

PUPPY INFORMATION BOOKLET



Veterinary Care

Vaccinations for your puppy

Core Vaccines

Core vaccination are vaccines which every puppy should receive, regardless of their expected lifestyle and exposure to other dogs. Most puppies will receive these vaccines spread out over 3 visits, ages ranging between 8, 12 and 16 weeks of age. However vaccination protocol may be altered after discussion with your veterinarian. vaccination protocol should always be individualized based on the patient's risk factors, life stage, and lifestyle. For this reason, these Guidelines are not intended to represent a universal vaccination protocol applicable to all dogs.

DA2PP – This vaccine protects against a combination of viruses seen in puppies and adult dogs: distemper, canine adenovirus-2, parainfluenza virus, and parvovirus. This vaccine is given as a series over 3 months.

Rabies – This vaccine protects against rabies virus, which can be transmitted to your puppy if it gets bitten by wildlife infected with rabies. Recommended for all puppies, regardless of risk level. This vaccine is given once when your puppy is approximately 4 months old, is boosted a year later, and then every 3 years. While the risk of rabies infection remains low in Nova Scotia, vaccination is required by some municipalities and is required to travel to some provinces and to cross into other countries.

Bordetella – This helps protect dogs against some forms of contagious bronchitis, and is recommended for dogs that frequently contact other dogs, go to training classes, stay in boarding kennels, etc. This vaccine is an oral vaccine and is given once a year. Dogs can still get kennel cough even if they have received the Bordetella vaccine, but it does help limit the severity of disease caused by the Bordetella organism.

Non-Core Vaccines

These are vaccines which may or may not be necessary, depending on your puppy's risk level based on their proposed lifestyle. For these vaccines, each puppy's risk is assessed individually, and we will discuss the pros and cons of each vaccine with you, and decide

together if either vaccine is right for your puppy. These vaccines are given once, boosted 1 month later, and then updated yearly.

Leptospirosis – This is a disease caused by various strains of bacteria carried by many wild animals and excreted in their urine. Dogs can become infected by drinking water contaminated with infected urine, such as in stagnant pools of water in the woods. Clinical signs include fever, not eating, vomiting, liver and kidney damage (can cause acute kidney failure). This disease also has a zoonotic potential, meaning that an affected dog can transmit the bacteria to a human through his urine.

This disease has been diagnosed in Nova Scotia. The current vaccine contains 4 common strains of this bacteria, but not every existing strain, so it is still possible for your puppy to acquire Leptospirosis even if he is vaccinated.

Lyme – This disease is transmitted by deer ticks, therefore any dog that is exposed to a tick is at risk. It takes the tick about 24 hours of feeding on an animal to transmit the bacteria. Once infected, 90% of dogs do not show clinical signs, but 10% typically show arthritis, fever, and rarely heart, neurologic, and kidney problems. Administration of the Lyme vaccine will help prevent infection in your puppy.

Risks of Vaccination

Vaccines may cause localized pain and swelling, low grade fever, allergic reactions such as swelling of the muzzle and eyelids, and mild lethargy. With any vaccine, an anaphylactic reaction, which is a potentially fatal hypersensitivity reaction, is possible. However, the risk of vaccine reaction is small compared to the risk of the diseases the vaccines prevent against. After the initial series of vaccines, we are able to check the titer levels of your dog, which can determine if your dog needs further vaccination.

Titer testing

Titer testing is a simple test that preformed using a blood sample to asses immunity levels in our pets, particular immunity levels may indicate if your pet has been previously vaccinated and as adequate immunity. At Burnside vet we offer inhouse titer testing for DA2PP. We also offer Rabies titer testing to be sent specialty lab.

Parasites

Puppies are more susceptible to parasite infections than adult dogs, therefore it is important to start them on parasite prevention early in life. Many parasites can also be transmitted from the mom to the puppy, so puppies are often infected from a very young age.

External Parasites

The two most common external parasites we see are fleas and ticks. These parasites attach onto the skin and suck blood, which can cause transmission of disease, such as with the deer tick and Lyme disease. Some other external parasites we see in puppies include demodectic mange and sarcoptic mange.

Monthly preventative – to prevent fleas and ticks, we recommend your puppy be given a preventative medication year round. We typically recommend *Nexgard* for dogs. This is a chewable tablet which prevents against both fleas and ticks.

