Puppy **Advice**

If you're thinking about, or have already welcomed a puppy into your family, here's some advice on how to help him or her settle in and look after their health.

VACCINATION

Our core vaccinations protect against Distemper, Parvovirus, Infectious Hepatitis and Leptospirosis, which are all life-threatening diseases.

Puppies need 2 vaccinations to ensure they have adequate immunity. We recommend your puppy receives his or her first vaccination at 8 weeks, and the second at 12 weeks. Vaccinating earlier than this can result in the vaccine not working properly, whilst leaving it until later interferes with socialisation. Your puppy will be fully covered for most of the diseases 1 week after the second vaccination. However, full immunity to Leptospirosis can take up to 3 weeks. Leptospirosis is usually caught from stagnant water or farmyards, so these are best avoided until your puppy is 15 weeks old.

We also recommend vaccinating against Kennel cough, which although not life threatening is common, unpleasant and highly contagious.

FLEAS & WORMS

Puppies are born with worms that have been passed down from their mothers. Worms can be very harmful to young puppies; hence we recommend worming your puppy monthly until they are 6 months old.

One flea can lay up to 2000 eggs, so regularly flea treating your puppy from first arrival is important.

We will recommend the appropriate flea and worm treatments that are tailor made for your pets individual lifestyle and risks - just speak to a member of our team.

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Oral products are preferable to spot-on as they are less likely to end up all over you and the carpet or be licked off and are better for the environment.

At 6 months old, we will invite you for a free adolescent health check, during which we will go through a parasite risk assessment with you to determine ongoing requirements.

PET HEALTH PLAN

Our Pet Health Plan is a monthly subscription providing all of your pet's preventative healthcare at a regular fixed cost. It includes all vaccinations, our recommended flea and worm treatments, which can be home delivered and unlimited free consultations with a vet or nurse. For more information and pricing, please visit our website or follow this link:
Newton Clarke | Pet Health Plans

FOOD

Puppies need a balanced, nutritious diet to support growth and bone development. We recommend feeding a pre-prepared, complete and high-quality food designed for puppies. Fresh water should always be available. Speak to one of our vets or nurses if you would like more advice.

HOUSE TRAINING

Getting your puppy clean in the house takes time and patience! Here's a link to some great advice on this subject.
* How To Toilet Train Your Puppy or Dog | RSPCA

We find that puppies that are crate trained are easier to house train. It also keeps them safe when you are not around and acclimates them to being in a limited space – very useful for visits to the kennels or vets in later life! Think of a crate like their bedroom – a safe space, rather than a cage.
* How to Crate Train Your Dog in Nine Easy Steps – American Kennel Club (akc.org)

Useful Links
www.newtonclarkevet.com/our-plans
www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/pets/dogs/training/toilettraining
www.akc.org/expert-advice/training/how-to-crate-train-your-dog-in-9-easy-steps

SOCIALISATION

Introducing your puppy to different situations, people, sounds and other animals is the key to ensuring you have a happy, confident and well-adjusted dog.

Until around 16 weeks, puppies are very accepting of new things and less likely to develop a fear response to them in later life, if they have a positive experience at this young age. Remember to be gently reassuring, calm but confident and use lots of treats or rewards.

Until your puppy is fully vaccinated, you will need to avoid pavements and parks, but you can still achieve a good deal of socialisation. Introduce them to lots of different people and children. Put on hats, back packs, umbrellas etc, go for trips in the car and take them to visit friends' houses where there are no dogs, or they are vaccinated. You can also carry your puppy places that are not yet safe for him or her to walk. The link below gives more excellent advice on socialisation, we cannot emphasise just how important this is to you and your dog's future happiness.
Socialising your puppy | Blue Cross

A good puppy training class will help with both socialisation and training.

NEUTERING

We like to allow dogs to mature fully before considering neutering, unless there are exceptional circumstances. This generally means over 12 months and at least one season for females. For giant breeds, we would advise waiting until they are over 18 months.

We can discuss neutering further at the 6-month adolescent health check, including whether laparoscopic (keyhole) neutering may be a good option for your pet.

MICROCHIPPING

It is a legal requirement for all dogs over the age of 8 weeks to be microchipped. Microchipping remains the most reliable way to reunite lost pets with their owners. This is done by painlessly inserting a small device (the same size as a grain of rice), below the skin which contains a unique code. This code can be read by a scanner and corresponds to a database containing the owner's details.

Useful Links
https://www.bluecross.org.uk/advice/dog/socialising-your-puppy

INSURANCE

We always want to provide the best possible treatment for your pet, especially during a stressful time when they may have unexpectedly become seriously unwell or injured. We recommend insurance not only for your peace of mind but so we don‘t need to compromise on treatment options and can provide the best available care when your pet needs it most.

Although we cannot recommend a particular insurance company, here are some things to look out for:

- Lifelong cover – without this, any condition your pet suffers will be excluded after 1 year
- Insurance limit – we suggest a minimum of £4000 per condition, per year
- Excesses and co-contributions may be required so please read the small print.
- Pet insurance policies vary enormously and cheaper polices may not provide the level of cover you require, potentially costing you more in the long run.

We will provide you with 4 weeks’ free insurance with Pet Plan when your puppy has his or her vaccinations.

ORAL HEALTH

It is a good idea to get your puppy comfortable with having his or her teeth cleaned, as this may reduce the chance of dental disease in the future which can not only be painful but costly to treat. If you would like a demonstration on how to clean your puppy’s teeth, please make an appointment with one of our nurses.

EXERCISE

Regular exercise and play are important for your puppy's physical and behavioural development. Despite popular belief, research shows that is not necessary, and can actually be harmful, to excessively restrict a puppy's exercise. We don’t advise that you immediately take your puppy out for hours of intense exercise but, within reason, let him or her get out in to the big wide world and enjoy themselves. The most important thing you can do to protect your puppy from arthritis and joint problems in later life is not let him or her become overweight.