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## **Taking the Hassle Out of House Training**

Your home has just been blessed with a new puppy that arrived cuddly, warm, and ready to be loved. Unfortunately, he did not arrive housetrained.

Housetraining your new puppy can be easy and effective if you dedicate the necessary time and patience. A successful plan includes supervision, confinement, and encouragement. With these elements, most pups can be trained in a relatively short period of time.

### **GETTING THE MESSAGE ACROSS**

If you want your puppy to eliminate outside, you must be aware of various conditions and activities that typically stimulate puppies to eliminate, including eating, drinking, playing, and waking from naps. Learn to be aware of these activities and be alert that your puppy may need to eliminate. Begin to condition your puppy by using a command such as "out" as you take it outside. With time, your puppy will learn to signal if he must go out.

The next step is to teach your puppy where you want him to eliminate. To accomplish this, you must accompany your puppy every time he goes outdoors. Choose a specific location with easy access. The area will soon become a familiar spot as the pup recognizes the odor from previous excursions. Mildly praise any sniffing or other pre-elimination behaviors and consider associating other pre-elimination behaviors and consider associating a unique training command such as "potty time" or "hurry up" with the act of eliminating. When your puppy eliminates, praise him heartily, offer a tasty food reward, or start playing. Your puppy will soon learn what is expected of him whenever he goes outside and hears the special command. As you begin housetraining, try to take your puppy outdoors every one to two hours. As he grows older and gets the hang of things, you can wait longer between outings.

### **SCHEDULING PUPPY'S DINNERTIME**

Controlling your puppy's feeding schedule provides some control over his elimination schedule. Most will eliminate within a predictable time after eating, usually within the first hour. Because of this, it is best to avoid feeding a large meal just before confinement. Offer food two or three times each day at the same times and make it available for no longer than 30 minutes. The last meal should be finished three to five hours before bedtime.

### **PREVENTING MISTAKES**

The most challenging part of the housetraining process is preventing your pup from eliminating indoors. Until he is housetrained, you will need to provide constant supervision. You should not consider your puppy housetrained until he has gone for at least four to eight consecutive weeks without eliminating anywhere in the home. Until your pup accomplishes this, keep him within eyesight of a family member 100 percent of the time. A leash is a handy tool to keep your puppy nearby when you are preoccupied, and he might wander away.

When you are unable to provide constant supervision because you are busy, sleeping, or away from home, confine your pup to a relatively small, safe area. Always take your puppy out to eliminate just before confinement. A wire or plastic crate provides an excellent area in which to confine your puppy when you cannot observe it. A crate has some limitations. Do not use it for longer than your puppy can physically control elimination or for more than four hours during the day. Most puppies will quickly adapt to the crate if you make training fun. Feeding in the crate, tossing toys inside for the pup to chase, and hiding treats in there should all encourage your puppy to look forward to being in the crate.

If your puppy is home alone each day for long periods, confine him to a larger area such as a small room or exercise pen. It should provide enough space for him to eliminate if necessary and to rest several feet away from a mess. For easier cleaning, place paper at the sites where he is likely to eliminate. It is important to associate good things with the confinement area, rather than making him solely an isolation area. Spend some time in the area playing with your puppy or simply reading nearby as he rests there.

### **RETURNING TO THE SCENE OF THE CRIME**

To help prevent your puppy from returning to previously soiled areas, remove urine and fecal odor with an effective commercial product. Saturate areas of soiled carpeting with odor-neutralizing products - merely spraying the surface is not as effective. If your puppy begins eliminating in certain areas of the home, deny access to these areas by closing doors to the rooms, using baby gates, or moving furniture over the soiled areas. Motion alarms will teach your puppy to avoid an area. Most pets avoid eliminating in areas where they eat or play. Feeding or placing water bowls, bedding, and toys in previously soiled areas can discourage elimination at those spots.

### **KEEPING YOUR COOL**

No puppy has ever been housetrained without making a mistake or two. Be prepared for the inevitable. It does not help to become frustrated and harshly discipline your puppy. Punishment is the least effective and most overused approach to housetraining. A correction should involve nothing more than a mild, startling distraction and should be used only if you catch your puppy in the act of eliminating indoors. A quick stomp of the foot, loud clap, tug on the leash, or abrupt "NO" (given with enough intensity to interrupt the behavior without frightening your puppy) is all that is necessary. Immediately take your pup to his elimination area outdoors to finish. A correction that occurs more than a few seconds after your puppy eliminates is useless because he will not understand why he is being corrected. If the punishment is too harsh, he may learn not to eliminate in front of you, even outdoors, and you run the risk of ruining the bond with your puppy. Do not rub your puppy's nose in its mess. There is absolutely nothing it will learn from this, except to be afraid of you.

Some pets will squat and urinate as they greet family members. Never scold them. This problem is due typically to either nervousness or excitement, and scolding will always make the problem worse.

With a little patience and consistent approach, your puppy will be as housetrained as the rest of your family.

## **CRATE TRAINING**

We all need a special place to call our own -- a sanctuary of sorts. Your pet is no different. Part of raising a healthy dog is providing him with his own sanctuary, and crates are a perfect solution. Both puppies and dogs can be easily trained to enjoy the retreat to their crate.

Crate training is neither cruel nor unfair, provided your puppy has sufficient exercise and an opportunity to eliminate before you place him in the crate. However, allowing your dog to wander through the home unsupervised to investigate, chew, and eliminate is unwise and potentially dangerous.

## **YOU AND YOUR DOG WILL LOVE CRATES**

There are numerous benefits to crate training your dog:

- Security for your dog
- Safety for your dog
- Prevention of costly damage (due to chewing, investigation, elimination, etc.)
- Help with training proper chewing and elimination
- Easy traveling (helps your dog become accustomed to caging for traveling and boarding)
- Improved dog/owner relationship (fewer problems mean less discipline for your puppy and less frustration for you)

## **TIPS**

The first step is purchasing a crate. The main thing to remember is to leave enough room for your dog to stand and turn around -- even when he is full-grown. Two basic styles exist: The metal, collapsible crates with tray floors and the plastic traveling crates. Some dogs adapt better to a small room, run, or playpen.

Because dogs are social animals, the ideal location for the crate is in a room where your family spends a lot of time, such as the kitchen, den, or bedroom. Avoid keeping the crate in an isolated laundry or furnace room. For the crate to remain a positive, enjoyable retreat never use it for punishment. You can, however, use the crate to avoid potential problems (e.g., chewing, house soiling). A radio or television can help calm your dog and mask environmental noises that sometimes trigger barking.

## **TRAINING PUPPIES**

Introduce your puppy to the crate as early as possible. Place a few treats, toys, or food in the crate to motivate your puppy to enter voluntarily.

The first confinement session should be after a period of play, exercise, and elimination (when he is ready to take a nap). Place your puppy in his crate with a toy and a treat and close the door. Leave the room but remain close enough to hear your puppy. You can expect some degree of distress the first few times your puppy is separated from his family

members. Never reward the pup by letting him out when he cries or whines. Ignore him until the crying stops, and then release him.

### **TRAINING ADULT DOGS**

Training an adult dog is like training a puppy, except for the initial introduction to the crate. Introduce your dog to the crate by setting it up in the feeding area with the door open for a few days. Place food, treats, and toys in the crate so that your dog enters on his own. Once he is entering the crate freely, it is time to close the door. Some dogs may adapt more quickly to crate training by placing the crate (with bedding inside) in your dog's normal sleeping area, allowing your dog to sleep in the crate at night. Again, never punish your dog by putting him in his crate. Gradually increase the amount of time your dog must remain quietly in the crate before you release him.

