

THE OAKS VETS

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PUPPY INFORMATION SHEET.

CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW ARRIVAL!

First things first! If you haven't already bought everything remember, dogs like their own personal place so provide a suitable bed, which should be off the ground and in a draught-free position. Puppy crates are now widely available and have proven to be very worthwhile as they provide a safe haven for your puppy. These also help protect your furniture, slippers and other household goods from being chewed and swallowed!

Other essential items include food and water bowls, brush and comb, collar and lead and some safe toys (be sure your puppy cannot bite off pieces and swallow them!).

It is advisable not to go to your pup every time he barks or cries, as he may become too dependent on you, which can lead to behavioural problems later on. A hot water bottle wrapped up well and placed in the bed and lots of soft, warm bedding can imitate the warmth of a mother's companionship.

INSURANCE

When you take charge of your new puppy, he may be insured for a short period of time under the breeder's cover. We highly recommend you take out insurance and keep them 'Insured For Life', rather than a 12 month policy. If your breeder has not provided any insurance we can organise 4 weeks free with Pet Plan, who will then contact you regarding the continuation of cover.

SOCIALISATION AND HABITUATION

From about six weeks old, puppies should be gently and carefully exposed to as many experiences as possible, both inside and outside the home. It is imperative that this socialisation is carried out carefully, using rewards to build up the puppy's confidence and drawing back if the stimulant starts to frighten him. Remember, too, that he will not have full protection from canine diseases at this age, so you must introduce him to the outside world from the safety of your arms, but never, under any circumstances, walk him outside on a lead before he is fully protected, which is usually a week after the second vaccination.

When a puppy arrives at its new home, it should be left alone for short periods, in order to learn how to behave when left. It should also experience short and regular car journeys.

PUPPY PARTIES AND SOCIALISATION CLASSES

These will help your puppy interact correctly with people and other animals and accept new experiences. The benefits from attending organised classes can be enormous.

This is also an ideal opportunity for a puppy to become accustomed to the vet's waiting and consulting rooms without experiencing any treatment and will provide the owners with an opportunity to discuss any concerns they may have, in a relaxed atmosphere.

When your puppy is a little older, he can progress to socialisation and habituation classes.

VACCINATION

A puppy is born with acquired immunity from his mother, which gradually fades by the time he is six weeks old. Though some vets offer vaccination at six weeks, the normal routine is to have the first injection at nine weeks, followed by the second one of the course at twelve weeks of age. Vaccination cannot be carried out earlier than six weeks because the pup's natural immunity blocks the effect of the vaccine. Vaccination is routinely carried out to protect puppies from Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza and Leptospirosis.

WORMING

The most common intestinal parasite in dogs is the roundworm, and young puppies can become seriously ill as a result of heavy infestations. It is important, therefore, that you commence a worming programme as soon as possible.

Another very good reason to start worming your puppy as soon as you can is that roundworm eggs can be passed on to humans.

HOUSE TRAINING

Puppies usually urinate or defecate soon after waking or after feeding and, if you physically put him in the correct area at these times, he is almost bound to toilet and when he uses the correct area he should immediately be praised with affection, kind words and the reward of a titbit. By rewarding him for correct action, he will soon learn how you want him to behave. Scolding a puppy for bad behaviour can be a dangerous tactic, as he may not connect a punishment with the misdeed.

HIDDEN DANGERS

Puppies, like children, can swallow all kinds of objects. You must be sure that your puppy cannot pick up things that can be swallowed, as these can cause a blockage in the gut, which will make him seriously ill. Puppies will chew all kinds of items and it is important to protect them from danger by keeping such things as electric cables out of reach. Ponds can also be a danger for young pups and should be covered.

YOUR CHECK LIST:

- Your puppy should be vaccinated at **9 weeks** & **12 weeks** of age.
- Worm your pup **every 2 weeks till he's 3 months** old then **monthly till he's 6 months old**. From 6 months your dog should be wormed every 3 months.
- Get your pup '**Insured for Life**'.
- Come along to a **Puppy Party (1 week after the 1st vaccination)** for 4 weeks and receive a 10% discount on neutering on completion.
- Find a good **Puppy Training Class** in your area and put your pup's name down now, or you may not get a place as they are very popular!

PUPPY PARTIES!

These are held in our branches and are taken by either a Veterinary Nurse or one of the Animal Care Assistants. You will be invited to attend for 4 weeks in a row and will be able to discuss things like **Training**, **Dental Care**, **Neutering** and **Feeding** amongst other things. It will give your puppy a great opportunity to not only socialise with other pups of various sizes but also give them a good experience of visiting the vets. Many of the dogs who have completed these classes are now very happy to come and see us, some owners say they can't pass the door without popping in! If you haven't already done so, please give your name to reception and come along to one of our surgeries:

Saltcoats: Monday 6pm-7pm & Wednesday 6pm - 7pm. Tel: 01294 462570

Largs: Tuesday 6pm - 7pm Tel: 01475 673644