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PUPPY INFORMATION SHEET

Greenbay Vets are committed to the best possible patient and client care. Our staff are friendly and approachable and will be happy to help you with any queries you may have. Please feel free to discuss any problems with the vet, or telephone for advice from one of our experienced reception/nursing staff. **Don't forget to attend our puppy parties on Wednesdays at our Torquay surgery between 5.30 and 6.30pm!**

Vaccinations

Your puppy will need a course of 2 injections 4 weeks apart to protect him/her from the main infectious diseases of dogs – Parvovirus, Canine Distemper, Infectious Hepatitis (adenovirus), and Leptospirosis. He/she can go out for a walk one week after the final injection, but you should avoid waterways for a further 2 weeks to allow full protection against Leptospirosis. Your dog then requires a yearly booster to keep the vaccinations up to date.

Your dog may also need to be vaccinated against kennel cough. This is an infection which can be picked up anywhere that your dog is in contact with other dogs. The vaccine is a spray administered into your puppy's nostril and lasts for one year. The vet will be able to advise you if it is needed and when it should be given. More information about vaccinations can be found on our website.

Worming and Flea Treatment

Your puppy should be given a roundworm treatment every 2 weeks until 2 weeks after being weaned off mum. Thereafter, every month until he/she is 6 months old and then every 3 months throughout his/her adult life. If your puppy will be in regular contact with young children, then worming for roundworms should be performed monthly. Most dogs should be treated for fleas all year round - effective prevention is much simpler than curing an infestation. Dogs that eat slugs or snails, or scavenge in the garden, may be at risk of lungworm, which can be fatal. Some dogs may also be at risk from ticks, depending where they are walked. There is a wide range of products available – prescription treatments are the most effective and can only be prescribed by a veterinary surgeon to animals under their care. The vet will advise you about which products are best for your dog. More information can be found on our website.

Neutering

If you are not intending to breed from your dog, then we recommend you consider getting them neutered. This is called spaying in a female and is an ovariectomy, thus preventing unwanted pregnancies. It also prevents womb infections, which can be fatal, and decreases the risk of breast cancer. It is not necessary for a bitch to have a litter before she is spayed. If your bitch is not spayed, she will usually come into season between 6 and 12 months of age and every 6-7 months after that. The operation in males is called castration and involves removing both testicles. Castration also prevents the risk of some prostatic diseases and can help prevent certain behavioural problems e.g. roaming and aggression. Neutered dogs are more prone to weight gain, so it is important that their diet is carefully controlled. Both operations can be performed from 6 months of age at either of our surgeries, with the option of 'keyhole' spay for bitches at our Torquay surgery. The vet will discuss neutering with you and be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Microchipping

This is a permanent form of identification. From April 2016 all dogs in England need to be microchipped by law. The microchip is about the size of a rice grain and is inserted into the scruff of your puppy's neck, like an injection. If your dog is found and taken to a vet, police station, rescue centre etc. then the microchip enables them to be identified and returned to you. It is vital to keep your contact details up to date on the microchip database.

Diet/Nutrition

The easiest way to give your puppy a balanced diet is to feed him/her a proprietary puppy diet (large breed variety for large breed puppies). Initially your puppy will need four meals a day, reducing to three by about 12 weeks old. By 6 months of age, they can be on two meals a day. We recommend Hill's Vet Essentials Puppy diet, which is available at the surgery. This is a complete dog food which should be fed until 1 year. We recommend following this with a Hill's Vet Essentials Canine Adult diet. Please ask about our loyalty scheme for money off Hill's food.

Dental Care

It is a good idea to start caring for your puppy's teeth when they are young. As your dog gets older plaque and tartar will start to form on his/her teeth and most older dogs need their teeth cleaned and polished at some point in their lives. Regular tooth brushing can help to stop plaque forming on their teeth. If you get your puppy used to having his/her teeth brushed when they are young, then you will be able to do this all through their life. The vet or nurse will be able to discuss how to accustom your puppy to this and other options which are available to care for your puppy's teeth.

Socialisation

Your puppy's first 6 months of life are the best time to socialise him/her with different people, places and situations. It is essential to introduce your puppy to different types of people (men, women, children, elderly and disabled people) while they are young to give them confidence and prevent them becoming easily frightened/nervous. It is also helpful to practice 'vet examinations' at home - to get your puppy used to having his/her eyes, nose, teeth and paws examined/touched; this makes a trip to the vets much less stressful! If your puppy is long-haired then it is best to start grooming and brushing them as young as possible. If your puppy will be living with other pets, then it is a good idea to socialise them whilst they are young.

Pet Insurance

Greenbay Vets strongly recommend that you consider insuring your pet. There are many different policies available. Check whether your policy provides 'lifetime' cover, so that if your dog develops a condition which will require treatment throughout its life, e.g. diabetes, the insurance company will continue to pay for the condition. It is easy to plan for routine costs such as boosters, but it can be a nasty shock if your dog needs urgent treatment and you have to pay the veterinary fees. There is an information sheet about pet insurance on our website, or available on request.

We are here with the aim of keeping your dog happy and healthy. Many problems can be prevented by giving your puppy the best start in life and practising preventative care. If you have any queries or concerns, our staff will be happy to help.