### **TRAVELING WITH YOUR PUP**

Finally, the crate is an ideal way to house your dog when traveling. Try short trips first and gradually increase travel time. Let your dog accompany you to the store, the park, or on trips around town. Anywhere that will help him adjust to the crate and elicit positive feelings. It is, however, against the law in Austin (Class C Misdemeanor) to leave your dog unattended in a car for any length of time, no matter the weather conditions. This includes if your dog is confined in a crate. Be sure to bring someone along to sit with him while you run your errands or to bring him to pet-friendly destinations.

Here are some good videos that can assist with successful puppy training:

### **Potty Training**



### **Crate Training**



### **How Dogs Learn: Training Tips & Secrets**



### **7 Rules for Good Behavior**



## **Keeping Mouthing and Biting Under Control**

It's normal for a puppy to use his mouth during play and social interactions, but it's certainly no fun having those sharp teeth embedded in your ankle or arm. It's important to teach your puppy how to use his mouth in an acceptable manner. Strategies for controlling your puppy include giving him basic training, providing sufficient stimulation to meet his needs, encouraging acceptable behavior, and interrupting undesirable biting behavior.

Play biting is much less common in adult dogs than in puppies, and the reasons behind it may be much more serious than a puppy's "natural" biting methods described here. In these cases, we recommend consulting with a behavior specialist.

### **DON'T MAKE THINGS WORSE**

Make sure you are not encouraging your puppy's biting. Don't get the pup all fired up with rough play, teasing, or tug of war. Avoid games that encourage him to attack your hands or feet, and don't wear gloves during play that allow or encourage the puppy to bite. You should also be careful not to reward "mouthy" behavior. If your puppy gets your attention when he places his mouth on you, the behavior will continue. Petting him, picking him up, gently talking to him, or even giving him a mild shove or a light scolding can reinforce the behavior.

### **CHANNEL THAT ENERGY**

If your puppy is constantly demanding attention by mouthing or biting excessively or is playing too rough, then he may not be receiving enough exercise and mental stimulation. If that's the case, you'll need to make sure he gets additional periods of vigorous play and exercise and more appropriate outlets for using his mouth. Give your pup plenty of exercise by walking, playing fetch, romping in the yard, or chasing a soccer ball. You, not the puppy, should be the one to initiate these play sessions.

See that your puppy has frequent opportunities for playing with other friendly young dogs. Provide plenty of interesting, interactive toys, like the ones that are designed to be manipulated to release a treat or those that promote prolonged chewing. The more energy the pup uses for appropriate activities, the less he will have for mouthy biting behavior. Remember the training mantra, "A tired puppy is a good puppy."

You can take advantage of the pup's dinnertime as an extra opportunity for training and exercise. Divide his dinner kibble between you and another family member, and then stand at opposite ends of a wide room or long hall in your home. Take turns calling the puppy to come and sit for a piece of food. In addition to exercising the pet, this game provides social interaction and teaches the puppy to come to people and sit during greetings rather than jump up on them.

### **TAKE CONTROL EARLY**

Enroll your pet in puppy socialization and training classes as soon as possible. This training will teach him that you are in control by using obedience commands. Ask him to sit before giving him things he wants or needs, and occasionally command him to stay for

a second or two before following you around the home or stairs or going through a doorway. Ignore all pushy behaviors, such as nudging, pawing, or whining for attention.

A dragline can be a helpful tool for managing the pup's behavior and can be particularly useful in the yard. Tie a long line (10 feet indoors and 20 feet or longer outdoors) to your pet's collar so you can quickly grab the line when you need to stop the biting. Be sure that the pet is closely supervised when he is wearing a dragline.

More headstrong pups may require a leash and a head halter for control. By leaving these attached when the pet is with the family, you can instantly stop mouthing and biting with a gentle pull on the leash. Release tension as soon as the biting or mouthing stops. Head halters can give all family members, even young children, a considerable amount of control over the pet.

### **ENOUGH IS ENOUGH- USING A "STOP" COMMAND**

While some mouthing during play is acceptable, it is important that the pet learns to stop on command. This can be done by giving "enough" command when he is biting. Begin your training when the pet is very calm. Hand the puppy a small piece of dry food as you say "OK" in a relaxed tone. Next, hold another piece of food in front of him, and firmly say "Enough" without raising your voice or yelling. If the puppy doesn't attempt to make contact with your hand or the food for two seconds, say "OK" and give him the food. If he touches your hand before two seconds pass and before you say "OK", immediately say "Enough" with sufficient force to make him back away but without frightening him. Gradually increase the time the puppy must wait. Once he learns to leave the food alone on command, practice the exercise without food by using only your hand. Later, repeat the exercise when the puppy is more keyed up.

The goal is to get to the point where the puppy will not take food or touch your hand once you have said "Enough", no matter how tasty the treat is. For this technique to work, the whole family must be very consistent, have precise timing, and practice every day. If necessary, a leash and head halter can also be used to teach the "Enough" command. Whenever the puppy ignores the command to stop biting, a gently pull on the leash will close the mouth and give you control. Eventually, the puppy will stop biting when you give the command the first time.

### **TAKE TIME TO SETTLE DOWN**

There will likely be times when your pet is out of control, and you have no time to effectively deal with the problem. In those situations, the best solution is to confine him to a safe area until he settles down. Once he has relaxed, release him, and encourage him to play in an appropriate manner. Occasionally, providing toys stuffed with food can provide a distraction to keep your pet's mouth off you when you don't have the time or energy to concentrate on controlling his behavior.

### **WHAT NOT TO DO**

Avoid harsh corrections and physical punishment. Never hit or slap your pet, thump his nose, squeeze his lips against his teeth, shake him by the scruff of the neck, roll him on



his back, or force your fingers into his mouth. This kind of correction is likely to make the biting problem worse, ruin the bond with your pet, and lead to more serious problems, such as fear and aggression. Use the positive training methods described above, and soon your puppy's mouthing and biting will disappear.

## **The Social Scene - Introducing your puppy to the world**

Little puppies don't come into our world with ready knowledge about humans or the world in which we live. They need to learn all about us--about car rides, vacuums, weaving bicycles, and more. If they don't have a chance to learn about the people, animals, and things in their environment, they may grow up to be fearful, anxious, antisocial adults. This situation can usually be prevented with early socialization and exposure to as many people, animals, sights, sounds and places as possible.

### **Socialization---Making Friends**

Socialization is the process of developing relationships with other living beings in your environment. The first few months of your puppy's life are the most critical for his development. If this time passes without the young pup making necessary social contacts irreparable damage may result, leading to fear, timidity, or aggression. Since the most sensitive period for puppy socialization occurs during the first 12 weeks of age, you should begin the socialization process as soon as you get your new puppy (and then continue into adulthood).

Start with simple, quiet, one-person introductions and gradually include more people in noisier situations. Invite friends, relatives, and their pets to come to your home to meet and greet and play with your puppy. As soon as your veterinarian says your puppy is adequately vaccinated, take him on as many walks and outings as possible. Initially avoid situations that might be high risk for disease, such as neighborhood parks or areas with stray dogs. To make the new introductions special, give a small treat to your puppy whenever he meets someone. As soon as your puppy can sit when he meets new people, let each new friend give the reward. This teaches your puppy to greet properly, rather than lunging or jumping up on visitors and passerby.

