

North Westchester Veterinary Office

2068 East Main St, Cortlandt Blvd.

Cortlandt Manor NY, 10567

914-736-9500

Your puppy's first visit (6-8 weeks of age)

- Care and instruction overview
- General physical exam
- Intestinal parasite exam (stool sample)
- Appropriate flea/tick preventative
- 1st set of core vaccines
 - Puppy Distemper vaccine



Your puppy's second visit (10-12 weeks of age)

- General physical exam
- 2nd set of core vaccinations
 - Puppy Distemper vaccine
- Possible introduction of non-core vaccines
 - Lyme
 - Bordatella
 - Canine Influenza
- Appropriate flea/tick preventative

Your puppy's third visit (15-16 weeks of age)

- General physical exam
- 3rd set of core vaccinations

- Puppy Distemper vaccine
- Rabies vaccination
- 2nd set of appropriate non-core vaccines
 - Lyme
 - Bordatella
 - Canine Influenza
- Appropriate flea/tick preventative
- Heartworm preventative

Your puppy's final visit of the year (6 months)

- General physical exam
- Recommended pre-anesthesia blood work
- Heartworm test
- Spay or neuter procedure
- Optional Microfinder Chip implantation under anesthesia
- Discussion of appropriate diet at discharge



Vaccines

Core Vaccines

Core vaccines are what every dog should be vaccinated for on a regular basis

Rabies Vaccine: Rabies is a viral infection that affects all mammals (including people) and is 100% fatal. It is given to healthy dogs at 12 weeks of age and older for prevention of disease due to the rabies virus. Revaccination is necessary 1 year later, then every 3 years thereafter. THIS VACCINE NEEDS TO BE GIVEN... IT IS NEW YORK STATE LAW.

Puppy Distemper Vaccine: It aids in the prevention of multiple disease, i.e. corona virus, parainfluenza virus, distemper virus, canine hepatitis, adenovirus type 2 and parvovirus. These viruses are the leading cause of death in unvaccinated puppies and are easily spread from one dog to another. The initial vaccine is given to puppies 6 weeks of age or older. It then needs to be boosted every 3-4 weeks until the puppy is at least 16 weeks old. A minimum of 2 vaccines are needed. The Puppy Distemper Vaccine is good for one year.

Canine Adult Distemper Vaccine: Is the same as the puppy distemper vaccine without the additional aid in prevention of canine corona virus. It is given to adult dogs once every 3 years starting one year after their initial puppy series.

Non-core Vaccines

The non-core vaccines are given to dogs that are at a high risk for a particular virus/disease.

Lyme Vaccine: Lyme disease is caused by the bacteria, *Borrelia burgdorferi*, and is transmitted by tick bites. Due to the large quantity of ticks in our region, the Lyme vaccine is *strongly recommended*. This vaccine is given to healthy dogs 9 weeks of age and older to aid in the prevention of Lyme disease. The initial vaccine is given and followed by a second dose 2-3 weeks later. Annual vaccination is recommended. If starting vaccinations after 6 months of age, testing for Lyme disease may be required. Testing may also be required if the dog is overdue for the annual Lyme vaccination. This testing is up to the doctor's discretion.



Canine Parainfluenza-Bordatella Bronchiseptica Vaccine: This vaccine aids in the prevention of disease associated with Canine parainfluenza and *Bordatella bronchiseptica* infection (causative agents of kennel cough disease). This vaccine is recommended if your dog will be going to the groomer, puppy play

classes, doggy daycares or boarding facilities. This vaccine must be given a minimum of 72 hours prior to kenneling to be effective.

Canine Influenza Vaccine: Canine influenza is a newly emerging infectious disease caused by the flu virus that occurs most frequently in high-density dog populations like shelters, boarding facilities, or dog shows. This vaccine is given to dogs at 6 weeks of age or older. After the initial vaccine, a booster will need to be given 2-4 weeks later. This vaccine is highly recommended for any dog who is currently receiving the Bordatella vaccination.

Leptospirosis Vaccine: Canine Leptospirosis is a bacterial disease of dogs and other mammals that primarily affects the liver or kidneys. The bacterium is most commonly carried by rodents and can be picked up from garbage or stagnant water. The initial vaccine is given to dogs at 6 weeks of age or older and then a booster is required 2-3 weeks later. This disease can be transmitted to humans so the vaccine is highly recommended for any dog who frequently goes hiking, swimming or has access to stagnant water.

