

Heathcote Veterinary Clinic

1335b Princes Hwy
Heathcote 2233
Telephone (02) 9520 0655
Fax: (02) 9520 7550



Hospital Hours
Monday to Friday 9.00am – 7.00pm
Saturday from 9.00am
Sunday 9.00am – 12.00pm

Your New Puppy

Congratulations on the purchase of your new puppy!

The team at Heathcote Veterinary Clinic wish to congratulate you on your new addition to the family. We hope that you will have many years of joy with your new dog. The health and well being of your pet is our highest priority and so we have put together a few notes on the most important veterinary and behavioural aspects of dog ownership to help you maximise the pleasure you get from your new pet. During the initial vaccination and consultation we will be more than happy to discuss these aspects and any other questions you may have about your new puppy.

Feeding – for Fitness, Fun and Friendship

Nutrition is one of the most important factors that contribute to a happy, healthy dog. At Heathcote Veterinary Clinic we take your pet's nutrition very seriously and will be happy to help you make the right choice for your new puppy and their changing requirements as he/she matures. Food is more than just nutrition, it is a source of entertainment, a tooth cleaner and an important part of the bond we share with our pets.

Feeding for Fitness – Dry food, Meat and Veg

We recommend that a high quality dry food make up most of the diet as it ensures your dog receives the correct balance of vitamins and minerals, energy and protein, especially important in puppies that need the right amount of calcium and phosphorus for their growing bones. Puppies require a “puppy” or “growth” diet for the first 12 months of life, or up until 18-24months in giant breeds. In addition, the hard consistency of dry food aids in developing the chewing habit, whilst leaving little residue on teeth.

Tough meats should be given in large chew size pieces. Examples include ox tongue, heart and stewing meat/off cuts. They leave minimal residue on the teeth. Dogs are omnivorous – they need both meat and vegetables in their diet. Boiled rice, pasta and vegetables are an effective way of providing bulk and variety to the diet whilst ensuring high energy and low fat food is being given.

Hungry Healthy Mouths

The nutritional needs of your puppy alter as your dog matures. It is important to take care of your puppy's teeth as well as you do your own. RAW BONES are a fantastic way of not only ensuring a natural tooth cleaning and maintaining dental hygiene, but also provide hours of natural fun and behavioural enrichment! Ideally we recommend raw bones 1-2 times per week in your dog's diet. Raw chicken wings and necks are good for small breed dogs and young pups. Brisket and shank bones will satisfy the bigger pups and breeds. There are also a variety of scientifically designed diets to clean teeth, and toys and treats developed to help maintain dental hygiene. Just remember to NEVER EVER, EVER feed your dog COOKED BONES of ANY sort!!

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Feeding for Fun and Friendship

In the wild natural world, a lot of a dogs life centres around mealtime – the hunting, stalking, catching and feeding hierarchy. Kong toys or other similar products engage this instinct to add a safe, entertaining element to feeding, making eating a much more satisfying activity. The rubber casing is soft enough to avoid tooth fracturing but firm enough to avoid being chewed and swallowed. They can be filled with dry food, frozen meat stock or peanut butter as a treat. Your pup will love spending time rolling and chewing the toy to receive the tasty food inside. You can hide it in the morning and set your pet the task of finding it while you are away to alleviate separation anxiety.

We develop and reinforce our relationships with our pets during feeding times. We instinctively know that food bonds our pet to us. We can also use food to encourage good behaviours through positive reinforcement when training and to reinforce the “pack” structure of the household. Puppy pre-school and group dog training can show you how best to use meal times and food rewards to develop your dog’s behaviour.

Things to Avoid feeding your puppy

- High fat treats (a common source of obese dogs!)
- Chocolate! (chocolate is very toxic to dogs, especially young pups)
- Compressed large biscuits (especially if your dog swallows without chewing)
- Preserved pet meats (the preservative sulfur dioxide can cause neurological disease)
- Cooked bones (risk of tooth fractures, obstructions, choke and pancreatitis)
- Canned dog food (poorly digested, high water content and tartar promoting. An expensive way to feed)

Always provide plenty of fresh drinking water for your puppy.

Toilet Training

There are three basic rules to toilet training:

1. Patience
2. Patience
3. Patience

Puppies are most likely to go to the toilet after they have eaten or drunk, upon waking from sleep or after exuberant play. Take the puppy to an area where you want them to urinate and wait until they relieve themselves. Reward them once the deed is done with treats and/or praise. Don’t punish a puppy for accidents while you are away. Unless the puppy is reprimanded within one second of the incorrect behaviour an association won’t be made. If the puppy is caught in the act, tell them a firm NO and move the puppy to the area where you want them to normally urinate. Once the puppy seems to have the idea, continue reinforcing the behaviour for at least one month to avoid any set back.