### **Networking**

It is important that your puppy meets and receives positive reinforcement from a wide variety of people of all ages and appearances. A puppy that grows up in a restricted social group (e.g., all adults or all females) may show fear or aggression when later exposed to people who look or act differently (e.g., children, men with beards). Even if there are no children living at home, it is likely your puppy will encounter them sometime. Therefore, every effort should be made to see that your young pup has plenty of opportunities to play with and learn about children. Some pups seem to consider kids to be completely different species since they walk, act, and talk much differently than adults. If you don't provide your puppy with adequate positive interaction with children during his early months, he may never feel comfortable around them.

Another excellent way to promote early socialization is to take your puppy to training classes. The new concept on training is to start puppies young before they pick up bad habits and when learning is rapid. Many communities now have puppy training socialization classes where puppies can be admitted as early as their third month. These classes not only help the pups get off to a great start with training, but they also offer a

wonderful opportunity for important social experiences with other puppies and people. Ask your veterinarian about classes available in your area.

Punishment during the early development stages can negatively influence the puppy's relationship with people. Avoid training methods that involve physical discipline, such as swatting your pup, thumping him on the nose, and rubbing his face in a mess. These methods can teach your dog to fear the human hand or to become a fear biter.

### **Habituation**

Habituation is a fancy term that involves getting used to a varied environment. As your puppy matures, new sounds and situations can lead to fear and anxiety. Begin the habituation process at an early age. Frequently expose your puppy to different sights, sounds, odors, and situations.

For example, repeated, short car rides can minimize anxiety associated with traveling, provided nothing unpleasant occurs during the ride. Also expose your puppy to stimuli such as the sound of traffic, sirens, airplanes, water, elevators, or alarm clocks. If your puppy seems to be exceptionally cautious when first introduced to new situations or stimuli, start off with mild exposure and give food rewards for non-fearful response you are trying to encourage. You can then "build up" to more intense exposure. Recordings of a variety of environmental sounds are available if it's difficult to expose your puppy to sufficient stimuli in your own neighborhood.

## Handling and grooming your puppy

It is very important to get your new dog used to being touched and handled. It is essential a dog is still and calm for all aspects of handling, this will make grooming, bathing, tooth brushing, health checks and more much easier. Typically, most dogs will be most sensitive to having their face and feet touched or handled- so these areas should be handled a lot when they are young.

Regular grooming and handling sessions are an excellent opportunity for you to give your pup an overall health check. It is nice to get into a regular routine, so nothing is missed. This should be a pleasant and relaxing time for you both. It is best to choose a time when the pup is tired and feeling sleepy and ready for a cuddle. Talk to him soothingly and reward him with verbal praise and maybe treats for accepting your handling of him. Do not allow him to turn the handling session into a playtime- no biting, no biting brushes, or running off with them.

If your puppy resists the handling at any point, then don't force the issue. Work on giving treats and positive praise and go slower with the event/handling that bothered him. Keep working slowly at the different aspects until the puppy is accepting and happy for the attention.

Dr. Sophia Yin was a well-known veterinary behaviorist. Her methods are wonderful, and you can find more about them on the website [www.drSophiaYin.com](http://www.drSophiaYin.com). If you look on the website there is a blog and a video section which are both helpful. She wrote a book, Perfect Puppy in 7 Days that has great information on training and handling a puppy. Dr. Ken Martin, also a veterinary behaviorist located here in Austin, has a book titled Puppy Start Right.

### COAT AND SKIN

All dogs, long and short-coated need the stimulation given to the skin by daily brushing. Introduce your pup to grooming by initially using firm stroking motions with your hand, all over his body -down his neck and back, down the legs, and under his tummy. When he is happy with this, introduce a gentle brush which will remove dead hair and massage the skin. Many dogs enjoy a good massage with brushes like this used in circular motions all over the back and sides. Experiment to find out what your pup enjoys. As your pup develops an adult coat, he may require special grooming techniques, such as combing out of feathers. Whatever the coat type, try and avoid harsh wire brushes and furminators that can scratch delicate skin and make grooming uncomfortable.

While grooming your dog, you can check the skin all over. If you notice any hairless or inflamed patches, this should be mentioned at the next appointment. Check for any sign of fleas - either live insects or, more commonly, specks of dark dirt like material that may be flea droppings.

### EYES

Look at the corners of the eyes for signs of redness or discharge. Some dogs have a

slight watery discharge from their eyes, which can easily be cleaned every day with a damp cloth. If the discharge is enough and becomes thick or discolored, a vet should check this immediately.

## **EARS**

Lift the earflaps and look at the opening of the ear canal. Dog's ears should not be waxy or smelly. If your dog's ears become dirty, this may require veterinary attention. Some drop-eared dogs do get smelly ears quite often and these will need to be cleaned regularly.

A small amount of wax can be cleaned from around the ear using a veterinary prescription ear cleaner and cotton ball, but do not put cotton tip applicators your dog's ears canal. Many dogs have little fluffy hairs growing from their ear canals that can be a trap for wax. These will need to be plucked out from time to time.

## **TEETH**

Lift your dog's lips and examine all the teeth, then open his mouth and look inside. The teeth should be bright white, and there should be no redness around the gums. Dogs should not have smelly breath. As your pup becomes older, he may develop deposits of plaque around his teeth and gums. Once the plaque progresses to calculus, then it's no longer able to be removed by brushing. Plaque creates bad breath and can lead to gingivitis (a gum infection which may lead to tooth loss or blood borne infections). If your dog's teeth become affected by plaque, they can be cleaned under general anesthesia, with a dental scaling and polishing machine.

As with all health problems prevention is, of course, better than cure. Oravet Chews, Veggie Dent Chews, CET Chews, and some of the specially designed dog chews help prevent this, but there is no substitute for regular brushing with dog toothpaste. Animal toothpastes do not froth the way tooth paste for humans do. They also not have the strong taste that many pets find unpleasant, instead having a savory flavor that most dogs enjoy. They contain enzymes that gently break down plaque and kill the bacteria that cause tartar and gingivitis to develop without the need for you to scrub hard. If your dog has become used to having his teeth brushed when he is a puppy, he will not object and will probably enjoy it! Regular brushing allows a dog to become accustomed to having his mouth examined, making it much easier for you to remove dangerous items from him in a hurry, should this ever prove necessary. The technicians will be happy to demonstrate how to brush your puppy's teeth and guide you through the array of dental care products available from reception.

## **FEET**

Use positive rewards while handling the feet- like treats and praise. Do a little at a time if the puppy is not comfortable with the initial handling/nail trimming and find something that he really likes to help distract him. Sometimes peanut butter or squeeze cheese can be licked out of a Kong while you work on the nails, providing a big distraction and a positive reward.

Pick up each foot in turn, feel and look between the toes for thorns or tangles of hair and check the nails. Nails should lightly touch the ground when the dog is standing but should

not curl around. It is important that your dog's nails do not become too long. This will cause his feet to be uncomfortable, and long claws can easily become caught on carpets and clothes, causing pain and distress. If your dog's nails are not being worn down regularly on walks, they need to be clipped with appropriate nail clippers.

- If your dog has clear or white nails, you can see the pink of the quick through the nail. The inside of the nail is the quick and contains the nerves and blood vessels. Avoid the quick area when trimming.
- If your dog has black nails, you will not be able to see the quick so only cut 1mm of the nail at a time until the dog begins to get sensitive. The sensitivity will usually occur before you reach the quick.
- If your dog has some clear and some black nails, use the average clear nail as a guide for cutting the black ones.
- When cutting nails, use sharp trimmers. Dull trimmers tend to crush the nail and cause pain even if you are not into the quick.
- It is recommended that you have styptic powder available at home in case you accidentally quick a nail. This is sold in pet stores.
- Trim your puppy's nails frequently. If you can hear them clicking on the floor when he walks, it is time for a trim.
- Do not forget to check the dewclaws that are situated further up the leg than the other nails and may be difficult to find in long coated breeds. Some breeders have these removed shortly after birth but if they are left intact, they may grow very long and easily become caught and damaged.