Why does my puppy need more than one vaccination?

When the mother nurses its puppy, the puppy receives a temporary form of immunity through its mother's milk. This immunity is in the form of proteins called maternal antibodies. For about twenty-four to forty-eight hours after birth, the puppy's intestines allow absorption of these antibodies directly into the blood stream. This immunity is of benefit during the first few weeks of the puppy's life, but at some point, this immunity fails and the puppy must be able to make its own long-lasting immunity. Vaccinations are used for this purpose. As long as the mother's antibodies are present, vaccinations do not have a chance to stimulate the puppy's immune system. The mother's antibodies interfere by neutralizing the vaccine. Many factors determine when the puppy will be able to respond to the vaccinations. These include the level of immunity in the mother dog, how much antibody has been absorbed, and the number of vaccines given to the puppy. Since we do not know when an individual puppy will lose the short-term immunity, we give a series of vaccinations. We hope that at least two of these will fall in the window of time when the puppy has lost immunity from its mother but has not yet been exposed to disease. A single vaccination, even if effective, is not likely to stimulate the long-term immunity, which is so important. The rabies vaccine is an exception to this; since one injection is given at the proper time/age it is enough to produce long-term immunity.



Vaccine Reactions

What to look out for: Any pet can have a reaction to a vaccine, even one that has been given before with no problem. It is important to understand the difference between “normal” reactions and “abnormal” reactions. You should always monitor your pet for at least 2 hours after any vaccination.

Normal Reaction: Pets may feel lethargic, ache-y, have a mild fever or a poor appetite. This is the body’s normal, healthy response to immune stimulus and should resolve within a day or so. If symptoms are severe or continue for more than one day, please call the office (914-736-9500).

Abnormal Reaction: Rarely, a pet may experience a serious allergic reaction to a vaccine, leading to anaphylactic shock. This is a serious, life-threatening condition. Signs of allergic reactions can include sudden and profound lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea, swelling of the face or legs, sudden itchiness, hives, collapse or difficulty breathing. These symptoms can occur within a few minutes of a vaccine or a few hours. ***You should contact the office immediately if any of the above symptoms occur, or contact a 24-hour emergency hospital: Veterinary Emergency Group 914-949-8779***

Vaccine Site Lumps: Many pets experience a localized swelling at the site of the vaccine injection. This is the body’s response to foreign material being injected. Very rarely, a more serious condition may form at the vaccine site. It is important that all vaccine lumps are reported to the Vet’s Office. We can then speak with you over the phone and then decide what treatment, if any, is required for your pets. These reactions should be recorded in your pet’s chart for future reference.



Flea and Tick Prevention

Why should I control fleas and ticks?

Besides making your dog itchy, fleas can lead to anemia, tapeworms and skin infections. Ticks are among the most efficient carriers of disease because they attach firmly when sucking blood, feed slowly and may go unnoticed for a considerable time while feeding. Your puppy can contract Lyme disease, Anaplasmosis, Ehrlichiosis, and Rocky Mountain Spotted fever from a tick bite.

How do I Control Fleas and Ticks?

There are several options for flea/tick control. Beware of over the counter products which may be harmful to your pet!

K9 Advantix is a great topical option. This is a monthly preventative that is applied to your dog. Advantix kills all life cycles of the flea and prevents ticks, mosquitoes, biting flies and lice from living on your pet.

The Seresto is a unique collar that kills and repels against fleas and tick. This collar slowly releases two main ingredients in low concentrations for effective 8 months of protection. The collar is easy to apply, non-greasy, odorless and convenient.

Credelio is a small and tasty beef flavored chewable tablet for treatment and control of fleas and ticks. This is a monthly preventative given according to your pets' weight.

Interceptor Plus is also a monthly chewable tablet that protects your pet against five common parasites.



These parasites include Heartworm disease, hookworms, roundworms, whipworms, and tapeworms.

Ask your veterinarian which product will be best for your pet!



Heartworm Disease

What is it?

Heartworm disease, or dirofilariasis, is a serious and potentially fatal disease in dogs. It is caused by a blood-borne parasite called *Dirofilaria immitis*. With heartworm disease, parasitic worms live in the right side of the heart and can grow 10 to 12 inches in length. As the heartworms grow, it causes damage to the pulmonary arteries of the lungs; signs of the disease may include a mild persistent cough, reluctance to exercise, fatigue after moderate activity, decreased appetite, and weight loss.