Internal Parasites

The most common internal parasites we see are roundworms and hookworms. These parasites are mostly within the digestive tract and can cause upset stomach and diarrhea. Other internal parasites we see in puppies include tapeworm, lungworm, coccidia, and giardia. While we do not see heartworm in dogs that are native to Nova Scotia and have never left, we do see heartworm in dogs that have moved here from other regions.

Deworming - At your first and second puppy appointments, you will be sent home with a dewormer. You and your veterinary team will also be able to discuss the risk assessment for your dog and if monthly deworming is appropriate for your dog. *Nexgard Spectra* is an option to combine prevention for both internal and external parasites.

Zoonosis

Some diseases, including various bacteria, parasites, viruses, fungi, etc., can be transmitted from your puppy to members of your family, including children. Proper handwashing is

important to help prevent disease transmission. Washing your hands is the most effective way to prevent zoonotic diseases. Vaccinating your puppy and using parasite prevention is another good way to decrease risk.

Spay and Neuter

Benefits of Spay/Neuter

There are many benefits to having your puppy spayed or neutered, including the following:

- Less likely to mark territory by urinating, which can occur inside the house as well as outside.
- Exhibit less roaming behavior, as there is no need to leave the property to find a mate
- Reduces risk of certain health problems such as pyometra (infection in the uterus) and mammary cancer in females, and prostate cancer and benign prostatic hyperplasia in males
- Eliminates risk of pregnancy

There are varying recommendations for when to spay or neuter your puppy depending on their size and breed. and your lifestyle. It is best to discuss with your veterinarian what the best age to spay or neuter your puppy.

What to do in an Emergency?

After Hours Emergencies

If your puppy has a medical emergency, we recommend he be seen by a veterinarian right away. If we are open, please call us and we will direct you on how to proceed.

If this is after hours, you will have to go to an emergency hospital. We are partnered with the Metro Animal Emergency Clinic, which is also located here in Burnside, and is open 24 hours. Please call them ahead of time and their team will ask for further information and direct you on how to proceed. You can find more information about them at www.maec.ca or call them at 902-468-0674.

Some reasons to go to an emergency clinic with your puppy or make an emergency appointment here include trauma, vomiting or diarrhea (especially if blood is seen), not eating, lethargy, and swelling of the face or hives, or eating something he shouldn't.

Common Household Poisons

The following are a list of common toxins you may have around your house. It is important that your puppy does not have access to these things, and if he does, is brought to a veterinary clinic right away.

Some foods including chocolate, grapes, raisins, currents, onions, garlic, chives,
macadamia nuts

Xylitol (found in chewing gum and other artificially sweetened foods)

Pain relievers (such as Tylenol and Advil) and other medications including: antidepressants, heart medications, antianxiety medications, muscle relaxants, ADHD medications, etc.

Caffeine

Alcohol

Antifreeze

Rat poisons

THC toxicity is becoming more prevalent for our pets. Sometimes our pets inadvertently gain access to products containing THC. Some dogs end also end up consuming human feces that contains THC and it will affect your dog.

Some symptoms of THC consumption in your puppy include ataxia (unsteadiness), and dribbling urine. These signs can mimic other conditions, so please seek veterinary attention if your dog is demonstrating these symptoms.

The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center (APCC) is your best resource for any animal poison-related emergency, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. If you think your pet may have ingested a potentially poisonous substance, call (888) 426-4435. A consultation fee may apply.

ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center Phone Number: (888) 426-4435

Puppy Nutrition

Feeding your puppy the appropriate amount, of a complete and balanced diet, formulated specifically for puppies is vital to its overall health and well-being.

Quality puppy food has advantages over adult dog food because it has been specially formulated for a puppy's demanding nutritional requirements and contains the appropriate amount of calcium, protein, vitamins, and minerals. Better nutrition provides an overall boost in the immune system and improved health over the long term!

If your dog is considered a large- or giant-breed, meaning one that is going to weigh more than 50 pounds (23 kg) as an adult, It is often recommended to choose a large breed puppy formula. These diets formulated for large breeds are formulated uniquely to large breeds to contain the optimal ratio of proteins and calcium, which allows to moderate, and prevent rapid growth, which can lead to the early development of joint disorders.

