



THE ULTIMATE CHECKLIST FOR YOUR PUPPY'S VETERINARY CARE

CONGRATULATIONS! You've added a puppy to your family!

Puppies are a lot of fun, but it also takes work to ensure your puppy grows into a healthy, happy, and well-adjusted adult dog. Here's a checklist to ensure you don't miss a beat when it comes to your puppy's veterinary care.

PUPPY LIFE STAGE: Birth through end of rapid growth (6–9 months of age, depending on breed and size)

VISIT YOUR VETERINARIAN: Every 3–4 weeks

DISCUSS WITH YOUR VETERINARIAN:

General health

- Your puppy's risk for congenital disorders and breed-specific conditions
- Core vaccines for puppies
- Noncore vaccines that may be appropriate for your puppy based on lifestyle risks
- The grooming needs of your puppy
- Boarding or daycare advice
- Meeting the costs of veterinary care for your dog's life, including options like pet health insurance and wellness plans

Dental health

- Your puppy's dental health
- Choosing safe chew toys and dental health products and how to provide at-home dental care

Reproductive health

- Spay/neuter, including the best age to spay or neuter your puppy and the associated benefits and risks
- Breeder planning, if you plan to breed your puppy

Nutrition and exercise

- What your puppy eats
- How much your puppy eats
- How often your puppy eats
- Your puppy's exercise needs
- Appropriate supplements, nutraceuticals, or herbs
- Appropriate treats

Safety

- Microchipping, including how to maintain the microchip registration with current contact information
- Potential hazards
- How to “puppy-proof” your home and outdoor spaces
- Transportation advice, including how to safely restrain your puppy in the car, motion sickness, and anxiety
- How to safely clean up after your puppy

Behavior and training

- Socialization and regular handling, including puppy classes
- How to use positive reinforcement methods to train your puppy
- Signs of fear, stress, and anxiety in dogs
- How to read a dog’s body language and prevent dog bites
- How to crate train your puppy
- How to provide mental stimulation and enrichment to avoid common behavioral problems
- “Happy” veterinary visits, which will help your puppy build positive associations with visiting the veterinarian, and can include bringing your puppy in regularly for affection and treats from the team without any poking or prodding

Parasites

- The prevalence of intestinal parasites in puppies, and your puppy’s need for deworming and regular intestinal parasite prevention
- Heartworm disease, and your puppy’s need for regular heartworm prevention
- Fleas and ticks, along with the diseases they transmit to animals and humans, and your puppy’s need for regular flea and tick prevention



Learn more about the care your dog will need in every stage of life at aaha.org/caninelifestage.