## **GROOMING**

It is important to groom short and long-haired dogs. All coats need the stimulation of a brush to remove dead hair. It also helps to build and reinforce a good relationship with your dog. Your dog should stand still while you brush him, wipe his feet, or towel him down. Muddy paws and dirty dogs happen a lot so having a dog that tolerates the cleanup is important!

Many dogs have coats that do not shed, but they require regular grooming/clip downs to keep the fur under control. They should be brushed between trips to the groomer to prevent mats from developing. Your training and handling is very important for all grooming too!

## **BATHING**

Dogs should be bathed if they are obviously dirty or have an odor. Dog shampoo should be used- they help to remove dirt without removing essential oils that they need for their coats.

**\*\*\* Remember** - if you notice anything that worries you while examining your dog, we will be happy to advise you. Most problems are easily treated if caught early and your dog relies on you to bring potential problems to the vet's attention as quickly as possible.

## **Collars, Leashes, Harnesses, and Halters**

### **Collars**

We generally recommend having one collar that holds the dog's ID and rabies tags and another to which you can attach a leash. If you're getting a collar for your dog, you'll need to start out with the right size. You should be able to fit ONLY 1-2 fingers under the collar when it's secured. This ensures that it's not too loose or too tight. As the dog grows, you can expand the collar. Get a new one when the collar feels too tight even at the largest setting. Make sure that the material is rugged enough to withstand day-to-day wear and tear.

There are some brands of veterinary approved prescription flea and/or tick collars which are safe to use. We recommend against the use of generic flea collars that you can purchase at the pet store. These bands of material let out toxic gases that remain near the pet's head and neck or get absorbed into the skin. Some dogs are sensitive to these chemicals. The materials can be toxic if your dog licks or eats the collar.

### **What to Use When Walking Your Dog**

Walking a dog is a great way to bond, it's also an effective way to connect with and train your dog. Dogs need the exercise and once they're fully vaccinated you will be able to take them out for walks. Dogs also love the mental stimulation that comes with a walk. However, if your overactive dog seems uncontrollable, walks can end up in frustration for both of you.

While it may be your natural inclination to pull on the leash to correct your dog; however, this behavior only causes your dog to pull in the opposite direction, making the problem worse. Tugging at the collar is also uncomfortable for your pet. Additionally, this habit can be harmful to small dogs.

Active dog harnesses may be your best option to use while walking, running, and hiking. Back-clip harnesses are comfortable, especially for small dogs. This is also called a dog harness vest. These devices allow you to clip the leash on at the dog's back, which prevents it from becoming a tripping hazard. A back-clip harness might not stop your dog from pulling, though. In fact, your canine might get a kick from the feeling of dragging you along like a dog sled if he's not trained to walk on a loose leash.

According to some experts, front-clip harnesses are more effective for dogs that like to walk you. Canines can feel every movement of the leash. With their lead attached at the powerful and sensitive chest, dogs can better respond to motions and commands.

Dog training halters might be best for extremely strong or overpowering dogs. Head halters (like the Gentle Leader) often get confused with muzzles because they wrap around a dog's snout and jaw. These types of trainers are like a horse's halter. The design gently encourages dogs to stop pulling because it directs their snout down and back when they start to barge forward. According to the Humane Society, this doesn't hurt the dog the way a choke chain or prong training collar could.

To fit a head halter properly, make sure that the band around the neck sits high, just behind the ears. The strap that covers the nose should be able to slide down to the area where the nose meets the fur, but not any further. When the dog's mouth is open, that strap will rest closer to the eyes.

## **Dog Collar Safety**

Dog collars can be dangerous in certain situations. Watch your dog after you place a new collar on him. If he can insert his lower jaw under the collar, it may be too large or too loose. Remember, you only want to be able to fit 1-2 fingers between your dog's neck and their collar. Additionally, large tags can get caught in your dog's crate. Dogs can get entangled with each other while playing, and tags and collars can get caught on crates or fences.

You should never keep a harness on your pet while he's playing or unsupervised. Always remove collars and harnesses when dogs are playing together, they can get caught on each other. It can be tough to rescue two dogs that are hurt and frightened. Therefore, it's best to prevent them from getting tangled up in the first place. Harnesses should only be used for walks and training.

Some dog collars have safety buckles that release when they're exposed to too much pressure. These can get your dog out of a hazardous situation. However, they can also come apart by accident. You should consider using a separate harness or halter for walking the dog so that your pet doesn't slip out of the safety collar.

Even if training harnesses restrict your dog's ability to pull against a lead, you should never jerk the leash roughly. Take the time to train your dog to walk on a loose leash.

## **Getting Your Pup Used to A New Collar**

If you're trying out a new device, introduce your dog to it slowly. Put the collar or harness on during mealtimes or just before a walk. When the dog associates it with a reward, he'll be more likely to wear it. Most experts suggest using gentle and positive reinforcement when familiarizing your pet with something new or performing training. Prong, pinch and choke collars are not recommended.

## **Retractable Leashes**

Retractable leashes provide extra length when waling your dog, but this also means that you have less control of your dog. Too long leashes can allow a dog to run into the road or run up to another dog and get into a fight. For this reason, we do not recommend retractable leashes.



## **A Guide to Feeding Your Puppy**

There are lots of things you will need to think about and plan for prior to bringing home a new puppy. How to feed, what to feed, and when to feed are just a few of these things. Whether you get the new pup from a breeder or from a shelter, it is a good idea to find out what the pup is eating there so that you can continue the same diet, at least for the first few days.

### **How, for the first couple days?**

Keeping the pup's food, the same is one way to minimize the stress of the move. Before you take your puppy home, ask for a sample of the food they have been eating to get you through the first few days. If you plan to change to another brand of food, do so after the first couple days and do it by gradually mixing in the new food into the old food. Do this over at least 2 or 3 days until you are feeding all new food. This will help encourage your puppy to keep eating, minimize stress, and prevent stomach upset, such as vomiting or diarrhea.

### **What?**

Most breeders and shelter workers know that puppies should be fed proprietary puppy food designed to supply all the nutrients that a rapidly growing pup needs. Some people refer to such rations as "growth formula." The ration should be complete and balanced and should say as much on the package label. The food should be AAFCO approved. AAFCO is the Association of American Feed Control Officials, and their stamp of approval means that the food has undergone rigorous testing and been found satisfactory for the label indication (i.e., feeding rapidly growing puppies). We especially recommend looking for a label that indicates the food underwent feeding trials. Examples of brands that utilize feeding trials include Science Diet, Royal Canin, Purina, and Iams.

The question arises, "Should I feed my pup dry food or canned food?" The answer is either, or a combination of the two, will do just fine. Dry food is less expensive but wet food can be more palatable for the pup.

For large breed dogs it is important to feed puppy food formulated for large breed puppies. This is because they have different caloric requirements as well as different requirements for other nutrients – like calcium and phosphorus.

For small breed dogs, a small breed puppy food may be preferred by the puppy as the kibble is smaller and may be easier to chew. Small dogs are also prone to hypoglycemia (low blood sugar) – a medical emergency where they develop weakness and seizures when their blood sugar goes dangerously low. If you have a toy breed, try to feed 4 or more small meals during the day.