At BVH we recommend PVD Essential Care Puppy food for most puppies, which comes in both Regular and Large Breed formulas.

How much, How Often, and for How long?

Every puppy kibble will have slightly different recommendations based on the particular food and calorie content. Following feeding charts on that specific food or Asking your veterinary team to help you figure out how much your puppy should be feeding will help ensure they are getting the correct amount.

Free-choice feeding should be avoided as it increases the risks for food bloat, becoming overweight, and (in large breed puppies) skeletal abnormalities. Scheduled feedings help track and manage daily food intake. Studies show that scheduled feeding can significantly lower the chance of obesity which resulted in an increase in lifestyle and longevity.

Is best to avoid feeding immediately after or before exercising your pet to help reduce the risk of bloat, especially in breeds at higher risk. Waiting to feed an hour before and 2 hours after intense exercise can help prevent bloat

Eight to twelve weeks old: Four meals times/day

Three to six months old: Three meals/day

Six months and up: Two meals /day(exception of large/giant breeds)

Transitioning Foods

When transitioning food brands a gradual transition over 7-14 days is recommended to avoid any gastrointestinal upset. With a sensitive stomach, the length of transition may take longer.

Transition period	New food	Old food
Day 1-2	¼ total amount	¾ total amount
Day 3-4	½ total amount	½ total amount
Day 5-7	¾ total amount	¼ total amount

Day 8	100%	0
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Food Storage & Safety

Storing kibble in cool, dry places in airtight glass or plastic containers helps keep the food as fresh as possible by preventing the fats in the kibble from spoiling, or the kibble from absorbing moisture which can lead to mold growth that can make your pet ill.

Freezing remaining foods that will last longer than 30 days will help keep food fresh. It's recommended to wash the food containers between each bag of food and replace containers as needed to prevent bacterial growth.

Never feed cooked or smoked bones. Dry and brittle bones are more likely to break into sharp fragments that increase the risk for gastrointestinal perforation, blockage, or other digestive upset. Avoid feeding anything that is too dense, as it can potentially lead to serious and painful tooth fractures.

Raw diet and Home-prepared diet safety

If choosing to feed your pet a raw or home-prepared cooked diet, there are a few safety precautions to be aware of and consider.

Feeding uncooked meat requires strict food safety, storage, and handling. Feeding raw meat increases the risk for pathogenic bacterial contamination, which can lead to more serious health concerns for both pets and owners.

Feeding raw bones can potentially lead to choking or tooth fracture. Weight-bearing bones significantly increase the risk of tooth fracture. If you choose to feed bones, please use caution and always closely supervise your pet.

Look for an NRC or AAFCO nutritional statement on the package if buying commercial dog food, not all foods are formulated the same. These statements ensure that at least all your puppy's minimum nutritional requirements are being met or exceeded. Ratio diets, such as BARF, PMR, and Franklin prey do not guarantee nutritional needs are being met. If you are considering feeding these diets, consider having a recipe formulated by a professional. Cooked, home-prepared, or DIY diets should also be formulated by a professional to ensure adequate nutrients are being met in the diets. The following nutrients: Vitamin D, Vitamin E, Zinc, Magnesium, Manganese, Ideal Fatty Acid ratios such as EPA and DHA are commonly lacking or completely missing in many raw and home-prepared diets.

Grooming

Grooming Needs

Regardless of if your dog has long fur or short fur (or no fur), they will have some grooming needs throughout their lives. Start getting your puppy used to these procedures early on will make a world of difference as your dog grows up. Introducing nail trims, brushing, and bathing before they are actually needed allows you to train your puppy to accept these in a positive fashion (you don't need to do it all in one session)

If you will be using a groomer for your dog, now is the time to book a first meet and greet and puppy groom. It may only be a quick bath and nail trim at this point, but it will allow your puppy to start to learn about the procedure. Your groomer will be able to help you start maintenance grooming procedures to prevent matting which will keep future grooms less stressful.

Nail Care – All animals need proper nail care, and starting this when your dog is a young puppy can make it much easier when they become an adult. Nail care should be done regularly. Even if there is no length to be taken off, examining the feet and nails on a regular basis enables you to watch for any changes. When they become too long, they can be very uncomfortable for your dog when they walk, and can cause structure changes in the feet and gait abnormalities.

