



*Furry Friends  
Refuge*

# **Puppy Care**

## **Guide for adopters**

**Animal Care Clinic West & Metro Cat Hospital**

2900 University Ave # F5  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515- 224-4368

**Animal Doctors Veterinary Clinic**

4800 Mills Civic parkway Suite #110  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515-309-9268

**Ashworth Road Animal Hospital**

5508 Ashworth Road  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515- 225-1807

**Broderick Animal Clinic**

10 4<sup>th</sup> Street  
Waukee, IA 50263  
515-987-1447

**Eberle Animal Hospital**

9920 Swanson Boulevard  
Clive, IA 50325  
515- 727-5757

**Fleming Animal Clinic**

1903 Ep True Pkwy # 307  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515- 221-9045

**Grand-Avenue Veterinary Hospital**

108 Grand Avenue  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515- 274-3489

**Jordan Creek Animal Hospital**

3401 Ep True Parkway  
West Des Moines, IA 50265  
515- 224-9500

**Northwest Veterinary Hospital, P.C.**

7507 Dennis Drive  
Urbandale, IA 50322  
515-276-4549

**Oaks Veterinary Clinic**

2030 27<sup>th</sup> Street Des Moines  
Des Moines, IA 50310  
515-279-3654

**Pet Medical Center of Urbandale**

4450 128<sup>th</sup> St  
Urbandale, IA 50323  
515-331-9035

**The Animal Health Care Center**

4450 NW 128<sup>th</sup> Street  
Urbandale, IA 50323  
515-278-1434

**University West**

8145 University Boulevard  
Clive, IA 50325  
515- 223-8185

**Urban Pet Hospital**

3601 104<sup>th</sup> Street  
Urbandale, IA 50322  
515- 727-0607

**Value Vet**

4654 Northwest 86<sup>th</sup> Street  
Urbandale, IA 50322  
515- 278-1011

**Waukee-Clive Veterinary Clinic**

15151 Hickman Rd  
Clive, IA 50325  
515- 987-4552

**Westfield Veterinary Clinic**

8789 Northwest 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Johnston, IA 50131  
515- 986-5738

**West Side Veterinary Clinic**

3035 Northwest 86<sup>th</sup> Street  
Urbandale, IA 50322  
515- 276-5972

**The Animal Hospital of Adel**

1126 Greene Street  
Adel, IA 50003  
515-993-3410

**Family Center      Pet      Veterinary West**

1215 Prospect Avenue  
West Des Moines  
(515) 224-9747

**Family Veterinary Center      Pet Center**

**Norwalk**  
1326 Sunset Drive  
Norwalk  
(515) 981-0317

## **The First day**

When adopting a new puppy you should choose a relatively quiet period to bring home your new little friend. During initial introductions, the puppy should not be allowed free access to the house, but should be confined to one room and allowed to explore that room. It is often helpful to first introduce the puppy to the room in which his/her crate is located or where he/she will be spending a large amount of his/her time each day (Please see crate training on page 7 for tips on crate training). After your puppy has explored and settled in, family members can begin to interact with the newcomer by speaking to him/her quietly, sitting on the floor next to him/her and petting him/her, or enticing him/her into a game with a toy. It is often best to introduce each person singly to avoid overwhelming the new puppy with several excited family members at a time. Finally, owners should make sure that the new puppy is provided with a quiet place to rest often during the first day. Travel and introductions to a new family are exciting, but are also stressful for a new puppy.

## **Establishing a regular daily schedule**

Because many owners have busy schedules and may be away from home during the work week, adjustments must be made to accommodate the new puppy's needs. One of the best ways to do this is to set aside a portion of time every day that is spent exclusively with the puppy. This time can be spent in a number of ways: exercising or playing, practicing obedience lessons, or just sitting quietly brushing or petting the puppy. This time may also be used to give the puppy exposure to new people and environments (see socialization below). In addition, a regular daily routine should be established. Behavior problems that are associated with boredom, frustration or separation stress are less likely to occur when the new puppy learns to anticipate a regular schedule of attention, exercise, play, and feeding. Ideally, feeding should take place at approximately the same time and in the same area. Exercise, training and play periods should occur at around the same time, even on weekends when your family's schedule may change somewhat. For puppies, the same door should always be used for going outdoors to eliminate (see housetraining on pg. 4 for more tips).

## Socializing your new puppy

Socialization is the first step in raising a well-behaved dog. During the first couple months of your dog's life, He/She goes through critical periods of development. When your dog is exposed to new people, places, and situations in a positive way during this period, there's a good chance that your dog will be calm and accepting when he/she experiences the same situations again later in life. Properly socialized dogs are less likely to develop behavior problems as they grow older. Dogs that don't get early socialization may react with fear or aggression when they are exposed to new things. It is much easier to teach your dog to accept new things as a puppy than it is to re-train your dog after bad habits develop.

Although the primary socialization period occurs early in life, continued socialization is also important throughout life to promote habitation and maintain social relationships. While 12 weeks in dogs is identified as the official "end" of primary socialization, the age of up to 4 to 6 months is generally accepted as a good period during which to socialize a new puppy. In fact, there is evidence suggesting that dogs benefit the most if socialization continued throughout the juvenile period. Socialization procedures should be viewed as an enjoyable activity for both your puppy, and for you.

All exposure needs to be introduced at your dog's pace, this will help ensure a positive experience, and avoid negative experiences. It is important not to overwhelm your dog by over-exposing him/her to new things. If you force or overwhelm your dog, you can cause him/her to make a negative association to the things in the environment, and can cause your dog to become more fearful and or aggressive.