Other types of diets include homemade diets and/or raw diets. It is important to make sure the diet is fully formulated by a veterinary nutritionist. Commercial options should be

AAFCO approved. It is very important to ensure proper handling of raw ingredients to decrease chances of foodborne illness.

Recently there has been an increase in a diet-induced heart condition called dilated cardiomyopathy or DCM. All of the affected dogs were on grain free diets. Those with early disease were able to recover once switched over to a non-grain-free diet. At this time and until we know more, we recommend avoiding grain free foods, especially those containing peas, chickpeas, and lentils. (See chapter on grain free diets.)

### **When?**

Very young puppies (6-12 weeks of age) need at least 3 meals per day. Eventually your puppy may outgrow the mid-day meal; when they show less interest you can phase it out. Make sure the last feeding is several hours before bedtime so your puppy will have plenty of time to eliminate before going into the crate for the night.

Feeding meals is a good practice because it permits you to observe the puppy eating several times a day and thus note its eating habits. At this stage in a puppy's life the gastrocolic reflex is still quite active, so once a pup has finished eating, it usually must be taken outside to eliminate. Pairing feeding with outside excursions in this way is a good start on the road toward eventual housebreaking. Mealtimes are also helpful because it is easier to notice subtle changes in appetite that might be the first sign of illness.

### **How Much?**

"How much should I feed?" might be the next question that comes to the new puppy owner's mind. First, let the manufacturer's label instructions be a guide for you. There will be a range of quantity depending on your pup's size. Just like with people, caloric requirements for one may not be the same as for another with the same body weight. Most pups can be fed in the middle of the range but aim for a normal body condition – not fat and roly-poly and not so thin that their ribs stick out. When meal feeding, especially if wet food is used, the food should be picked up after about 15 or 20 minutes so that none is left lying around. This assures that the pup will eat at specified mealtimes and will enable the puppy's owner to observe their eating habits and be ready to take them outside for a walk after the meal.

### **Treats?**

Healthy treats are best. These can be either with the meal or offered periodically throughout the day to reward good behavior. Wet food is more of a reward than dry food and can be reserved for use in this way. Alternatively puppy treats may be used. The important thing about treats is that they should be small and should not be given too often or they will imbalance the diet. Avoid feeding dogs human food especially handouts from the table.

**Supplements?**

Another thing new puppy owners wonder is whether they should feed their new pup vitamins or mineral supplements. The answer to this is that if you are feeding proper puppy food that is complete and balanced, additional vitamins and minerals are often not necessary.

So, what's the bottom line? The answer is really that puppy owners should feed high quality AAFCO-approved food in the manner recommended by the manufacturers. Puppies should eat regularly, and their eating habits should be observed to ensure that they do not eat too much or too little and that they do not become sick.

## Dilated Cardiomyopathy in Dogs and the link to Grain -Free Diets

DCM is a life-threatening condition in which the heart muscle weakens and cannot pump blood efficiently. A physical hallmark is enlargement of the left ventricle, the organ's main pumping chamber. Dogs with DCM may cough, struggle to breathe and lack stamina. They may collapse, faint or die suddenly. (2)

Starting around 2015, the FDA began receiving reports of dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) in dogs of all breeds. Rising numbers of reported cases led the agency in 2018 to call the public's attention to the issue. A common thread in many of the cases was that the affected animals ate **grain-free** formulations of pet food. (1)

In examining diet histories of affected dogs, he said, investigators found that more than 90% of products, according to their labels or label ingredients, were 'grain-free.' These products did not contain corn, soy, wheat, rice, barley, or other grains. Ninety-three percent of reported products had what appeared from the ingredient panel to be high proportions of peas or lentils or both. A small percent of reported products contained potatoes, including sweet potatoes, in the ingredient list. The data also indicate dogs tended to have worse clinical signs the longer they were on grain-free diets, she said. And, among the grain-free diet group, younger patients had worse clinical disease. (2)

It is the recommendation of Brodie Animal Hospital doctors and staff, to make sure that the food you are feeding your dog is **NOT** grain-free to prevent this life-threatening and preventable illness.

### References:

1)<https://www.avma.org/javma-news/2021-01-01/fda-urges-collaboration-dilated-cardiomyopathy-afflicts-more-dogs>

2)<https://news.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=210&id=9933507>

## Microchips

Pet identification is extremely important to animal parents. Worrying about the whereabouts of a lost pet can be a traumatic experience and a collar can only do so much for an animal stranded in an unknown environment. The pet microchip was created to help alleviate these fears and increase the chances for a joyous reunion.

### Frequently Asked Questions About Pet Microchips

The pet microchip is a small device that is implanted in your pet and, when scanned, identifies a unique code that's specifically created for your furry friend. It is small in size (roughly the size of a grain of rice), compact, and easily inserted under the skin. When a microchip scanner is used to search for a dog or cat with a microchip, a unique number comes up that specifically identifies the pet and its owner.

### How Long Does a Microchip Last?

Typically, a microchip can last up to 20 years and most chip companies will guarantee the product for the life of the animal.

### Can You Feel Your Pet's Microchip?

Depending on the location and body type of the pet, the microchip can sometimes be felt just under the skin, but most of the time it can't be felt. The microchip may also occasionally migrate to different areas under the skin. This can be normal.

### What are the Side Effects of Getting a Pet Microchip?

Side effects are very uncommon with the microchip. After implantation, there may be some bleeding at the injection site and the potential for temporary hair loss.

### How are Pet Microchips Implanted?

Pet microchips are implanted with a large syringe just over the shoulder blades, behind the head, but above the scruff of the neck. Over time, a thin layer of scar tissue will form around the chip, and anchor it in place. After the procedure, the microchip does not require any maintenance or special care. Placement generally does not cause much pain and the typical procedure involves the following:

- **The microchip packet is opened, and the contents are evaluated.**
  - This packet often includes the chip itself, a clip for the pet's collar, a syringe, and stickers that identify the chip number.
- **The chip is scanned.**
  - This is done to confirm that it is functional, and the number is accurate.
- **A technician will restrain your pet.**
  - As the syringe is inserted into the subcutaneous area between the skin and muscle, the plunger is pressed, and the microchip enters the body.
- **They'll check for functionality.**
  - After the procedure, the pet microchip is scanned to ensure that the chip is present and functional.
- **The final step is getting the chip registered.**

- Your chosen chip company will need to pair the chip number with your personal contact information, so that if your pet is found, you can be located immediately. It is critical to provide your name, address, and the best phone number to reach you.
- It is also important to keep your contact information up to date with the microchip company.

### **Are Pet Microchips Worth It?**

Considering the low price, limited strain, and potential for a lifetime of service, the pet microchip is a good investment for pet parents, as they can increase the chances of finding a lost pet.

## **Canine Infectious Disease and Vaccination Information**

A nursing puppy receives antibodies from its mother's milk that protect it from disease during the first months of its life. Unfortunately, these antibodies can also keep vaccines from being fully effective. The antibodies gradually decrease during the first few months of the puppy's life. Therefore, we give puppies a series of 3-4 vaccine doses spread out over six to 21 weeks of age. That way, if maternal antibodies interfere with early vaccinations, later doses will still stimulate the puppy to produce their own antibodies to the disease.