Most people choose to clip their dog's nails using purposely made nail clippers. When clipping your puppy's nails, ensure that you do not cut them too short. Ask us to show you an appropriate length to cut your pet's nails. You do not need trim your puppy's nails all in one setting. Get into a routine and clip one or 2 nails a day. Be sure to reward your dog after trimming their nails.

Cutting the quick of your puppy's nails can hurt and can cause the nail to bleed. While we know that everyone takes the best precautions to avoid this, we know that accidents can happen. Don't panic if you do cause the nail to bleed. Keep some commercial clotting powder on hand such as Kwik Stop and use this to stop a bleeding nail quickly.



Some owners (and dogs) prefer to grind their dog's nails down with a Dremel instead. Be mindful not of fur (and human hair) getting caught in the tool. Also be careful not to spend too much time on a nail at a time (a matter of seconds) so that your dog does not get burned by the tool. You can ask your veterinary or training team on how to introduce to your dog to the Dremel.



You can also train your dog to file their own nails using a specially made scratching pad. Ask your veterinary team and/or trainer on how to teach your dog to do this.

Ears – All dogs will have their ears examined throughout their lives and many dog's will need their ears to be cleaned. Ears can be an extra sensitive area for your dog throughout their lives. It is important to get your puppy used to you examining their ears and the ear cleaning procedure. You can start by handling and looking at your puppy's ears and rewarding with treats. Get your puppy used to having a cotton ball gently wipe the inside of their ear, as well as the smell and feel of an ear cleaner. We can recommend an appropriate ear cleaning solution for your puppy, and show you how to clean your puppy's ears. Please do not put anything in your puppy's ears that have not been approved for use in animals.

Teeth – Caring for your dog's teeth starts in puppyhood. Start by getting your puppy used to you looking at and in their mouth. Every time you look, make sure that you reward your pup with a treat or playtime with a toy. You can start introducing your pet to brushing by gently using some pet approved tooth paste on a piece of gauze wrapped around your finger. Start by gently wiping on your puppy's teeth. You can also use veterinary approved dental wipes instead. Once your dog is accepting of the teeth being wiped, you can start introducing a tooth brush. There are a few options of tooth

brushes designed specifically for your pet. If your dog does not readily accept one tooth brush, they may accept another one. Keep your sessions short and positive.

TEACHING YOUR PET TO LOVE BEING HANDLED FOR VET VISITS AND GROOMING

When your pet does not like to be handled it can be very challenging. Giving medications, doing nail trims and teeth brushing can turn into a battle. It is also important to be aware this can progress into bigger stressors for your pet. A surprise tail pull, paw grab, or well-meaning hug from a child could potentially make your pet uncomfortable enough to bite.

Teaching your pet to enjoy being handled can be accomplished through positive training experiences.

Most puppies do not usually have a negative emotional response to having a veterinary exam but introducing touch gradually in a manner that does not produce stress is important preventatively.

For veterinary exam exercises we want touch to predict tasty treats, and over time the touch alone will produce a positive emotional response in your pet.

Guidelines for teaching your puppy to accept handling:

DO: Go slow, the point of these training sessions is to teach your puppy that veterinary handling can be a fun and predictable game.

DO: Timing is everything. Ensure you touch your pet in the area you are working on FIRST and then give the treat.

DON'T: Never start with the part of their body that makes them uncomfortable. Start with the part of their body that is likely to cause the least amount of stress, such as petting their back. Then work up to more potentially stressful body parts such as paws.

DON'T: If your puppy is displaying any signs of stress STOP. Go back to a body part that they are comfortable with and end the session on a positive note. For future session consider breaking the steps down more for the concerning body part(s).

Training Session Example

1. Lift lip to look at teeth (right side) then give a treat.
2. Lift lip to look at teeth (left side) then give a treat.
3. Lift right ear and look at ear flap then give a treat.

4. Lift left ear and look at ear flap then give a treat.

Training sessions can be 2-5 min/daily. You do not need to go through a whole mock exam in one session. Take your time and go at your puppy's pace.

Having trouble? Ask your veterinary behavior team for more resources on the training and behavior of your pet.