Socialization should involve as many people and situations as possible. Introduce your dog to a wide variety of people, including men, women, and children of all ages, also introduce your dog to other dogs of all sizes, cats, and other everyday things that your dog will likely encounter throughout his/her life, like strange noises, household appliances, vacuums, bikes, cars. Virtually everything may be new to your dog, so don't be limited thinking that it's something he/she has likely seen before.

While you likely can't expose your dog to everything he/she may encounter in the future, you can make sure that your dog has positive exposure to a wide variety of novel experiences; this will result in a dog that easily adjusts to new things throughout his/her life. A well-socialized dog isn't frightened of something he/she may never have experienced previously. In other words, well-socialized dogs are more secure, confident and self-assured.

Handling exercises are another important part of socializing. Think of all the ways your dog may be handled in his/her lifetime - a child could pull his/her tail, a veterinarian might need to restrain your dog

for shots, you may need to hold your dogs feet to clip his/her nails. If you get your dog to be comfortable being handled in a gentle manner as a puppy, you will be less likely to have trouble handling your dog when he/she gets older.

## **Socializing your new puppy (*cont.*)**

When socializing puppies, be safe, there is a small possibility that your dog may be exposed to an illness; however the advantages of socialization far outweigh the minimal risk of illness. Ultimately, the decision is yours on where you take your dog when socializing.

### **Important reminders for Socialization.**

- **Have fun!** Your positive attitude toward new things is important for your dog.
- Use common sense and be careful that all experiences are positive. Avoid situations, people and environments that you think might result in a less-than-happy experience for your dog.
- **GO SLOW.** Respect your dog's feelings. Don't push or force your dog if he/she's at all reluctant. Try laughing and interacting with the new object yourself, but ultimately err on the side of caution if your dog thinks something is just too scary right now.

## **House-Training**

Housetraining takes time and commitment for the entire family to be successful. It may take several weeks to several months for your dog to become reliably housetrained. If you're consistent and patient, you can successfully housetrain your dog with minimum stress. A successful housetraining strategy combines control of the puppy's environment to prevent elimination in the house and ample opportunity for urinating and defecating outdoors. Providing many and frequent trips outside early in the housetraining process is essential for establishing a strong and positive association with elimination outdoors in a pre-selected location and on an appropriate surface (usually grass). Training should emphasize positive reinforcement of elimination outdoors and should not focus on punishment for mistakes made indoors.

If a puppy is well-supervised and taken outside frequently to eliminate, accidents in the house should be rare. If elimination occurs in the house, the puppy should *not* be punished or reprimanded. The use of physical or harsh verbal punishment during house-training can cause fear and avoidance, and can result in a puppy who avoids being in the presence of his/her owner when eliminating. Punishing dogs for accidents causes him/her to associate the punishment with his/her owner and possibly with that

location in the house, but does not necessarily affect future elimination habits. In fact, a history of punishment for in-home elimination is often the cause of house-soiling problems in which the dog eliminates out of sight of the owner, in another room of the home. If you observe the puppy eliminating in the house, the puppy should be calmly interrupted (not reprimanded) and carried or taken on a leash outside to finish, calmly praise your dog for going in the proper place outside. The spot of the accident inside the home should be cleaned thoroughly with cleaner designed for pet waste to reduce olfactory attractiveness of the spot, and you should intensify supervision of the puppy and house-training techniques.

## House-Training (*cont.*)

Young dogs should not be allowed unsupervised freedom in the house until they are completely reliable in terms of house-training. Whenever the puppy cannot be supervised, he/she should be confined to a crate or to a small “dog-proofed” area. As your puppy begins to demonstrate learning by eliminating promptly when taken outdoors, having no accidents indoors, and occasionally approaching the door to indicate a need to go outside, you can gradually increase the amount of freedom that your puppy is allowed free in the house. As puppies mature, owners can begin to rely more on the dog’s signals and his/her elimination schedule to dictate the dog’s elimination schedule. In general, all dogs, regardless of age, should be provided with an opportunity to go outdoors to eliminate every few hours during the day. If your dog is having accidents in your house, and he/she is reliably house-trained, you should take him/her to your vet for a check-up.

### Steps for successful house-training-

- Supervision, supervision, supervision: Unsupervised dogs explore and, while they are exploring, they eliminate. Accidents can be prevented with this simple rule: The puppy is never alone or unsupervised (never!). A crate can be used to safely confine your puppy when he/she cannot be supervised (read crate-training on page. 7). As your puppy matures and becomes more reliable, their freedom can be gradually increased.
- Frequent outings: One of the most common mistakes that new owners make with younger dogs is to wait too long between trips outdoors. Puppy bladders are very small and young dogs have a limited ability to control their elimination habits.
- Same door, same area: Your puppy should be taken to the same outdoor area where elimination is desirable and the owner should always accompany the puppy outdoors (always!).
- Positively reinforce desired behavior: Owners should accompany the puppy outside. Being present enables the owner to immediately reinforce elimination. This should be in the form of quiet praise or petting- exuberant praise should be avoided as it may interrupt or distract young dogs.

- Establish a regular feeding and exercise schedule: Puppies should be fed 2-3 times a day, at approximately the same times, and walked and played with on a regular schedule. This promotes regular elimination habits that aid with house-training.
- Avoid unrealistic expectations: Puppies younger than 12-14 weeks have limited control over elimination and *must* be taken outside frequently. Unfortunately, some owners have been led to believe that an eight-week old puppy can be fully house-trained. This is simply not true. More realistically, most puppies begin to become reliable when they are about 5-6 months of age.