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Flea Treatment and Prevention

95% of fleas exist in the environment around your dog so as well as treating the dog it is also important to treat the environment ie clean bedding regularly, use insecticides around the house if large burdens exist.

It is important to use a flea treatment on your puppy regularly, usually every month and maintain it throughout the year. Several products are available on the market and it is important to choose one that suits your needs.

We recommend Revolution which targets all lifecycles of the flea as well as controlling heartworm and ear mites. Advantage (safe for young puppies), Advantix (from 7 weeks old) and Advocate are other good topical application flea treatments. These products effectively break the life cycle by killing eggs, larvae and adult fleas. It is best to start flea prevention as soon as you bring your new puppy home to minimise the chance of fresh eggs being laid inside your house. Don't bathe your dog for 48 hours before or after application of the product to ensure efficacy. The spot on is best applied to the skin at the back of the neck – part the hairs slightly to ensure application directly to the skin.

It is important to check with the vet or nurse before using a product on very young puppies as some products can be harmful.

Ticks

Living on the beautiful East coast of Australia brings many joys to us all however, this region, especially around the Sutherland Shire brings with it a few perils for our beloved pets. The Paralysis tick is bluey grey in colour and harbours a very dangerous toxin. Although tick season is usually in the warmer months from September through to March it is not uncommon for our clinic to see tick paralysis cases even in the middle of Winter! Daily searching of your pet particularly in peak season is a MUST with the majority of ticks found on the front half of the body around the neck, head and shoulder regions and under their collar.

Symptoms

The symptoms of tick paralysis can vary however commonly seen signs include:

1. No interest in eating and lethargy.
2. There may be a change to the sound of your dog's bark.
3. An exaggerated swallowing action that may even sound like your pet is trying to clear their throat or retch.
4. Regurgitation/vomiting
5. Wobbliness in his/her hindlimbs or walk. Your pet may not be able to jump as well as usual or may keep sitting down.
6. Difficulty breathing often characterised by open mouth breathing.

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What to do

If you find a tick and there are NO SIGNS, simply remove the tick by twisting it out with a pair of tweezers. Save the tick for identification purposes if possible and keep searching as there may be more than one!

Removal of the tick does not guarantee that symptoms will not develop. Keep your puppy/dog confined for the next 24 hours and monitor closely. Excitement and activity increase the activity of the toxin so try to keep your dog calm.

If your pet shows ANY OF THE ABOVE SYMPTOMS call us IMMEDIATELY. The sooner we are able to treat your pet for paralysis the better chance it has of living. Ticks kill pets so do not hesitate to call us if you suspect your dog has a tick even if you have been unable to find it.

Tick prevention

We recommend that you use Advantix for paralysis tick prevention. This needs to be applied fortnightly and has the added value of flea, mosquito and sandfly protection. Preventic collars work well for most dogs and can be used in conjunction with Advantix. They need to be changed every 2 months and taken off if the dog is going swimming.

Unfortunately no tick prevention product is 100% effective so we recommend that you perform daily searches for ticks on your dog. These daily tick searches are imperative particularly during the tick months (September to March) and your puppy will enjoy the cuddle! Run your fingers through your pets coat massaging down to the skin. Pay particular attention to the feet, head and neck areas and don't forget to feel under their collar! You will be feeling for a tiny raised lump, a bit like a pimple or nipple. If you find a lump but aren't sure if it's a tick or not, it's very easy to pop into the clinic and have one of our staff check for you.....better to be safe than sorry.

Desexing

We usually desex puppies from 4- 6 months of age.

Desexing is a day procedure – your puppy will come into hospital in the morning and will go home that afternoon. Our desexing cost includes the surgery, anaesthesia and sedation, the day in hospital, overnight pain relief, and a recheck if needed and suture removal 10 days after the surgery. Unless you are going to breed from your dog, we **strongly** recommend desexing early! Desexed pets are cheaper to register at your local council and pups have very rapid recoveries from the surgery. As well as this, veterinary research has shown that dogs that are desexed **before** they reach sexual maturity (approx 8-12 months of age) have almost 80% less risk of developing cancers such as prostate and mammary tumours.

At the time of desexing we also offer pre-anaesthetic blood testing to give us an overall picture of your pet's health. Pre-anaesthetic testing helps us to pick up health problems which may not be evident on physical examination and minimises the risks associated with general anaesthesia. In addition it provides us with baseline values for your pet's health which we keep on file for the lifetime of your pet and which tell us whether your puppies organs have developed and are functioning properly. We can also refer to these results if your dog becomes unwell in the future.