Behaviour and Training

House training

When your puppy first arrives home, he will not know how to tell you that he has to go outside to do his use the washroom. Therefore, it is important to create a regular schedule to take your puppy outside, on leash until he defecates and/or urinates. If he does not go, return him to a crate or closely supervised area. He/she should not have access to free play time until he has emptied himself. Important times to take him/her out is after waking up, after a play session, after eating, and before bed. When he does go, give him lots of praise so he/she learns that going outside is a good thing. Never get mad at your puppy for using the bathroom inside the house; this can cause your puppy to become afraid of going in front of you.

Crate training

Confining your puppy to a small area while you are unable to supervise him or her will help prevent housetraining accidents and chewing on inappropriate objects. Alternatively, you could use baby gates to confine your puppy to a small, "puppy-proofed" area. Make sure to take them out to pee when they are first let out of the crate.

Puppy socialization

Proper socialization for your puppy is very important to help maintain appropriate behaviour throughout your puppy's life. This includes socialization with adults, children, new experiences, and other puppies.

Puppies learn a lot about play from each other, and learn when too much is too much. However, a puppy's fear period is from 6 – 12 weeks, which means if something negative happens to them at this point, they can hold onto that for a long time. Therefore, choosing appropriate times to socialize with appropriate play mates is important. Puppy socialization classes at your nearby dog training facility are perfect for this!

Obedience Training – All dogs will benefit from participating in an obedience class. Even if you have had a dog before, the added distraction of other dogs and people will help your puppy learn to respond to you around these distraction. The American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior recommends that only reward based training methods be used for dog training (<https://avsub.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/AVSAB-Humane-Dog-Training-Position->

[Statement-2021.pdf](#)). We are happy to provide recommendations of providers that follow these recommendations.

Playful Paws Inc. – 902.464.7297; 60 Thornhill Drive, Unit #1, Dartmouth

Fetch Inc. – 902.468.0207; 80 Joseph Zatzman Drive, Dartmouth

Jollytails (also a daycare, retail store) – 902.406.0998; 40 Joseph Zatzman Dr., Burnside

Sublime Canine –902.717.1344; 6300 Lady Hammond Road, Halifax

Doggy daycares and kennels – all of the previously listed trainers also offer doggy daycare; other daycare and boarding facilities include:

Happy Hounds Doggy Daycare – 902.429.1342; 3092 Barrington St., Halifax

Wyndenfog – 902.222.5134; wyndenfog@gmail.com

Personal training for specific problems – sometimes you and/or your dog may require some additional one on one training. We do have a technician on staff that is also a certified professional dog trainer that you are able to book a consultation with.

You can also reach out to the following trainers who will come to you to help you with your dog

The Mindful Canine – 902.478.3533; <https://mindfulcanine.ca/>

Sydney Bolak – atyourbark@gmail.com

Front N’Scenter Canine – 902.476.7934; info@frontnscenter.com

Microchipping

Microchipping = Permanent Identification

A microchip is a small implant (about the size of a grain of rice) that is placed under your puppy's skin, between the shoulder blades, by injection through a needle. It contains a tracking number that will be linked to your name and contact information. If your puppy gets lost without his collar and name tags on, the shelter, veterinary clinic, or animal control officer that finds him or her will be able to scan your puppy with a microchip reader and contact you. It is the quickest way to have your puppy returned safely to you!

At Burnside Veterinary Hospital, we use 24PetWatch as our microchip provider. You can find more information about them at www.24PetWatch.com or call them at 1-800-597-2424.

Pet Insurance

Pet Insurance

At Burnside Vet Hospital, we are partnered Trupanion pet insurance. Every puppy that has an appointment here can be signed up for a free trial of Trupanion insurance. This trial will last for 4 weeks, and Trupanion will automatically cancel you after this time period – no hassles! If you want to continue Tru[anion insurance, you will need to call them and set up a long term plan. There are many reasons pet insurance may be right for you!

When getting a new puppy, you know to budget for food, toys, leashes, puppy veterinary appointments, spaying or neutering, etc. However, your puppy could also cause you to incur some unexpected costs throughout his life, with both accidents or illnesses. Whether it be trauma causing a broken leg, swallowing a chew toy that requires foreign body surgery to remove, or having an illness such as parvovirus or kennel cough, these things can be hard to budget for. This is where pet insurance can help! Check out their website at trupanion.com/canada/ for more information, or call them at 1-855-210-8749.