## House-Training (*cont.*)

### Recommended house-training schedule for new puppies-

Young puppies learn most rapidly if they have frequent opportunities to eliminate in the correct place (outdoors) and if they are prevented from making mistakes indoors. The best way to prevent accidents in your home is to take puppies outside regularly and often. For puppies between 7 and 12 weeks of age, this means every 20 to 30 minutes during periods when the puppy is active and playing. This schedule can be gradually extended as the puppy matures. Puppies should also go outside to eliminate at these times:

- In the morning immediately after waking
- After napping during the day-No matter how short the nap was!
- Following each meal and after long drinks of water
- After playing or training sessions (and periodically during extended play sessions)
- Immediately before going to bed in the evening
- Puppies less than 12 to 14 weeks of age: Once or twice during the night (small bladders are not yet able to last the entire night)

Final note: Young puppies should not be expected to indicate their needs to go outside to owners. This is true for both puppies and for newly adopted adults who have never been house-trained. The time span between when the puppy feels the need to eliminate and when he/she must eliminate may be very short. Adult dogs that have not been adequately house-trained also need to gradually learn to wait to eliminate.

## Crate-Training

Crate training can be one of the best things you can do for your dog. A crate can provide a place of security for your dog, and where your dog can relax when he/she is tired or anxious. There may be times throughout your dog's life when they will need to be confined, dog's that are accustomed to being in a crate, will feel more relaxed and at ease. Crate training can also be very helpful when working on housetraining with your dog. When choosing a crate, you want to make sure that it's large enough for your dog to be able to stand up and turn around comfortably, if the crate is too big, your dog will be able to get away from their mess, and won't be inclined to hold it.

To introduce your dog to a crate, you can start by feeding your dog his/her meals in the crate, leaving the door open. Start by putting the bowl inside the crate near the entrance, and then gradually move it farther into the crate over several days when your dog seems comfortable. Throughout the day you can toss toys and treats into the crate, this will encourage your dog to go into the crate, and will help your dog associate the crate with good things.

Once your dog is comfortable going in and spending time in the crate with the door open, start closing the door for a couple seconds, then open the door. Reward your dog with treats and praise while the door is closed and your dog is calm. Continue building the time that your dog spends in their crate. If your dog paws at the door and whines to get out, ignore, and wait for your dog to settle before letting him/her out. (Letting your dog out of the crate when he/she is whining, pawing will teach your dog that carrying on works when he/she wants their way, and will inhibit your dog from becoming comfortable in the crate). If your dog is comfortable with the crate, he/she shouldn't hesitate to enter it and enjoy their toys, treats with the door closed.

Always keep a fun toy or two in the crate to keep your dog occupied. You can provide both a hard chew toy, and a soft toy, so your dog will always have a toy to fit their mood. **Any toy you leave in your dog's crate should be sturdy and safe.**

Although the crate is a valuable and safe tool, it's very important to not over use it.

### **Important reminders for crate training:**

- Never put your dog into the crate as punishment. You want the dog to think of it in a happy way.
- Pair the crate with good things, like toys and treats.
- Try to put the crate in a quiet, but well-trafficked area in the house.
- If your dog is tired out, he/she will accept the crate more willingly. That means exercise!
- Make sure that your dog has gone potty shortly before being crated.

## **Preventing Nipping in puppies**

Gentle mouthing and nipping is normal play behavior for dogs. Puppies demonstrate these behaviors when they play with other puppies and when playing with human companions. Dogs also naturally investigate new articles with their mouths. This is normal exploratory behavior and is also a component of “teething” when the puppy’s permanent teeth begin to erupt after four months of age. Owners must teach puppies to inhibit the intensity of their nipping during play and to completely stop nipping and mouthing when asked to do so. Contrary to popular belief, puppies will not learn this on their own, nor will they “outgrow” nipping. A puppy who is not taught to inhibit his/her play biting while young can develop into an adult dog who uses his/her mouth much too roughly while he/she is playing. In some cases, this can even lead to using his/her mouth aggressively. Conversely, teaching puppies to play gently without nipping leads to adults who play with humans and other dogs safely and gently. The two most effective training techniques for teaching gentle play are *redirection* and *removal of attention* when nipping starts. All play sessions with puppies should include a pre-selected toy. The toy is brought out at the start of every session. During play, all nipping and mouthing is redirected to the toy and away from hands or clothing. After several play experiences with the owner and the toy, the puppy will begin to associate the “special toy” with play and focus his/her nipping, mouthing and tugging to the toy, not to hands or clothing. The removal of attention (negative punishment) can complement redirection for puppies who persist in nipping at hands. In this case, nipping is negatively punished when the owner abruptly stops all play and attention whenever the puppy begins to play too roughly or use his/her mouth inappropriately. The owner reacts quickly, saying “ouch” or another high pitched sound (don’t scare the dog) and immediately stops play. Play only begins again when the puppy is calm.

As puppies mature, they can be taught alternate commands to use for redirection and to calm puppies who become too excited during play. The most appropriate are sit, down, and to come when called. These exercises should be used sporadically into all play sessions, as they provide a positive way to moderate the puppy’s energy and arousal levels, and provide an opportunity to positively reinforce relaxed-calm behaviors. Although these exercises are helpful in redirecting nipping behavior, you should

avoid using a sit, down, or stay only in response to nipping and avoid unwanted negative associations with these commands.

Try to avoid getting your puppy overly excited during playtime, and avoid using your hands during play. Reward your dog every time you pet or play with your dog and he/she does not mouth you. Also make sure your dog is getting appropriate amount of exercise.

