

Puppy Information

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome your new puppy to the Brambles Veterinary Surgery. At the Brambles our aim is to provide you with all you require to enable him/her to live as long, and as healthy a life as possible. Whilst we are here to treat your pet 24 hours a day when he/she is ill or injured, we feel it is equally important to provide you with good quality preventive healthcare to keep your pet in good working order throughout their life.

The first year of your new puppy's life is probably the most important. During this time the body changes dramatically and anything that affects this can have long lasting consequences.

To help you through this important first year, following a full healthcheck with the vet, our qualified nursing staff offer a series of free clinics where they will guide you through the complexities of feeding, worming, socialisation, neutering and much more.

Our commitment to a long and healthy life for your pet does not stop at the age of one. There are many things that can be done during your pet's life to reduce the possibilities of health problems and even to lengthen their lifespan.

To guide you through the first year we have enclosed a 10-point checklist, which outlines all the important topics to consider. Don't worry if it all seems a little overwhelming – we are here to guide you through it and to answer any questions or queries that you may have.

Vaccination Routine Check List For Puppies

1. Feeding

At this age we recommend Hills Science Plan Puppy. The Science Plan range is specifically designed to provide the correct levels of energy, protein, vitamins and minerals for a growing puppy. There is a special diet for large, fast growing breeds. The diet is fully balanced so there is no need to use supplements, but always ensure there is a constant supply of drinking water. At 8 - 12 months of age your puppy can move on to Hills Science Plan Adult to continue optimum development.

2. Vaccination

This begins with a course of two injections and protects against Distemper (Hardpad), Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parvovirus and Para influenza Virus. To maintain your dog's immunity against these diseases a yearly booster is required - we will send you a reminder when it is due! The kennel cough vaccine is also recommended if your dog is going into kennels or attending training classes.

3. Insurance

Pet health insurance is recommended to cover unexpected veterinary fees, it also provides many other benefits including specialist fees and third party and legal costs. Unexpected illness or accidents can be very costly, but being insured means that your pet's health is never compromised. Don't put it off until it is too late.

4. Worming

This is necessary for all dogs. Initially for puppies we recommend Milbemax at monthly intervals until 6 months of age. Thereafter use Milbemax at 3 monthly intervals.

5. Flea Control

We recommend the use of Program Plus. This is a monthly tablet that not only ensures your house is a flea-free zone but also provides 100% effective control of

roundworms. Another effective alternative is Advantage spot-on. It comes in a box containing four month's supply. It is easy to use; a single tube is applied to the back of the neck giving your dog one month's protection. For year round cover, simply apply one tube per month, it also helps treat the house as well.

6. **Neutering**

This is a most important subject. Our policy is to spay all bitches at 6 months of age. Recent studies have shown that the risk of cancer later in life is significantly reduced if your bitch is spayed before her first season - it also saves the inconvenience of seasons, bleeding and unwanted visitors! Neutered females live longer as do neutered males. Male dogs should also be castrated from 6 months of age. This will help prevent anti-social behaviour, aggression and as a method of birth control.

7. **Dental Care**

We clean our teeth twice a day - imagine what our mouths would be like if we didn't - dogs are no exception! It is important to develop a dental care regime at an early age to get your puppy used to it. We suggest 'Logic Oral Hygiene gel' or CET toothpaste. 'Logic Oral Hygiene Gel' is extremely easy to use. In fact your dog will probably regard it as a treat! Let your puppy lick the required amount directly off the tube. The gel then coats the teeth and begins the breakdown of plaque. Or if your puppy will allow you to, you can brush his/her teeth with the special CET toothpaste and brush. The gel or the toothpaste should be used daily to keep your puppy's mouth in tiptop condition.

8. **Housetraining**

When trying to toilet train your puppy it is very important that you give him every opportunity to go to the toilet in the right place. As soon as he has eaten, or woken up your pup will probably want to do something and so you must take him/her outside. When he does go to the toilet outside you should reward him with a small treat/ praise whilst he is going to the toilet. If he has any accidents indoors you must ignore them and not punish him as he will not make the connection between the two events. He will soon learn that when he goes to the toilet outside he is rewarded, when he doesn't he gets nothing.

9. **Behaviour & General Training**

The golden rule when training your puppy is to try and ignore the things that you don't like and to reward the things that you do like. The most effective punishment for a puppy is to be ignored. Please remember to try and be consistent. We recommend taking your puppy to "play school" for basic training and socialisation skills followed by training classes. But don't forget we are at the end of the phone. Don't let behavioural problems get you down. Our Nurses would be happy to listen, and offer constructive suggestions to help overcome any difficulties you may be experiencing. It is also a good idea to get your pet used to having its feet and ears handled and inspected. Getting then used to this at an early age means they are more likely to let you touch them when there is a problem.

10. **Identichip**

This is a tiny microchip (about the size of a grain of rice), which is injected under the loose skin at the back of the neck. This provides your pet with a secure proof of identity - unlike collar tags that can get lost or be taken off! Each microchip has a unique identification code, this along with your pet's and your details are registered on a central database, which is available 24 hours a day. If your pet should get lost or stray it would usually get taken to the local authorities, a charity organisation or veterinary centre. Immediately on arrival the animal would be scanned - and you would be reunited with your pet as soon as possible.

It only costs £19.99 for the chip and lifelong registration (or £17.99 if given at the time of vaccination).

The above points are a brief summary of some of the beliefs and protocols of this Practice. If you would like to discuss any problems you are having, or would just like a bit of advice - do not hesitate to contact us - it's what we are here for!