How can my dog get it?

Heartworm disease develops when a dog is bitten by a mosquito carrying the microscopic heartworm larvae. This is not transmissible from dog to dog.



Is it common?

Heartworm disease continues to be a major health problem for dogs living in the United States and throughout the temperate and tropical regions of the world.

How do I protect my dog?

We recommend Interceptor Plus to prevent heartworm disease. This product is suggested for all dogs all year round. In a well-controlled lab study, Interceptor Plus was 100% effective against heartworm infections when administered once a month.

Intestinal Parasites

On your pet's first visit, and all annual visits, a stool sample should be run to screen for any intestinal parasites. Intestinal parasites are microscopic and generally not seen with the naked eye. Parasites can be transmitted from one dog to another, most often through their feces. Some can also be transmitted to humans by walking through the grass barefoot and/or not washing your hands well. Be sure to have your pet tested regularly and treated accordingly. Many heartworm medications aid in the prevention of intestinal parasites and should be used regularly.

Do all puppies have worms?

Intestinal parasites are very common in puppies. Puppies can become infected with parasites before they are born or later through their mother's milk. The microscopic examination of a stool sample will usually help us to determine the presence of intestinal parasites. We recommend this exam for all puppies. De-worming is done now and repeated in about three weeks. It is important that it be repeated because the de-worming medication only kills the adult worms. Within three to four weeks, the larval stages will become adults and need to be treated. Dogs remain susceptible to re-infection with hookworms and roundworms. Periodic de-worming throughout the dog's life may be recommended for outdoor dogs.

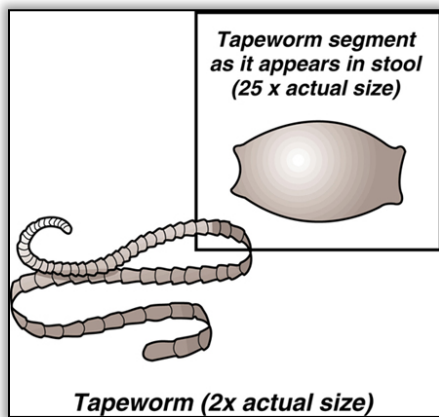
Is there more than one type?

There are several types of intestinal parasites, most commonly:

- **Roundworms:** Roundworms do not require an intermediate host to spread from dog to dog. Nematodes (roundworms) are free-living in the bowel. If a growing puppy is infected with a large number of roundworms, they can stunt growth, cause serious digestive upsets and result in excessive gas formation. These puppies have a characteristic 'pot bellied' appearance. Roundworms can be transmitted from dog to dog via infective eggs shed in the feces.
- **Hookworms:** Hookworms, particularly *Ancylostoma*, are one of the most pathogenic parasites dogs can have. The hookworm is approximately 1/2 to 1" (1-2 cm) long and attaches to the lining of the bowel. As a result of blood sucking, hookworms can cause severe anemia. In

addition, the infective larvae can enter the host either by mouth or through the skin, particularly the feet. Eczema and secondary bacterial infection can result due to irritation as they burrow through the skin. They cause dark brown-black diarrhea.

- **Tapeworms:** Tapeworms are one of the most common intestinal parasites of dogs. Puppies become infected with them when they swallow fleas; the eggs of the tapeworm live inside the



flea. When the dog chews or licks its skin as a flea bites, the flea may be swallowed. The flea is digested within the dog's intestine; the tapeworm hatches and then anchors itself to the intestinal lining. Therefore, exposure to fleas may result in a new infection. *Dipylidium caninum*, the common tapeworm of the dog, causes few problems in the adult host but can result in digestive upsets and stunting of growth in puppies.

- **Whipworms:** Large intestinal worms that cause gas and diarrhea.
- **Giardia:** A one-celled parasite that lives in the intestines and causes diarrhea.
- **Coccidia:** A microscopic protozoa causing severe damage to the intestines and diarrhea.