## **Teaching puppies to chew appropriate items**

A primary underlying cause for chewing in young puppies is normal exploratory behavior. Puppies learn about their environment by smelling, touching, manipulating, and sometimes chewing on novel items. Chewing behavior in puppies is not classified as problem behavior, but rather a normal behavior that must be directed to appropriate items. Management of the puppy's home environment is the most effective approach for preventing undesirable chewing and for teaching puppies which items are their own and are safe for chewing. An important rule is to keep all items that may attract the puppy secured and out of sight. The puppy must be supervised during all free time in the home, both to prevent inappropriate chewing and to monitor house-training. Owners must provide a variety of appropriate chew toys for the puppy and have these available whenever the puppy is awake and active. Appropriate chew toys are hard enough to not be destroyed or torn apart quickly and are composed of a material that is known to be safe if swallowed. Because dogs enjoy novelty in their toys, owners should select a variety of types of chew toys and rotate them frequently. Observe your dog's chewing habits and offer a similar, but acceptable substitute. If your dog likes to chew on hard surfaces, like table legs, give your dog something hard to chew on, such as appropriate hard toys like kongs. If your dog likes to chew on soft stuff, like pillows, fabric etc. try a softer appropriate toy. Or offer your dog a variety of soft and hard toys and let your dog choose which one he/she wants.

If the puppy does pick up something that is not his/hers, the owner should simply remove it from his/her mouth and redirect him/her to one of their own toys, praising the puppy when he/she chews on appropriate items. Similar to house-training, using a harsh reprimand when the puppy is chewing on something undesirable can teach the puppy to chew out of sight of the owner or to run away whenever in possession of a novel item. Owners often mistakenly interpret this behavior as signifying that the puppy "Knows he/she is wrong" . However, avoidance behaviors such as theses simply signify that the dog has learned though experience with punishment to avoid chewing in the presence of the owner or, in more extreme cases, to run away from the owner when in possession of a novel object. Remember to always reward your dog for making the proper chewing choices.

Finally, in addition to managing the puppy's environment and providing plenty of varied and interesting chew toys, owners can teach their puppy the two invaluable commands of "leave it" and "give or drop it."

### **A special note about bones-**

The idea that it's natural for dogs to chew on bones is a popular one. However, bones can be dangerous and can cause serious injury to your dog. Like broken teeth, mouth or tongue injuries, choking, intestinal blockage, infections, and in the worst case death.

Talk with your veterinarian about chewing alternatives for your dog. There are many bone-like products made with materials that are safe for dogs to chew on. However the decision is yours on what you give your dog to chew on. You should always supervise your dog with any chew product.

## **Introducing your new dog to other pets**

**Dogs and cats:** Whether you already have a dog and are considering getting a cat, or vice versa, it is very important to think about their first introduction. If you let a loose cat and an off-leash dog meet each other in an open room for the first time, you are probably setting up both animals to fail. Plan ahead and take your time!

Do not introduce the animals right away. Put your cat away in another room, Let your dog explore the room where the cat has been. Then put your dog away and let your cat explore the room where the dog has been, this will help them investigate the scent of each other. Across a few days, rotate which animal has freedom and which is confined to allow each animal plenty of time to investigate the other one's scent. Continue with this type of introduction until the dog is calm (or at least not obsessed with the cats scent), and the cat is calm, eating and using the litter box normally. When the dog(s) and cat(s) are calm allow the animals (one at a time if you have multiple cats or dogs) to be in the same room at the same time, but keep the dog securely leashed. Again continue with this type of introduction until the dog is calm and ignores the cat, and the cat is calm, eating and using the litter box normally. Continue until both the dog and cat seem happy and relaxed around each other.

When no one is home, the dog or cat must be securely confined so unsupervised interactions are not possible. Unsupervised time together can occur after the cat and dog have been supervised around each other for a significant period of time (a month or so) and you are positive they will not hurt each other. Kittens and dogs should **NEVER** be left alone together. Even if your dog is okay with your Adult cat, he/she may become too rough with a kitten and hurt him/her. So, for safety's sake, keep small kittens and dogs apart any time you are not watching them. Realize that introductions may take weeks, or even months. If there is any sign that it is not going well, simply go back a couple steps and go more slowly. Always make sure your cat has an escape route when around the dog.

**Dogs and Small animals:** Very few dogs can appreciate the company of a small furry pet, bird, reptile etc. Most dogs can't be around small animals without thinking of a quick game of chase or a quick snack. Good management is essential when living with both types of animals. Dogs are predatory animals and other small animals (like rabbits) are prey animals. It's a dog's natural instinct to pounce on

and chase small furry moving objects. While we enjoy the companionship of both types of animals, nature will usually have its way.

Dogs should **NEVER** be left with any small animal(s).

Birds and small animals should have secure cages that are dog-proof and be kept out of reach from your dog. If possible keep them in a separate room and close the door behind you.

If you are not confident or comfortable at any point, please seek the help from someone who is knowledgeable about dog and animal behavior.

