

## Caring for your new dog or puppy

Congratulations on the addition of your new dog or puppy! Here's what you need to know to take good care of your pet.

### Supplies

- Premium quality dog food and treats for the right breed and size.
- Food and water bowls – ceramic and metal bowls clean up better.
- Safe toys – make sure there's no lead paint or breakable parts that could be swallowed or get stuck in your puppy's mouth.
- Dog brush and comb.
- Dog shampoo. Please do not use human shampoos – they are designed for a skin pH of 5.5 in humans and not a neutral pH of 7, as in the case of dogs.
- Pooper scooper and biodegradable poop bags.
- Collar with ID tag and leash.
- Nail clippers for dogs.
- Carrier or crate for transporting safely between home and veterinary hospital, parlour, training school, etc.
- Dog bed.
- Dog toothbrush and dog toothpaste.
- Outdoor dog house.
- Make sure you have shaded areas outdoors.

### Health

- When you receive your puppy on that first day, it is a good idea to take it to a veterinarian for a cursory physical examination. I personally recommend that we do not vaccinate on that first day as physiological stress is common and can create problems.
- Adult dogs should see a veterinarian at least once a year and when you suspect that there may be something wrong with your pet's health. If your dog seems to be acting strangely, call your veterinarian right away.
- Ask your veterinarian for a dog food recommendation of what you should be feeding given your dog's lifestyle and life stage
- Ask your veterinarian for a good quality deworming remedy.
- Ask your veterinarian to microchip your dog so that your dog has a better chance of returning home if it gets lost.
- Never give your dog medicine unless it's recommended by a veterinarian. Keep all poisons, like rat poison, away from your pet. If you think your pet has been poisoned, call your veterinarian.
- To prevent health problems like mammary growths, testicular cancer, prostate problems and uterine infections, females should be spayed and males should be neutered at approximately 6 months of age - dogs that are spayed/neutered tend to be more homeward bound and/or fight significantly less.

### What to feed your puppy or dog

- Adult dogs should eat premium-quality dry food. If you want, you can mix the dry food with water or nutritionally balanced canned food.
- Puppies need a high-quality puppy food. Toy breeds and small breeds are considered puppies up to the age of 12 months. Medium sized dogs are considered adults from 12-18 months of age. Large and giant breed dogs

are considered adults from 18 – 24 months. Consult with your veterinarian to decide when it will be most appropriate for you to migrate onto an adult diet.

- Avoid "people food" for all dogs and puppies
- Dogs and puppies need clean, fresh water available at all times

### **When to feed**

The following are general recommendations rather than hard and fast rules. Discuss these options with your veterinarian and decide which one is the best option for your dog at its particular life stage.

- Puppies 8 - 12 weeks old: 3 meals a day
- Puppies 3 - 6 months old: 2 meals a day
- Puppies 6 months - 1 year: 2 meals a day
- Dogs, 1 year or older: 2 meals a day
- Large dogs: may need 3 meals a day

### **Dangers! Never give your dog....**

- Anything harder than your pet's teeth. This includes cow bones, nylon bones and real bones. These can break a dog's teeth.
- House plants – an impressively long list of such plants contain toxic principles that can be life-threatening to your dog or have physical properties (spikes, microscopic crystals, etc.) that can harm your dog.
- T-shirts or knotted socks. If accidentally chewed apart and ingested, they can become entrapped "foreign bodies", causing your pet to become very ill and even die.
- Alcohol
- Chocolate
- Coffee
- Grapes and raisins
- Mouldy or spoiled food
- Onions, garlic or chives
- Poultry bones
- Salty foods or salt
- Tomato leaves or stems
- Unripe fruit
- Yeast dough
- Nuts

### **Exercise**

- Different dogs need different amounts of exercise. Some dogs need a lot. Some dogs get hurt if they exercise too much. Ask your veterinarian what's best for your pet.
- When walking your pet, be careful of broken glass, spilled chemicals, or hot pavements and tar surfaces.
- A trained dog is a happy dog! Contact your veterinarian to find a training class, which is a good way to exercise and socialize your dog, while also providing mental stimulation!