



Mont Albert Veterinary Surgery
443 Mont Albert Road
Mont Albert VIC 3127
Phone (03) 9890 1728
ABN 75 007 008 184

PUPPY FACT SHEET

Congratulations on the new addition to your family. We know you will love your new puppy & do your best to keep him or her healthy and strong.

Food

For the first week, try to give foods that your new pup is already used to. Make any changes to the diet gradually to avoid bowel upsets.

High quality puppy foods (tinned and dry) such as Advance or Hills Vet Essentials have an excellent balance of essential vitamins and minerals for growing pups. Try to keep your puppy from putting on excess weight; this is most important in large breeds like Golden Retrievers.

As a general rule, pups should have three meals a day up to the age of six months, two meals up to twelve months and one daily meal from then on. For some active breeds, two meals a day may be appropriate. **DO NOT EXERCISE YOUR PUPPY STRAIGHT AFTER A MEAL.**

Vaccinations

Your puppy should have a C5 vaccination at 6 to 8 weeks, 12 weeks and 16 weeks. This vaccine protects pups against distemper, canine hepatitis, parvovirus and two strains of kennel cough.

The vaccination visits also allow us to check your pup's physical condition and to address any questions you may have.

Heartworm and Flea Prevention

Heartworm is transmitted by mosquitoes and is easy to prevent, much harder to treat. Pups should be started on heartworm prevention by 12 weeks of age. An injection of Proheart SR12 at 3, 6 and 15 months and then yearly at the same time as a dog's regular vaccinations is an ideal way to protect against heartworm.

For flea prevention, Advantage is safe on puppies from 6 weeks of age and Nexgard from 8 weeks.

Alternatively, there are monthly oral products like Nexgard Spectra or monthly "spot-on" products like Advocate which combine heartworm, flea and worm control.

Ticks can occasionally be a hazard, even in Melbourne. Products like Nexgard and Nexgard Spectra are a very effective way to protect dogs against ticks.

Intestinal worms

Using an "allwormer" preparation such as Drontal or Milbemax will get rid of intestinal worms. Pups should be wormed at 4, 6, 8, 10 and 12 weeks, then every month until 6 months of age then every 3 months. It is important to remember that some of these worms can pose a health risk to humans, particularly to young children.

Socialising and Training

A dog's adult personality is strongly affected by experiences during puppyhood. Between 3 and 12 weeks of age, puppies should be exposed to lots of different experiences: different people (adults and children), noises, other dogs, open spaces, crowds, etc.

Be sure to avoid direct contact with dogs you don't know and also with dog droppings until your pup has been fully vaccinated.

It's also a good idea to get the pup used to being touched and examined: look in ears, open his or her mouth, touch & feel paws, etc.

Set the rules for behaviour right from the start and be consistently firm but fair. Puppy school helps with socialisation and sets you on the right track. Obedience training is also advisable when the pup is a little older.

Toilet training

Put your puppy outside after meals, after sleeps and when he or she starts sniffing the ground. If the pup urinates or defecates outside, give lots of encouraging praise using a pleasant tone of voice. Don't reprimand your puppy for going to the toilet inside unless you can catch him or her in the act. Generally, positive reinforcement, consistency and repetition are far more effective than punishment.

Microchipping and Registration

If your puppy is already microchipped, you need to make sure that the microchip registry (usually Central Animal Records) has been notified that you are the new owner. Local councils require that all dogs be registered by the age of 3 months. This is separate from microchip registration.

Desexing

We recommend that desexing be done at 5 to 6 months of age except for some large breeds where there may be some benefits in delaying desexing until they are a bit older. Dogs need to stay with us for the day and there are usually no stitches to remove afterwards.

Insurance

As the range of veterinary services increases, it is worth considering taking out pet insurance. There are a number of insurance companies who will cover your puppy for a proportion of veterinary expenses. Make sure you don't delay getting insurance as they will not cover pre-existing conditions.

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