## **Introducing your new dog to other dogs**

If you have a dog and a new one will be entering your home, there are things you can do to ensure that the meeting goes well. If you are uncertain how one (or both) of the dogs will react to another dog, be cautious. The dogs need to be introduced on neutral ground. Choose a location where neither dog is likely to feel territorial. If you are adopting a dog from a shelter, bring your resident dog with you to meet the new dog there. Wherever you choose to introduce the dogs, make sure all dogs are on a leash (this will help control the dogs should something happen). A separate person should handle each dog. If you have more than one resident dog, it may help to introduce them one at a time to the new dog. When the meeting occurs be calm and relaxed, if possible keep the leash loose (since pulling on and keeping the leash tight might communicate to the dog that you are fearful or anxious about their meeting). As the dogs approach each other, watch their body language closely, if you don't know how to tell the difference between dogs that are getting to know each other, and dogs who don't like each other, try to have someone there that does. If that is not possible here are some tips on what to watch for, and what to do. One body position that indicates things are going well is a "play bow". This is when a dog will crouch with his/her front legs on the ground and his/her rear end in the air. This is an invitation to play that may or may not elicit friendly behavior from the other dog. Allow them to sniff each other, and give praise for a nice greeting. If all is going well take them for a walk together, stopping occasionally to allow them to sniff and investigate each other. Watch carefully for body postures that indicate an aggressive response. If they stiffen their bodies, have prolonged stares, have hair standing up on their back, teeth-baring, deep growls or they try to lunge at each other and try to fight, they probably aren't going to be best friends, for the safety of people and the dogs, don't try any further introductions without the help from someone experienced with dog training and behavior.

If the dogs seem fine together you can take them home, make sure you have put away your resident dog(s) toys, bones, food etc, since they may be a source of conflict. If you're going to offer the resident dog, and the new dog, food, toys, bones etc., it may be best to separate them. Once your dogs are good friends, they may be more willing to "share" or at least be close to each other when having these items.

Until you're confident that the dogs will get along, they should never be left alone together. **Introducing puppies to adult dogs:** To introduce a puppy to a dog, use the same procedures as above. Puppies depending on their age and background may not recognize body language from an older dog, for this reason if a puppy is under 4 months, both the dog and the puppy may need frequent breaks from each other. Some adult dogs will quickly lose patience with a puppy's energy. For this reason, a puppy shouldn't be left alone with an adult dog until you're confident the puppy isn't in any danger. It may be hard with a new puppy, but make sure that your adult dog gets some "quiet" time away from the puppy. Also make sure your adult dog is getting some fun individual attention with you as well.

## Dogs and kids

Children can have the most amazing relationships with dogs if both are taught how to properly interact and respect each other. Proper training and management of both children and dogs can prevent bad things from ever happening. Remember not all dogs are good with kids, and vice versa. Every dog is different, so if possible before adopting a dog bring your children to see how they and how the dog interact with each other.

**Before adopting a dog:** If you have children, their maturity and lifestyle may be important on deciding what type of dog you want to bring home. Some dogs aren't good with young children, and some children are just too young to take on a responsibility for another life. If children aren't emotionally and mentally prepared for a dog, they can't be counted on to take care of a dog's needs, and all the care giving will fall on one or both of the parents. All family members both young and old need to be on board with the decision to adopt a dog and understand their part in caring for a new dog. Discuss the adoption with your children so that everyone knows what's expected of them before the adoption process begins.

**After adopting a dog:** Make sure your children understand how to appropriately interact with your new dog. Teasing, rough physical interaction, pulling ears, tail etc. are unacceptable behaviors. Some people hold the belief that it's not up to the children to learn acceptable behavior. If they are rough, the dog should have to "take it". This is completely unrealistic, and a very dangerous thinking. Yes, there are some dogs that kids can walk all over, however not all dogs will be so tolerant. Some dogs may be frightened by rough exuberant child behaviors. If the dogs tries to escape and can't, then she/he could snap or bite. Your new dog needs to learn how to appropriately interact with children also. Dogs need to be taught how to play safely around children. The dog must learn bite inhibition, learn to not chase running children (this can be very tempting for some dogs, especially herding breeds); the dog also needs to learn to leave the children's things alone. Dogs don't know the difference between their toys

and the children's toys unless they are taught. It will be up to you to teach your dog what is and what isn't an appropriate toy for him/her to chew on. Children also need to learn to leave the dog's things alone. Children should not try to take toys or food from the dog. They shouldn't use the dog's crate as a "fort" (the crate should be solely reserved as the dog's "safe" zone). Just as the dog should respect the children's things, your children should respect the dog's things.

Children can take part in helping care for your new dog, with realistic responsibilities based on their age and maturity level. Let your children participate in training, then everyone can learn how to communicate with the dog, and your dog will learn how to act around everyone as well.

Always keep an eye on your dog whenever he/she is around children. Young children should **NEVER** be left unattended with any dog of any size or age.

## Health and wellness for your new Puppy

### Vaccination Schedule

How many vaccine boosters your puppy will need depends on how old your puppy is when you adopt him/her. Puppies need many booster shots because young puppies begin to lose their maternal immunity (from their mom), but as they are growing their adult immunity hasn't kicked in yet. It is important they receive vaccines to be protected from the diseases that are most likely to make them sick.

This is a recommended puppy vaccine schedule and may be altered. Your veterinarian will help determine what vaccines are necessary to fit your puppy's specific needs.