### **PARVOVIRUS INFECTION IN DOGS**

Dogs become infected with parvovirus through contact with the stool of an infected dog or a contaminated environment. The virus is very hardy and remains infective in the environment for a long time. Puppies are the most susceptible to parvovirus infections since they are not yet immune. Parvovirus causes severe, and often bloody, vomiting and diarrhea. Infected animals rapidly dehydrate and in severe cases progress to shock and death. A vaccine is available for prevention of canine parvovirus infection, and all dogs should continue vaccinations after the initial puppy series.

### **RABIES VIRUS**

Rabies is a fatal disease caused by a virus. All warm-blooded animals are susceptible. The disease is usually spread when an infected animal bites another animal or person. The bitten animal or person will not become infected, however, unless the saliva of the sick animal contains the rabies virus at the time of the bite. Wild animals with the highest prevalence of rabies infection are bats, skunks, and foxes. Dogs and cats are the most infected domestic animals. Because the signs of rabies vary, diagnosis is difficult while the animal is alive. The only way to conclusively diagnose is a laboratory exam of brain tissue postmortem.

Texas state law mandates all dogs and cats over 3 months of age be vaccinated for Rabies and receive a booster 1 year later. After the initial 2 vaccinations, a booster is required every 3 years in dogs in Texas. Post exposure boosters should also be given if the situation arises.

### **CANINE PARAINFLUENZA AND BORDETELLA-BRONCHISEPTICA BACTERIA**

These diseases cause canine cough or tracheobronchitis, which is an upper respiratory infection that shows up as a persistent dry, hacking cough. The disease may last several weeks and is highly contagious. Effective vaccines are available. Annual vaccination is necessary after the initial booster series.

### **INFECTIOUS HEPATITIS AND CANINE ADENOVIRUS TYPE 2 IN DOGS**

Infectious canine hepatitis (ICH) is a serious viral disease that affects the liver, kidneys, lymph nodes, eyes, and other organs. Nearly all dogs are exposed to ICH at some time during their lives, but the disease may not develop and never be noticed. Sometimes it will be so severe that death occurs within a few hours after the first signs of illness. Signs of ICH develop about one week after exposure and include high fever, loss of appetite,

increased thirst, tonsillitis, and reddening of the mouth, throat, and eyelids. In some cases, there is bloody diarrhea. The virus may be present in any body secretion and may remain present in the urine for up to 6-9 months. After the initial puppy series, the highly effective vaccine is boosted at 1-2 years of age and then every three years thereafter.

### **DISTEMPER IN DOGS**

Distemper is a highly contagious disease of dogs, wolves, coyotes, raccoons, minks, and ferrets. It is caused by a virus that is easily spread through air and by contact with contaminated objects (like a cold virus for people). Though distemper occurs more frequently in young dogs, it can affect a dog of any age. Signs range from those of a mild respiratory problem, like runny eyes or nose, to severe diarrhea, vomiting, and seizures. Distemper is a serious disease that is often fatal. Many recovered dogs are left with uncontrollable muscle or limb jerking, and/or periodic convulsions. Currently we have no drugs to destroy the virus; prevention is the best treatment. All dogs should have a puppy series and have vaccine boosted at 1 years of age and then every three years thereafter.

### **LEPTOSPIROSIS IN DOGS**

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease that can infect many mammals, including raccoons, deer, squirrels, and many other species found in Central Texas. This bacterium is passed in the urine into common water sources, such as ponds and other pools of standing water. Your dog can then be infected by drinking, swimming, or walking in these sources where the bacteria can enter the bloodstream through cuts or through the eyes, nose, or mouth. Leptospirosis can cause severe kidney or liver failure even with treatment, and the bacteria can also infect humans. At Brodie Animal Hospital, we recommend all dogs that go outside at any time receive the Leptospirosis vaccine. The vaccine needs boosting 3 weeks after the initial vaccine, then once yearly thereafter. This vaccine has proven to be safer than any vaccine created in years past, with fewer reactions being reported.

### **HEARTWORM DISEASE**

Heartworms are parasites that live in your dog's heart and bloodstream. They are transmitted through the bite of an infected mosquito. Indoor and outdoor dogs are at risk of this potentially fatal disease. A blood test can detect infestation even if no symptoms exist. Monthly medication of prevention, as well as injections that last 6 or 12 months are available, and a yearly test is required to ensure no heartworms are present in your dog. More on this later.

### **INTERNAL PARASITES**

Parasites like hookworms, roundworms, whipworms, giardia, and coccidia threaten the health of your pet. In large numbers they can cause intestinal blockage, anemia, diarrhea, vomiting, and death. Each type of parasite requires a specific treatment (no one treatment will kill them all). A yearly microscopic exam of your pet's stool is recommended. Select heartworm preventatives also protect your dog from becoming infected with hookworms, roundworms, and whipworms.



## **Parvovirus Infection in Puppies and Dogs**

Since 1980, parvovirus has become the most serious viral disease of puppies and dogs in the United States and most parts of the world. Parvovirus (parvo for short) is a highly contagious virus that causes severe infection in puppies and unvaccinated dogs by invading and destroying white blood cells and the cells of the intestinal lining. Puppies and dogs become infected when they ingest virus that has been shed in the stool of an infected dog. This can occur when your pet comes in contact with the virus in a contaminated environment, such as a public park. Also, the virus can be readily transmitted from place to place on the hair or feet of an infected dog or on shoes, clothing, or other objects that have been contaminated with the virus. The virus is very hardy and remains infective in the environment for 6 months or more with the right conditions. In addition, dogs may not get sick for up to 7-14 days after being exposed.

Parvo causes severe vomiting and bloody diarrhea. Without treatment, infected animals rapidly become dehydrated, some can progress to shock and death within 2-3 days of infection. Occasionally parvo attacks the heart muscle of very young puppies which can cause sudden death before any other signs are noticed.

All dogs are at risk, but puppies less than 4 months old and dogs that have not been vaccinated against parvo are at increased risk of acquiring the disease. A vaccine is available for prevention of canine parvovirus infection. All puppies should receive a complete series of vaccines. At Brodie Animal Hospital, we recommend that every puppy receive a parvovirus vaccine every 3 weeks with a final parvovirus vaccine at 18- 21 weeks of age. All dogs should receive a vaccine booster with a parvovirus vaccine one year after their initial puppy vaccination series and then at least every 3 years. In addition to having your puppy properly vaccinated, you should minimize contact with other puppies that have not been fully vaccinated and with other dogs that may be sick. This should include avoiding bringing your puppy to places where young puppies congregate such as pet shops and parks. Use caution when bringing your puppy-to-puppy classes, doggy daycare, and grooming establishments. We recommend only attending training classes that require all puppies be up to date on their vaccines. Finally, do not allow your puppy or dog to come into contact with the fecal waste of other dogs while walking or playing outdoors.

## Zoonotic Diseases and Dogs

Zoonotic Diseases are diseases that are transferred from animal to human. Remember that in most cases, these diseases are preventable and treatable. The best way to protect yourself from zoonotic diseases is to practice good hygiene after playing with your dog or handling its waste. Take your dog to the veterinarian for regular checkups, and if your dog exhibits any of the symptoms of these diseases.

### **Giardia**

Giardiasis is the most frequent cause of nonbacterial diarrhea in North America and the most diagnosed intestinal parasite in humans. It is transmitted most frequently through contaminated water. The most common sign of giardiasis in dogs is diarrhea, which can be acute, chronic, or intermittent.

### **Leptospirosis**

Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease spread through the urine of infected animals. In people, the symptoms are often flu-like. The risk of getting leptospirosis through common contact with a dog is low.