Figure 1 Giardia

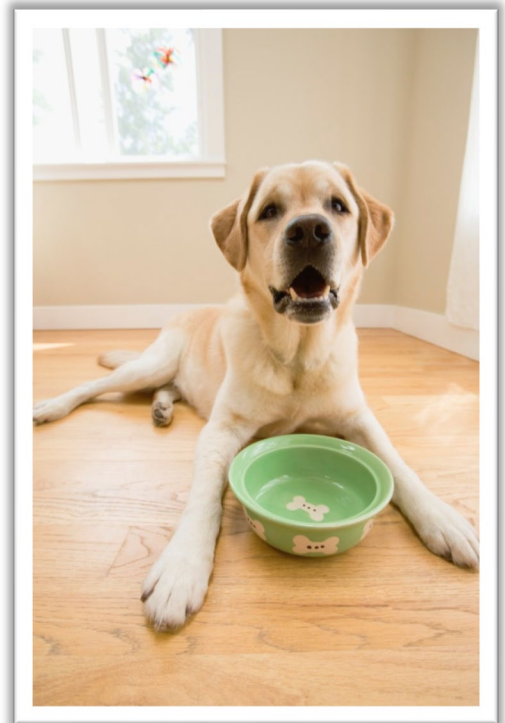
Feeding your puppy

What should I feed my puppy?

Diet is extremely important during the growing months of a dog's life. We recommend a VETERINARY RECOMMENDED NAME-BRAND FOOD made by a national dog food company (not a generic or local brand) and a diet MADE FOR PUPPIES. This should be fed until your puppy is about six to eighteen months of age, depending on its breed and size. We recommend that you only buy food that has been certified by an independent organization as complete and balanced. In the United States, you should look for food that has been certified by AAFCO, an independent organization that oversees the entire pet food industry. It does not endorse any particular food, but it will certify that the food has met the minimum requirements for nutrition. In Canada, look for foods approved by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA).

Feeding a dry or canned form of dog food is acceptable. Any of the formulations is acceptable as long as the label states that the food is intended for growth (or is a puppy food), and is "complete and balanced". This means that the food is nutritionally complete and meets the needs of growth and development. Each of the types of food has advantages and disadvantages. Dry food is definitely the most inexpensive. It can be left in the dog's bowl without drying. If you have a large breed puppy, make sure you purchase dog food formulated for large breeds as they have specific energy requirements. The guaranteed analysis on the back of the bag should indicate a Calcium level <1.2%.

Table foods are not usually recommended. Because they are generally very tasty, dogs will often begin to hold out for these and not eat their well-balanced dog food. If you choose to give your puppy table food, be sure that at least 90% of its diet is good quality commercial puppy food. Vegetables like carrots and green beans make great "treats".



How often should I feed my puppy?

There are several “right” ways to feed puppies. The most popular method is commonly called “meal feeding.” This means that the puppy is fed at specific times of the day. A measured amount of food should be offered four times per day for five to twelve week old puppies. What is not eaten within thirty minutes is taken up. If the food is eaten within three to four minutes, the quantity is probably not sufficient. Puppies fed in this manner generally begin to cut back on one of those meals by three to four months of age and perhaps another one later. If a certain feeding is ignored for several days, it should be discontinued. Free choice feeding means that food is available at all times. This tends to lead to overeating and obesity.



Puppy Behavior

What type of play behavior should I expect from a healthy puppy?

It is very important that you provide stimulating play for your puppy, especially during the first week in its new home. Stalking and pouncing are important play behaviors in puppies and are necessary for proper muscular development. Your puppy will be less likely to use family members for these activities if you provide adequate puppy-safe toys. The best toys are lightweight and movable. These include wads of paper and rubber balls. Any toy that is small enough to be swallowed should be avoided. We can help you choose the safest toys for your pet loved one. Rope toys, soft squeaky toys and rubber kongs stuffed with peanut butter are all good options. Discourage your puppy from chewing shoes, socks or small toys that may be swallowed.

Why is my puppy constantly chewing?

Chewing is a normal puppy behavior. Almost all of a puppy's 28 baby teeth are present by about four weeks of age. They begin to fall out at four months of age and are replaced by the 42 adult (permanent) teeth by about six months of age. Therefore, chewing is a puppy characteristic that you can expect until about six to seven months of age. It is important that you do what you can to direct your puppy's chewing toward acceptable objects. You should provide puppy-safe items such as nylon chew bones and other chew toys so other objects are spared.



How do I discipline my puppy?

- Don't allow your puppy to do anything now, that you will consider unacceptable when he is an adult.
- If your puppy nips you, do not hit or punish him. Instead, say "ouch!" in a sharp quick tone and ignore him for 5 seconds. Resume play. If he nips again, repeat the "ouch!" and ignore him again. He must learn that his bites hurt us and are not acceptable.
- Disciplining a young puppy may be necessary if its behavior threatens people or property, but harsh punishment should be avoided. Hand clapping and using shaker cans or horns can be

intimidating enough to inhibit undesirable behavior. However, remote punishment is preferred. Remote punishment consists of using something that appears unconnected to the punisher to stop the problem behavior. Examples include using spray bottles, throwing objects in the direction of the puppy to startle (but not hit) it, and making loud noises. Remote punishment is preferred because the puppy associates punishment with the undesirable act and not with you.