<b>Recommended Puppy Schedule</b>
<b>6-8 Weeks</b> Distemper Combo Vaccine Fecal Exam Deworming
<b>8-11 weeks</b> Distemper Combo Booster Bordetella Vaccine Lyme Vaccine +/- Fecal Exam Deworming
<b>12-15 weeks</b> Distemper Combo Booster Bordetella Booster Leptospirosis Vaccine

<p><b>+/- Fecal Exam</b> <b>+/- Deworming</b></p>
<p><b>16 weeks</b> <b>Distemper Combo Booster</b> <b>Leptospirosis Booster</b> <b>Rabies Vaccine</b> <b>+/- Fecal Exam</b> <b>+/- Deworming</b></p>
<p><b>10 months</b> <b>Heartworm Test</b></p>

**Distemper Combo Vaccine** (distemper, adenovirus-2, parvovirus, and parainfluenza)

This vaccine prevents against four viral diseases. Distemper virus is a viral infection that affects the nervous system, digestive system, and respiratory system. Distemper virus is very serious, with a fatality rate of almost 50% in untreated dogs. Adenovirus Type 1 is a virus that affects the liver and kidneys, while Adenovirus Type 2 affects the respiratory system. Parvovirus is a virus that is highly contagious among dogs. It attacks the digestive and immune systems causing diarrhea and vomiting. Parvovirus is also very serious, with a fatality rate approaching 90% if left untreated. Parainfluenza virus causes a respiratory disease in dogs. This vaccine is administered initially and must be boosted at least once. Depending on when your puppy began this series a total of 3-4 vaccines may be administered. The Distemper Combo vaccine is typically an annual or tri-annual vaccine.

**Bordetella Vaccine**

This vaccine prevents against the condition commonly referred to as Kennel Cough. Kennel Cough is also known as Canine Infectious Tracheobronchitis. Bordetella bronchiseptica is a bacterial disease that infects the respiratory system and causes a hacking cough. Bordetella is highly contagious and easily transmitted through direct contact or the air. This vaccine is recommended for dogs that are at high risk for exposure, such as shelters, grooming facilities, dog parks, or boarding facilities. This vaccine is initially administered then boosted 3-4 weeks later, although occasionally some dogs are given just one vaccine. Bordetella is an annual vaccine.

**Rabies Vaccine**

Rabies vaccination is usually required by law. Rabies is a viral infection that affects the nervous system and causes death if contracted. The initial Rabies vaccine is a 1 year vaccine that is given at 12-16 weeks of age. Typically a 3-year vaccine can be administered after the initial 1 year vaccine.

**Leptospirosis Vaccine**

Leptospirosis is a bacterium that infects the kidneys and liver and can cause potentially fatal kidney and/or liver disease if left untreated. Leptospirosis is transmitted through the urine of wild animals. Dogs can become infected from sniffing your own backyard. The bacteria is shed in urine, then once a dog sniffs the area the bacteria can be transmitted to the dog through the nasal mucosal membranes

and spread to the liver or kidneys. Leptospirosis can also be transmitted to humans, causing human illness. It is important to vaccinate your dog for this as it can potentially be a public health concern. This vaccine is typically administered any time after 12 weeks of age and then boosted 3-4 weeks later. It is an annual vaccine.

### **Additional Vaccines to consider**

#### **Lyme Vaccine**

Lyme disease is caused by a bacteria (*Borrelia Burgdorferi*) transmitted by ticks. Lyme causes joint disease (arthritis) and kidney disease. This vaccine is recommended for dogs that have a high risk of being exposed to ticks, such as during camping, hiking, or hunting activities. This vaccine is initially administered any time after 9 weeks of age, boosted 3 weeks later, and then given annually.

#### **Influenza Vaccine**

Influenza is a newer disease affecting dogs. This causes flu-like symptoms in dogs that are usually mild, but can progress to life-threatening pneumonia, especially in sick or debilitated animals. It is transmitted by direct contact with infected dogs or respiratory secretions (such as coughing or sneezing). It is spread rapidly in facilities, such as boarding facilities, day care facilities, veterinary clinics, grooming facilities, or

dog parks. This vaccine is administered as an initial dose and followed by a booster 2-4 weeks later. Yearly re-vaccination is recommended.

### **Intestinal Parasites**

Intestinal parasites are extremely common in young puppies. The most common intestinal parasites are roundworms and hookworms. Virtually all puppies are infected with roundworms at birth or shortly after. Thus it is very important that routine deworming medication be administered to puppies. Other intestinal parasites include whipworms, tapeworms, coccidia, and giardia. Clinical signs depend on which parasite is present, but diarrhea is a common symptom. It is important to put your new puppy on a monthly preventative to prevent against the most common intestinal parasites (usually roundworms and hookworms) as parasites are prevalent in the environment (even in your own backyard!). Fecal examinations are important for detecting the less common parasites so that your veterinarian can appropriately treat your puppy.

### **Heartworm Disease**

Heartworm disease is a severe disease transmitted by mosquitoes. Heartworms affect the heart and lungs of dogs and can clog the vessels, causing a debilitating and potentially fatal disease. It is extremely important that your puppy be put on a monthly heartworm preventative at the age of 16 weeks. Heartworm preventative is usually in the form of a chewable or pill or included in a topical application. A heartworm test is a blood test performed by your veterinarian usually at 10 months to 1 year of age. Heartworm preventative must be administered monthly throughout your dog's life. It is very important to prevent this disease rather than try to treat it should your dog become infected. Heartworm

treatment is often very expensive and extremely hard on your dog (often requiring a month of cage rest and harsh medications). This disease is much easier to prevent than treat!

## **Fleas and Ticks**

It is important to prevent flea infestations as they are difficult to get rid of once your puppy has them! A monthly flea preventative can be administered usually as a topical application to prevent infestation. Fleas can cause anemia if there is a severe infestation. Additionally some animals are extremely allergic to even just one flea bite, often resulting in hair loss. Tapeworms are usually associated with flea infestations as well. It is important to treat fleas year-round as they can be found even in the cold winter months. Tick preventatives are often administered topically as well. Ticks can carry diseases, such as Lyme disease. It is important to use a preventative if your puppy has a high risk of tick exposure.