### **Lyme Disease**

Although Lyme disease is not prevalent in our area, it is common in the Northeastern US, and if plan to travel with your pet, it is something to consider. Lyme disease is a bacterial disease that can cause a “bull’s-eye” rash with fever, headache, and muscle or joint pain. If you are in an area where there are ticks, such as the woods, wear light-colored clothing so that ticks can be spotted more easily and removed before becoming attached, wear long-sleeved shirts, and tuck your pants into socks. Appropriate insect repellants should be used. After hikes or other outdoor activities in high-risk areas, inspect yourself and your dog for ticks and remove them promptly. Be sure to treat your pet on an ongoing basis with a flea and tick prevention medication.

### **Rabies**

Rabies is a fatal disease caused by the rabies virus. Call 311 and talk to your health care provider right away if any animal bites you, especially a wild animal. Most household pets, including dogs, are vaccinated, but because there is a chance of contracting rabies from a dog bite, you should always contact your doctor for care. Texas law requires all dogs to be vaccinated against rabies at least every three years after the initial 2 injections.

### **Ringworm**

Ringworm is not a worm, but a skin disease caused by fungus. Ringworm usually makes a bald patch of scaly skin or a ring-shaped rash that is reddish and itchy. The rash can be dry and scaly or wet and crusty. Ringworm is transmitted by direct contact with an infected animal’s skin or hair, or contaminated soil. Dogs and cats, especially puppies and kittens, can pass ringworm to people, so preventative care by your veterinarian is important.

**Roundworm**

Roundworms are commonly found in the intestines of dogs and puppies and shed through their stool. Roundworm infections can also cause eye disease that can cause blindness or even swelling of the body's organs or central nervous system, although most infections are not serious. It can also come from contaminated soil, like from gardening. Wash your hands after playing with your dog and do not let children play in areas soiled with pet waste. Most heartworm preventions have ingredients that treat/prevent intestinal parasites.

**Hookworm**

Hookworms are relatively common intestinal parasites of dogs, cats, and other animals. Adult worms live in the small intestine and their eggs are shed in the stool. Hookworm larvae can penetrate human skin and cause a skin disorder known as cutaneous larval migrans or creeping eruption. This infection is not common, but anyone who develops a skin rash after being in contact with a pet with hookworms should consult a physician. Pick up and dispose of all stools promptly. Wash hands after any contact with stool or animal. Most heartworm preventions have ingredients that treat/prevent intestinal parasites.

## Heartworm Disease

Heartworm disease is very common in Central Texas. Heartworms are parasites spread by mosquitoes. The parasite lives in the right side of the dog's heart and the nearby large vessels. It can take up to 6 months from the time of the dog is bitten by an infected mosquito until the dog will test positive for heartworms. If left untreated, heartworm infection can be fatal. This parasite is easily prevented, and it is recommended that all dogs and cats use preventatives. Although dogs and cats are both susceptible to heartworm disease, dogs get heartworms much more commonly than cats. Outdoor pets may be at increased risk for heartworms since their exposure to mosquitoes is higher.

### HEARTWORM PREVENTION

Highly effective medication is available to prevent heartworm disease in dogs and cats. Mosquito control is certainly helpful but should never be the sole means of prevention. Here are some products we carry at Brodie Animal Hospital:

#### CANINE PRODUCTS-

- **Sentinel:** This is a once monthly treatment for preventing heartworms as well as common intestinal parasites such as roundworms, hookworms, and whipworms. It also aides in the control of the flea population by rendering the flea eggs sterile (but it does not kill adult fleas). It must be given after a full meal.
- **Trifexis:** This is a once monthly treatment for preventing heartworms as well as common intestinal parasites such as roundworms, hookworms, and whipworms. It also kills adult fleas. It must be given after a full meal.
- **Simparica Trio:** This is a once monthly chewable tablet for preventing heartworms as well as the intestinal parasites roundworms and hookworms. It also kills adult fleas and ticks. It must be given on a full stomach.
- **ProHeart:** There are 2 different types of Proheart, Proheart 6 and ProHeart 12, which provide heartworm protection for 6 or 12 months respectively. This is an injectable treatment that can be done to pets 6 months or older. It is recommended to have a heartworm test done before the first time of administration, and 6 months after the first administration.

## Dental Disease in Dogs



**Normal Teeth and Gums**



**Advanced Dental Disease**

Dental tartar is composed of various mineral salts, organic material, and food particles. In the early stages of accumulation, the material is soft (plaque), but it quickly hardens into tartar (calculus), adheres to the teeth, and cannot be removed by a toothbrush after 3 days. Continual accumulation causes inflammation and eventual recession of the gums, bone loss and loose teeth. The breath becomes very smelly, and the mouth becomes a dangerous source of infection. Untreated tooth and gum disease in dogs allows bacteria to enter the bloodstream which may cause damage to the kidneys, heart valves and other organs. Severe dental disease is a daily source of pain, and may cause an animal to eat less, lose weight and lose overall vigor. However, many dogs will not show obvious signs, even with advanced dental disease, so it is important to have your dog's teeth checked regularly.

**Treatment (Our Job):**

General anesthesia is required to do a thorough job cleaning your dog's teeth. To reduce the risks of anesthesia, a doctor will perform an exam before starting the procedure. We will also do a blood test to make sure your dog is a good candidate for anesthesia. Your dog will have an intravenous drip placed to ensure hydration, perfusion of the organs, and maintenance of blood pressure. We use short acting anesthetic agents, including injectable and gas anesthesia, which are adjustable (so the patient does not go too deeply under anesthesia). We monitor ECG, oxygen saturation, blood pressure, respiratory rate, heart rate, ETCO<sub>2</sub>, and temperature. A circulating warm air blanket and a warm water pad will help maintain body temperature. Your pet is recovered in a heated cage under close supervision.

The teeth are cleaned with an ultrasonic scaler and by hand, and then polished, followed by a fluoride treatment. All the teeth are X-rayed with a dental X-ray machine. If extractions are needed, local anesthesia is performed, so your pet will wake up with a comfortable mouth. Post-operatively, pain medications are given and prescribed for you to give at home. Many dogs with significant dental problems are "senior" (over 7 years old). We routinely clean teeth on dogs up to 14-20 years old with very beneficial effects



**X-Ray of tooth root abscess**

**Preventative Maintenance and Cleaning (Your Job):**

For dogs, the very best prevention is brushing teeth daily or every other day to remove plaque and prevent calculus formation. C.E.T. is a special enzymatic toothpaste developed to kill the bacteria that develop on the gums and teeth of dogs and remove plaque. It is available in several tasty flavors. Do not use human toothpaste, which can cause stomach upset if swallowed, and can have a sweetener called xylitol which is toxic to dogs.

To start a tooth brushing program with your dog, here are a few hints:

- 1) Begin slowly by putting your finger (with or without a gauze pad) in his/her mouth between the gums and cheeks for a few seconds and increase the time a little each session for about 3 days. Always make brushing a positive experience and reward your pet after each session with lots of praise.

2) Next, add a little CET toothpaste on your finger and continue brushing with your finger for another couple of days. Let your pet taste the toothpaste. Often, they like the flavor.

3) Introduce a finger-brush, a CET soft bristle brush, or an Oral-B pediatric brush slowly at first, a few seconds at a time, then add CET toothpaste and attempt a brushing. It is not necessary to brush the inside of your dog's teeth. Concentrate on the gumline on the outside of all teeth. By slowly building up to this new activity and establishing trust, your dog should allow you to brush his/her teeth. In fact, many dogs look forward to this as an expected part of their day with you. A tooth brushing session should only take 1-2 minutes of your time daily to every other day. Ideally, you should introduce tooth brushing to your dog as a young puppy as part of a daily routine to familiarize him/her with the process.