How do I socialize my new puppy?

The socialization period for dogs is between four and twelve weeks of age. During that time, the puppy is very impressionable to social influences. If it has good experiences with men, women, children, cats, other dogs, and novel items such as vacuums, baths, car rides and strollers, it is likely to accept them throughout life. If the experiences are absent or unpleasant, your puppy may become apprehensive or

adverse to any of them. During this time frame, your puppy can go outside in YOUR backyard, with healthy vaccinated pets. This ensures your puppy will not come into contact with any diseases they are not protected against but can still experience new things. You should also play with all parts of your puppy. Handling their ears, bellies, toes and other body parts when they're in their socialization period will help allow you to be able to handle them as adults for ear cleanings, nail trims and other procedures.

Why does my puppy eat poop?

This unpleasant habit is known as coprophagy. Unfortunately, it is a tough habit to break and often is just a compulsive behavior.

Possible causes are malnutrition, boredom, excess confinement or mimicry (they may learn it from a doggy buddy). Fortunately, other

than possible transmission of intestinal parasites, few problems are caused by this habit.

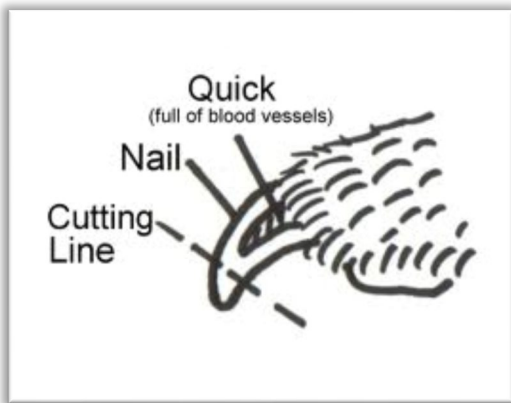


Some suggestions that may help:

- Remove feces from the yard immediately after defecation or at least daily
- Provide regular exercise and stimulation
- Add Adolph's meat tenderizer or fresh pineapple to your dog's food (this makes the feces less appetizing)

Can I trim my puppy's sharp toe nails?

Puppies have very sharp toe nails. They can be trimmed with your regular finger nail clippers or with nail trimmers made for dogs and cats. It's very important to start cutting your puppies nails when they are young to get them used to it. If you take too much off the nail, you will cut into the "quick" and bleeding and pain will occur. If this happens, neither you nor your dog will want to do this again. Therefore, a few points are helpful:



- If your dog has clear or white nails, you can see the pink of the quick through the nail. Avoid the pink area, and you should be out of the quick.
 - If your dog has black nails, you will not be able to see the quick so only cut 1/32" (1 mm) of the nail at a time until the dog begins to get sensitive. The sensitivity will usually occur before you are into the blood vessel. With black nails, it is likely that you will get too close on at least one nail.
- 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 in the quick.
 - You should always have styptic powder available. This is sold in pet stores under several trade names, but it will be labeled for use in trimming nails.
 - If your puppy is squirmy or loses patience, just cut a few nails at a time. It's ok to just cut one paw once a week or one nail every day.



Microchips

Why should I do this?

Microchips are a safe and simple way to be sure your pet's identification is never mistaken. They are the most widely recommended pet identification device. Even if your pet generally wears a collar, your pet may run out the door before you have a chance to put it on, or the collar may break away when your pet is out of the house.

How do they work?

This tiny device is implanted under the skin with a needle much like administering an injection. You then register the microchip with the company to give them all of your contact information. There is NO yearly fee you have to pay to the microchip companies. The information will always be there. A special scanner can detect these chips; veterinary hospitals and animal shelters across the country have these scanners. A national registry assists in the identification and return of micro chipped pets throughout the United States and Canada.

Pet Insurance

There are a few different companies which offer pet insurance plans. This is something to be considered on a patient to patient basis. We have found that the company "Trupanion" covers more than some of the other insurance companies out there. Another option is to set up a "savings account" for your puppy and put a small amount of money into it every month. Then, you have a special account to pull money from in the case of an emergency.