## **Common Signs of Illness in Your Puppy**

Although non-encompassing, these are some common signs of illness in puppies. It is important to contact your veterinarian promptly if you notice any of these clinical signs or if your puppy is not acting normally.

- 1) Vomiting - often a sign of gastrointestinal upset
- 2) Diarrhea - can be caused by parasites, viral, or bacterial gastrointestinal disease
- 3) Eating less or not interested in food - often an early sign that your puppy isn't feeling well
- 4) Coughing – caused by respiratory illness, such as Kennel Cough Syndrome
- 5) Sneezing – caused by respiratory illness
- 6) Eye discharge – caused by upper respiratory illness or can be caused by an injury
- 7) Scratching at ears – indicates an ear infection
- 8) Urinating more frequently – often a sign of a urinary tract infection

## **Grooming and Dental Hygiene**

It is important to get your puppy used to routine grooming activities, such as bathing and brushing, nail trims, ear cleaning, and dental care. Puppies (and dogs in general) do not need to be bathed frequently (in general not more than every 4-6 weeks). In fact, over-bathing your dog will lead to dry skin and itchiness. It is important, however, to get your puppies used to bathing at a young age as an occasional bath will likely be necessary. It is important to use appropriate shampoos for bathing and to rinse thoroughly. Brushing is important for your dog, especially if you have a long-hair breed. Dog hair can become matted if not frequently brushed out leading to skin irritation and infection. It is important to

get your puppy used to routine brushing. Make the brushing sessions fun with lots of treats and praise initially to get your puppy used to grooming activities.

Nail trimming is a necessity throughout your dog's life, as long nails are uncomfortable for your dog. How often your dog will need a nail trim depends on how quickly your dog's nails grow and activity level. It is important to play with your puppies paws to get them used to you handling their paws. Nail trims should be performed every few weeks so you can just clip the tips off. There are different types of nail clippers that you can purchase depending on what will work best for your dog. Your veterinarian can show you how to appropriately clip nails.

Ear cleaning may be necessary later in your dog's life if you have a breed that is predisposed to ear infections. It is important to play with your puppies ears and get him or her used to you handling his or her ears. It is important to use a cotton ball or cloth to clean the exterior of the ear and NOT put anything into the ear canal (such as a cotton swab) as this may damage your dog's ear drum. Ear cleansers can be purchased from your veterinarian if necessary. If you allow your dog to swim, you may need to purchase an ear cleaner with a drying agent that will help prevent against yeast infections due to the moisture in the ear canal. Your veterinarian can help you determine appropriate ear care for your dog.

Dental hygiene is extremely important as dental disease can cause your dog to have a painful mouth and predispose to other disease (such as heart or kidney disease) later in life. The gold standard is daily (or at least every other day) brushing of your dog's teeth to prevent plaque and subsequent tartar formation. You can get your puppy used to daily teeth brushing at a young age to make this task easier for you. It is important to use pet-appropriate toothpaste (often pet-friendly flavored!). You can use either a toothbrush or finger toothbrush to brush your dog's teeth. If you are unable to brush your dog's teeth, dental chews or special diets can help prevent plaque and tartar formation. It is important to use a VOHC approved dental chew as other bones (such as rawhides) can actually break teeth or cause foreign bodies (i.e. get stuck in the intestines). Even with routine at home care, dental procedures are necessary to remove existing tartar and assess your dog's teeth. An annual dental is recommended to prevent tooth loss later in life.

Keeping your puppy healthy and happy sounds like a daunting task, but it is important to realize that if you spend time getting your puppy used to these activities at a young age, then it will be much easier (and take less time) for you to care for your furry friend later in life!

## **Harmful foods and plants to dogs**

### **Foods Toxic to Pets**

**Avocado** – usually causes gastrointestinal signs in dogs, but may cause cardiac problems.

## **Beer, wine**

**Bread dough (due to ethanol)** – may cause bloat, gastrointestinal blockage from rising dough, behavior changes, and cardiac/respiratory problems.

**Chocolate** – causes increased heart rate, cardiac arrhythmias, excitement, seizures, vomiting, diarrhea, or urinary incontinence

**Coffee products** – caffeine causes irritability, increased heart rate, over-stimulation, and increased urination

**Grapes, raisins** – causes renal failure.

**Macadamia nuts** – causes vomiting, abdominal pain, weakness, lameness and affects the nervous system (not usually fatal, but does cause transient paralysis).

**Prunes** (high in sorbitol)

**Onions & garlic** – causes hemolytic anemia (damages the red blood cells).

**Xylitol sweeteners** (found in chewing gums, candies, baked goods) – causes extremely low blood sugar and liver disease (symptoms are vomiting, depression, diarrhea, weakness, seizures, and death).

## **Plants to Avoid**

**Rhubarb** – can cause vomiting, diarrhea, and oral irritation, often progressing to renal failure.

**Tomatoes (the flowers , vines, and green fruit)** – causes vomiting, diarrhea, and nervous system problems.

**Cocoa Mulch Bark** – same effects as chocolate ingestion.

**Marijuana** - results in depression of the central nervous system and incoordination, as well as vomiting, diarrhea, drooling, increased heart rate, and even seizures and coma.

**Sago Palm** - the seeds or "nuts" contain the largest amount of toxin. The ingestion of just one or two seeds can result in very serious effects, which include vomiting, diarrhea, depression, seizures and liver failure.