If you have tried all the above steps without success, an alternative is dental chews and dental diets. A fun, easy product is the CET Chew-eze rawhide, which delivers the CET bacteria killing enzyme to the gums as your dog chews on the rawhide. Use one every 1-3 days depending on your dog's tartar. **However, it is important that you supervise your dog to be sure he/she chews well and does not swallow large pieces of a dental chew.**

**\*\*Regular brushing and/or the use of Oravet Chews or sealant, or CET Rawhide Chews will help prevent infection and extractions of teeth in the future\*\***

We look forward to giving your dog a clean, happy, and healthy mouth. If you have any questions about the dental needs of your dog, please do not hesitate to ask one of the Brodie Animal Hospital technicians. They are happy to help.

Information and photos used with permission from Jan Bellow

## Emergency Pet Care

In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for you to provide first aid to your pet. Pet first aid is immediate and temporary care given to your injured pet until they can be taken to a veterinarian.

**Recognizing an Emergency-** Get to know your pet's behavior and health. Use that knowledge and your common sense to recognize when your pet is experiencing a health emergency. Watch for:

- Crying, whining, or yelps
- Bleeding or obvious deformities
- Unusual odors in the pet's environment, such as gas, smoke, or chemical
- Unusual behavior, such as dizziness, confusion, vomiting, or diarrhea
- Signs of shock, including rapid, weak, or absent pulse; unconsciousness; cool limbs; and rapid, slow, or difficult breathing
- Trouble breathing

### ***Emergency Action Steps***

- **Check:** Is the scene safe? If not, seek help. Check the injured animal only when it is safe to do so.
- **Call:** Telephone for help, but do **not** call 9-1-1 for an animal emergency. Start with BAH during office hours: **512-892-3486**; OR **Central Texas Veterinary Specialty and Emergency Hospital** if after hours: **512-892-9038**, OR **Austin Veterinary Emergency & Specialty: 512-343-2837**, local animal control **311**, or the humane society. If you suspect poisoning, call Animal Poison Control (1-888-426-4435).
- **Care:** If it is safe to do so, provide first aid as needed and transport your pet to a hospital, veterinarian, or shelter for further care.

**Basic First Aid-** Consult your veterinarian for more complete advice on providing first aid to your pet, especially if it has any ongoing health issues.

1. **Check for breathing.** Administer rescue breathing or CPR, if needed.
2. **Control bleeding.** Carefully apply pressure to the wound.
3. **Warm the animal.** Wrap a thermal blanket around the animal's body if they are cold or in shock.
4. **Transport your pet to a veterinarian or animal hospital immediately. Don't delay.**

### **Central Texas Veterinary Specialty and Emergency Hospital (South)**

4434 Frontier Trail, Austin, TX 78745  
Tel (512) 892-9038 • fax (512) 892-7911

### **Austin Veterinary Emergency & Specialty**

7300 Ranch Rd 2222, Austin, TX 78730  
Tel (512) 343-2837



**If you think that your pet has ingested something toxic, call ASPCA Poison Control 1-888-426-4435.** There is a cost associated with this call. They will provide you with a case number and when your pet is taken to the clinic, that case number will allow the veterinarian to speak directly to the specialist at Poison Control and provide the best treatment plan for your pet. Also, if you can bring the product with the label to the clinic, it will assist in the treatment as well. If you have a Home Again microchip and the yearly registration is up to date, the service to call ASPCA Poison Control can be included.



## Poisonous Plants and Your Pet

Be aware of the plants in your yard or home. Ingestion of even small amounts of rhododendron or azalea, oleander, lily, or yew can be harmful or fatal to your pet.

### *Symptoms of Plant Poisoning*

- Irritation to skin and/or mouth
- Drooling
- Diarrhea
- Seizures
- Unconsciousness
- Vomiting

Note: Vomiting is common after dogs or cats ingest plant material—seek care especially if vomiting accompanies other symptoms.

Poisonous Plants (the ASPCA Poison control website provides pictures of these plants)

Aloe Vera	Clematis	Ivy, all varieties	Poison Hemlock
Amaryllis	Cordatum	Jerusalem Cherry	Poison Ivy
Apple (seeds, leaves)	Corn Plant	Juniper (needles, berries)	Poison Oak
Apricot (pit, leaves)	Cornstalk Plant	Kalanchoe*	Poison Sumac
Asparagus Fern	Croton	Larkspur	Poppy
Autumn Crocus*	Cycads*	Lily,* most varieties	Pothos
Avocado (fruit, pit)	Cyclamen	Lily of the Valley*	Potato Plant (leaves, sprouts)
Azalea*	Daffodil	Marijuana	Primrose
	Diffenbachia/Dumb		
Baby's Breath	Cane	Mistletoe	Rhododendron*
	Dracaena/Dragon		
Begonia	Tree	Morning Glory	Rhubarb* (leaves)
Bittersweet	Elephant Ear	Mushroom* (some)	Ribbon Plant
Bird of Paradise	Fiddle-leaf Fig	Narcissus	Sago Palm*
Buddhist Pine	Foxglove*	Nightshade	Skunk Cabbage
	Geranium		
Caladium	Grapes	Oleander*	String of Pearls
Calla Lily	Holly (berries)	Oregon Grape	Tomato (green fruit, stems, leaves)
Castor Bean*	Hyacinth	Peach (leaves, pits)	Tulips
Ceriman	Hydrangea	Philodendron	Weeping Fig
Cherry (leaves, pits)	Iris	Plum (pit, leaves)	Yew*

\* Highly Toxic: Contact your veterinarian immediately if your pet ingests one of these plants. This is not a comprehensive list of all poisonous plants. If a plant is not on this list, do not automatically consider it to be safe.

## Do Your Emergency Plans Include Your Pets?



### **Develop an evacuation plan that includes your pet.**

Pets are not better off left at home if you evacuate- if it isn't safe for you to be there, it's not safe for them either. Emergency shelters usually do not allow pets, however, so plan and find a boarding kennel, motel, or friend who will take your pet.

### **Make sure your pet is properly identified.**

A collar with a tag may come off in an emergency. At Brodie Animal Hospital, we strongly recommend a microchip to identify your pet safely and permanently.

**Keep phone numbers and a current photo of your pet in your emergency kit.** Have the phone numbers of Brodie Animal Hospital, the Emergency Hospital, the humane society, and local shelters on hand in case your pet is lost. You may need your pet's photo to prove ownership.

### **Have a leash and/or cat carrier on hand.**

You will need these items to safely evacuate an agitated pet.

### **Keep your pet's vaccinations up to date.**

Most boarding facilities require proof of current rabies and distemper vaccines. Keep copies of these records in your emergency kit.

### **Comfort your pet.**

In the event of an emergency, your pet will probably be just as frightened as you. Give it attention and affection—but don't force it. Let your pet come to you.

### ***Prepare a 72- Hour Pet Emergency Kit***

Pack in waterproof bags in a backpack:

- Food and water (enough for 3 days)
- Food and water bowls
- Prescription medications (rotate frequently)
- Pet's medical record
- Pet's rabies certificate
- Authorization for medical treatment in your absence
- Emergency phone numbers
- Your veterinarian's phone number
- Extra leash and collar
- Current picture of your pet
- Towel or small blanket for sleeping

- Small plastic bags for waste disposal (dog)
- Small litter box with litter (cat)
- Favorite toy or treat
- First aid items