



Maidstone Veterinary Clinic

Veterinary Surgeons: P.J. Warmerdam BVSc, MRCVS and Associates.
28 King Street Upper Hutt, Telephone (04) 5285-927, fax (04)5282-042

PUPPY INFORMATION

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Now that you have brought your new puppy home - what is next? We assume that you have a bed for your puppy, as well as puppy food, bowls and a collar, but what else?

THE HEALTHY PUPPY.

Your Veterinarian will discuss a wide range of health concerns at your first visit. These will include:

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| a) Vaccinations. | c) Diet |
| b) Worming. | d) Fleas |

THE WELL BEHAVED PUPPY.

It is easy to like friendly well-behaved dogs. But puppies do not develop into friendly well-behaved dogs without some effort on your behalf. This involves a commitment to early socialisation, training and exercise.



a) Socialization and habituation.

These two terms basically mean getting your puppy used to the **living things** in its environment (eg. dogs, cats, people), as well as **non-animate parts** of its environment (eg. sounds, sights, smells). All experiences should be enjoyable for your puppy. Take tasty treats with you (eg. luncheon sausage) and give these to your puppy when it is behaving well. If your pup is scared do NOT soothe it, (dogs see the soothing tone as praise) but act calmly and matter-of-factly. If you act confidently - your puppy will too. If your pup is afraid of something, increase the distance between your puppy and the cause of its fear until

the pup is relaxed again. Then dish out the treats, and try to get a little closer next time.

Socialization: Now is the best time to get your pup used to people, other dogs and animals. The socialization period stretches to about 4 months and after that age it is much harder for your pup to adjust to new experiences. While you should not walk your pup along the street, you can carry it in your arms and let it meet lots of different types of people - different ages from baby in a pram through to elderly, different nationalities, different occupations from skateboarder through to wheel-bin operators. While your pup is cute, introduce it to your neighbours and get a good rapport going with them - they may be less likely to complain if your pup barks in the night, and more likely to help out, if for example you need someone to walk your dog during the day.

Puppy Pre-school classes are a great way for your puppy to meet dogs. At the preschool pups of similar ages meet to play and interact. It is an important part of their growing up. If you have the opportunity to meet healthy friendly older dogs do so, but ensure you observe the older dog and puppy at all times for their own safety. Introduce your puppy to cats in a controlled manner, eg. nurse the pup on your lap while your friend nurses the cat, or feed them together (cat high if necessary), or use a cage for either puppy or cat. Cats can easily inflict serious damage on puppies eyes etc. so take care. Introduce your pup to horses, cows and other animals if possible. At all times ensure the safety of your puppy.



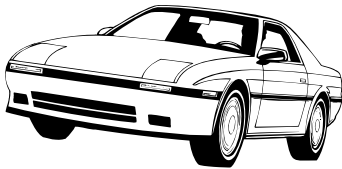
CHILDREN AND PUPPIES.

Puppies and children are not always fun together! Children under five years need to be supervised closely around dogs. Children over five years should understand how to behave around your puppy - walk don't run, slow movements with your hands, keep hands low not high, stand like a tree and the puppy won't chase you or bite you.



Habituation:

Take your puppy out in your arms to see and hear the traffic, trains, buses, walk over a bridge, under trees, through pedestrians, past the shops etc. Once your puppy is able to go on walks take it on lots of different surfaces - smooth, slippery, hard, grass, sand, rocks etc. Many dogs develop problems with bikes, skateboarders, prams etc. so ensure your puppy has met them and behaves appropriately. Show your puppy five new things every week!



b) HANDLING.

All pups should allow their family to handle them, and they should also tolerate strangers handling them. This obviously makes it easier for you when it comes time to put drops in ears, eyes or nose, bandage a paw etc. It also means visits to Vets, groomers etc. are more enjoyable.

From the day you get your puppy touch its ears, eyes, nose, mouth, feet, tail, belly and run your hands through its coat. This way your puppy will get used to being handled and you will become familiar with what is normal, and you are more likely to notice changes sooner. Grooming should be done on a regular time (weekly) of your pup's life and gives you an opportunity to check your pup all over, as well remove dead hair and dirt.

c) COLLARS and LEADS. Puppies should get used to a collar and a plain lead. Other types of leads such as halties (Gentle leaders) and car harnesses can also be considered later. Halties help teach dogs to walk properly on a lead and the dog is unable to pull its owner along. In conjunction with treats all dogs can be trained to walk beside their owners. Choke chains should not be used on puppies.



d) TRAINING and EXERCISE.

All dogs should be trained in the basic commands - sit, down, come, walk nicely and stay or wait. This should be done using food rewards. The best approach is to show your puppy what you require and then reward it, rather than punishing it for something it has done wrong. Training requires patience and lots of repetition.

All dogs need regular exercise. A 20 -30 minute walk on a lead is good, but try to ensure your pup gets the opportunity to explore different places, different sights and smells and surface off the lead. A Retractable lead is excellent - use it until your puppy is reliable at coming when called.

If both dog and trainer enjoy the experience of all the above, we should end up with a well behaved and liked pet instead of

'The Hound from Hell'

