and around them.

6. TAKE IT ONE NAIL AT A TIME

Rather than doing it all at once, trim one to three nails a day. You'd be surprised at how much easier the task becomes for you and your dog.



7. SHORT SPURTS

Stay attuned to the dog's body language, pair handling with rewards, and keep nail trim sessions 30 seconds to two minutes. Doing this will help build up your dog's confidence.

8. TRIM FIRST, PLAY LATER

Finish up sessions with a play session or going through the dog's favorite trick routines. (Bonus: They get extra credit for "shake," since offering a paw increases canine contentment toward paw handling).

9. TAKE A TEAM APPROACH

Think of nail trimming as a team sport. Everyone on the dog's team affects comfort level with nail care. Find someone who is dedicated to protecting the emotional well-being of the dog. Team efforts provide help from all angles, especially when Fido needs extra help learning to relax during care.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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POISONOUS FOODS

9 Common foods your dog should never eat

Source: PetPoisonHelpline.org

1. CHOCOLATE

Chocolate contains theobromine and caffeine. Ingestion in toxic amounts can result in vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactivity, elevated heart rate, abnormal heart rhythm, tremors, seizures, and possibly even death (though death is rare in pets who receive prompt and appropriate treatment).

2. ALCOHOL

(Including that in fermenting bread yeast)

Ingestion of alcohol can cause dangerous drops in blood sugar, blood pressure, and body temperature. Severely intoxicated animals can potentially experience seizures and respiratory failure.

3. CAFFEINE

Ingestion of unused coffee grounds or beans, tea bags, or supplements could cause serious toxicity in pets. Signs of hyperactivity, restlessness, vomiting, elevated heart rate, high blood pressure, abnormal heart rhythms, tremors, and elevated body temperature may be seen. In severe cases, seizures, collapse, and death are possible.

4. GRAPES, RAISINS, AND CURRANTS

Ingestion of even a small amount of grapes, raisins, or currants can result in severe, acute kidney failure. Most, if not all, products that contain grapes or raisins may cause toxicity – this includes grape juice, trail mix with raisins, raisin bread, and possibly even wine. The toxin in these foods can cause vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, anorexia, and acute renal (kidney) failure.

5. GARLIC, ONIONS, CHIVES, AND LEEKS

Certain breeds and species are more sensitive, including cats and Japanese breeds of dogs (e.g. Akita, Shiba Inu). Toxic doses can cause anemia, nausea, drooling, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, pale gums, increased heart rate, increased respiratory rate, weakness, exercise intolerance, and collapse.

6. TABLE SALT

Salt poisoning results in signs of vomiting, diarrhea, lethargy, incoordination, and excessive thirst or urination. In severe cases, tremors, seizures, coma, and even death are possible.



7. APRICOT

The seeds, leaves, and stems of the apricot tree contain cyanide. When ingested in toxic amounts, clinical signs of dilated pupils, difficulty breathing, inadequate oxygen levels, bright red gums, shock, and death can be seen.

8. MILK

Because pets are unable to break down the lactose in dairy products, this leaves the lactose sugar in their system for the bacteria in their intestines to ferment, causing intestinal cramps and diarrhea.

9. XYLITOL

Xylitol is a natural, sugar-free sweetener commonly found in chewing gums, foods (including some peanut butters), candies, toothpastes, and sugar-free, chewable multivitamins. There are even some pieces of clothing that contain xylitol! If xylitol is ingested, it can cause life-threatening low blood sugar (even within 10-15 minutes of ingestion) and acute liver failure.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

**24/7 ANIMAL POISON CONTROL
CENTER** (855) 764-7661

<https://www.petpoisonhelpline.com>

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