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Pre-anaesthetic testing significantly decreases the anaesthetic risk to your pup as we can alter the type of anaesthetic agent we use to best complement your pet's health. It thus provides both you and us with greater peace of mind.

Heartworm Prevention

Heartworm is a worm carried by mosquitoes. When an infected mozzie bites a dog, the worm larvae migrate through blood vessels and develop into adult worms where they can cause serious heart complications. Heartworm is very dangerous to treat but is easily prevented.

Puppies can be started on a variety of spot on products such as Revolution and Advocate which protect against heartworm and many other dog parasites. We usually recommend when pups are 6 months of age to have a heartworm injection: "Proheart SR-12". This protects the pup for 9 months from heartworm. They then require a booster Proheart injection at 15 months of age which will also coincide with their annual vaccinations.

It is very important to maintain Heartworm prevention throughout life. Restarting prevention after a period of discontinuity can be lethal.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are very important to maintain the health and wellbeing of your puppy. The vaccination protects against a variety of diseases:

- **Canine Distemper:** A disease causing vomiting, diarrhoea, neurological signs and fever.
- **Canine Parvovirus:** A severe gastrointestinal disease resulting in profuse bloody diarrhoea and a high risk of death
- **Canine Hepatitis:** A disease causing vomiting, diarrhoea and liver and kidney dysfunction.
- **Canine (Kennel) Cough:** A respiratory disease causing coughing and often nasal discharge with the potential to develop into bronchitis.

Puppies require 3 initial vaccinations to ensure they receive adequate immunity protection.

1. 1st vaccination at 6-8 weeks
2. 2nd vaccination at 12-14 weeks
3. 3rd vaccination at 16-18 weeks

They then require annual vaccinations thereafter (we will send you yearly reminders).

We recommend not mixing with other dogs in parks or training groups until pup's have had at least their 2nd vaccination (approx 12 weeks).

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Intestinal Worming

Many puppies are born with roundworm and it is important to worm your puppy regularly to control these and other intestinal worms. You should use a good quality all-wormer and make sure it covers ALL of the following worms:

- Roundworm
- Hookworm
- Whipworm
- Tapeworm

All dogs need to be wormed as follows:

- Every fortnight from 2 weeks of age until 3 months old:
 - ie: At 2 weeks of age, 4 weeks, 6 weeks, 8 weeks, 10 weeks and 12 weeks of age.
- Monthly from 3 to 6 months of age:
 - ie: At 4 months, 5 months and 6 months of age
- Every 3 months for the rest of their life:
 - A hint to help you remember is to worm every change of the season: Summer, Spring, Winter, Autumn

Microchipping and Registration

Puppies, by law MUST be permanently identified through microchip by 12 weeks of age. Registration through the NSW Council on the Companion Animal Register must be done after they have been microchipped and before they are 6 months old. We can microchip your pup at the clinic during a standard consultation and fill out all the necessary registration forms for you too.

Heathcote Veterinary Clinic's Puppy Pre-School

Training your puppy is extremely important and the foundations should be laid at an early age. We recommend puppy classes for the following reasons:

- Socialise puppies with other dogs and people
- Identify any potential behavioural problems early so that measures can be introduced to modify that trait
- Help make visits to the vet more enjoyable for dogs
- Get puppies off to a good start with basic training so they become controlled, well behaved and socially acceptable adults, and to teach them good manners
- Have a fun and enjoyable experience for the whole family, and give you the opportunity to ask all those niggling puppy questions!

Puppy Preschool runs for 1 hour on a Wednesday night for a period of 4 weeks at Heathcote Veterinary Clinic. For enquiries and bookings please call our friendly hospital staff.

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Name: _____

	Age	Date	Prevention Due	Done
Newborn Regime (6-12 weeks)	6 weeks		1st Puppy vaccination (C3)	
			Flea control (Revolution or other)	
			Intestinal all wormer	
	8 weeks		Weight	
			Intestinal all wormer	
	10 weeks		Weight	
			2nd Puppy vaccination (C5)	
			Intestinal all wormer	
				Weight

	Age	Date	Prevention Due	Done
Puppy Regime (3 - 6 months)	3 months		Heartworm Prevention	
			Flea control (Revolution or other)	
			Intestinal all wormer	
			Weight	
	4 months		3rd Puppy vaccination (C5)	
			Heartworm Prevention	
			Intestinal all wormer	
			Weight	
	5 months		Heartworm Prevention	
			Intestinal all wormer	
			Weight	
	6 months		Desex	
			Heartworm Injection	
			Intestinal all wormer	
			Weight	

Adult Regime	Annual vaccination
	Annual heartworm injection
	Monthly flea treatment
	3 monthly all wormer for intestinal worm control
	Paralysis tick prevention strongly recommended during tick season from September to March