**Tulip/Narcissus bulbs** - the bulb portions contain toxins that can cause intense gastrointestinal irritation, drooling, loss of appetite, depression of the central nervous system, convulsions and cardiac abnormalities.

**Azalea/Rhododendron** – can cause vomiting, drooling, diarrhea, weakness and depression of the central nervous system in animals. Severe azalea poisoning could ultimately lead to coma and death from cardiovascular collapse.

**Oleander** – may cause gastrointestinal tract irritation, abnormal heart function, hypothermia and even death.

**Castor Bean** - can produce severe abdominal pain, drooling, vomiting, diarrhea, excessive thirst, weakness and loss of appetite. Severe cases of poisoning can result in dehydration, muscle twitching, tremors, seizures, coma and death.

**Cyclamen** - can produce significant gastrointestinal irritation, including intense vomiting. Fatalities have also been reported in some cases.

**Kalanchoe** - can produce gastrointestinal irritation, as well as those that are toxic to the heart, and can seriously affect cardiac rhythm and rate.

**Yew** - causes central nervous system effects such as trembling, incoordination, and difficulty breathing. It can also cause significant gastrointestinal irritation and cardiac failure, which can result in death.

**Amaryllis** - can cause vomiting, depression, diarrhea, abdominal pain, hypersalivation, anorexia and tremors.

**Autumn Crocus** - can result in oral irritation, bloody vomiting, diarrhea, shock, multi-organ damage and bone marrow suppression.

**Chrysanthemum** – may produce gastrointestinal upset, including drooling, vomiting and diarrhea, if eaten. In certain cases depression and loss of coordination may also develop if enough of any part of the plant is consumed.

**English Ivy** - can result in vomiting, abdominal pain, hypersalivation and diarrhea.

**Peace Lily** - can cause oral irritation, excessive drooling, vomiting, difficulty in swallowing and intense burning and irritation of the mouth, lips and tongue.

**Pothos** - can cause significant mechanical irritation and swelling of the oral tissues and other parts of the gastrointestinal tract.

**Schefflera** - can cause oral irritation, excessive drooling, vomiting, difficulty in swallowing and intense burning and irritation of the mouth, lips and tongue.

## Other potential hazards to pets

**Antifreeze poisoning**

**Rodenticide poisoning (rat poison)**

**Insecticides**

**Over-the-counter human pain medications (such as Tylenol, Ibuprofen, or Aspirin)**

**Other Human Medications**

**Household products, such as lead, paints, solvents, cleaning products, and adhesives**

**Nicotine**

## **Final tips and information**

### **Every dog is an individual**

Remember that you can research yourself and your potential canine friend and still be pleasantly or unpleasantly surprised once you adopt. The puppy you fall in love with may grow into an adult of a size and personality you did not expect. Do keep in mind that breed characteristics are just that—characteristics and generalizations that tend to run in a particular breed. Just because a dog isn't what you thought he/she was at first doesn't mean that he/she doesn't have great qualities of his/her own or that you won't have amazing experiences together. You can encourage some behavior by finding positive ways to motivate your dog into activities that you can both enjoy. Every dog is a product of not only genetics but individual personality, training and life circumstances. If you can let go of your initial expectations and value your new companion for who he/she is, you just might enjoy the most fulfilling relationship of your life!

### **Making time**

Companionship is a priority in most dog adoptions. It's fun to cuddle with a dog and watch television. But your dog is not a plush toy. Your dog will need proper nutrition, physical exercise, and mental stimulation. Problems become inevitable if you don't have time or dedication to meet your dog's needs.

Dogs without exercise may get fat, listless, and hyperactive. Dogs without proper mental and physical stimulation will more than likely design their own brain and bodybuilding games that may include chewing, barking, digging etc. Exercise is perhaps one of the most basic needs. Every dog, at every age, needs to be exercised every day. If your dog fails to get a proper workout, he/she's likely to exhibit behavioral problems that no amount of training can fix.

## **Commit to a lifelong, loving relationship with your Furry Friend**

Your dog is not an "it". He/she has feelings and emotions just like you. Your dog's love is genuine. Look upon your dog as a family member, giving him/her the same time and affection as you would a person dear to you, and you will be rewarded with the most loyal, attentive, loving friend you could ever imagine. When you have a dog, you'll have to find a way to continue living with him/her, in whatever physical, financial, or emotional state you're in. Still, on rare occasions, a turn in family fortunes may make it impossible to keep a dog. Sometimes a family has to make the painful decision to part ways with the dog. It happens. But such decisions should never be made lightly. Your dog has grown to depend on you in every part of his/her life; he/she has grown to love everything about you, and will be traumatized and lost by the end of your relationship.

## **Seeking Professional Help**

You love your dog and want the best for him/her. Trouble is, you may not know how to get the best behavior out of your dog while maintaining your loving, positive relationship. That's where a trainer comes in. Furry Friends recommends finding a good, positive reinforcement trainer to help you, especially if your dog has particular issues that you're struggling to rectify. In the end, though, the decision on how to train rests on you and your dog.

Remember all dogs bark, chew, dig and all dogs go to the bathroom, how, where and when they do all these things depends on you. It's your responsibility to provide them with acceptable outlets for these behaviors to help them learn to do them in acceptable ways. Helping your dog to successfully navigate the rules and expectations of humans is important to keeping harmony in your home, and an important part of your relationship.

## **Appreciate your time with your dog. It's all too short**

Your dog's life is short compared with yours. Your puppy all too soon will become an elderly dog. So look at life the way your dog does, and enjoy every moment together. You got a dog because you thought you'd have fun together, So do so!

Enjoy your new Furry Friend!

