



Congratulations on your new Puppy/Dog!

This handout is being provided to help you better understand the medical needs of your new pet. Hearing all this information at one time can be overwhelming. This handout delivers an organized comprehensive review of preventative medicine to aid you in keeping your pet as healthy as possible.

The following information will be covered:

- Vaccinations
- Intestinal Parasites
- Heartworm Prevention
- Spaying/Neutering
- Familiarizing Yourself with Your Pet's Breed

Vaccinations

When to start Vaccinating?

Vaccinations should be started between 6-8 weeks of age. Expect that your pet will have a series of **booster vaccines every 3-4 weeks** until the appropriate age and appropriate immune response has been acquired. These booster vaccines are necessary in order for your pet's immune system to be able to adequately defend itself against disease.

What Vaccines and Why?

Rabies and distemper are the 2 core vaccines that are highly recommended in dogs. The distemper vaccine also includes leptospirosis, adenovirus, and parvovirus.

Listed below is a description of each disease the distemper vaccine protects your pet against:

Distemper is a highly infectious viral disease transmitted by wildlife and unvaccinated pets. It is a disease that most commonly affects the central nervous system and is commonly a fatal disease. Raccoons are more likely to carry and transmit distemper rather than rabies.

Canine Parvovirus is a virus that attacks the intestinal tract of dogs. It can cause life threatening diarrhea. It is highly contagious and usually requires intensive hospital care for survival.

Canine Adenovirus is used in vaccines to provide protection against canine infectious hepatitis. It is also one of the causes of infectious tracheobronchitis.

Leptospirosis is an infectious bacteria that can cause multiple organ damage. It is spread to both humans and animals by exposure to infected urine. Michigan is considered an endemic area for leptospirosis.

Rabies Vaccine- This vaccine is required by law. Rabies disease is 100% fatal. Having your pet vaccinated not only protects them from the disease; but also protects them from having to be quarantined or euthanized for rabies testing if they happen to bite someone or another pet.

Optional Vaccines:

Bordatella Vaccine- Bordatella is a highly infectious respiratory disease to dogs of all ages. It is not caused by one virus or bacteria alone but can be caused by several different infectious agents. This vaccine is recommended for dogs that go to a grooming/boarding facility, dog parks or puppy/behavioral classes.

Lyme Vaccine- Lyme disease is a bacteria that is transmitted by ticks. This vaccine is recommended for pets that will be exposed to areas where there is a high tick burden.

Intestinal Parasites

There are several types of parasites that can live in our pet's gastrointestinal system. Although many of our pets appear healthy and we may not see the need to check for parasites, veterinarians are concerned about these parasites affecting not only your pet's health, but also you and your families' health. Some of these parasites can be transmitted to humans, especially our children.

Parasites can affect our pets' health by causing weight loss, diarrhea/GI upset, anemia, coughing and by suppressing their immune system.

It is important to understand that most parasites require a microscope to examine the feces for eggs. It is highly recommended that a fecal sample be checked yearly to screen for the intestinal parasites listed below.

The most common parasites include:

Roundworms:

- Transmission is from ingesting infected rodents or feces from infected animals. Many puppies are infected through their mother's milk when nursing.
- Transmissible to humans: Yes

Tapeworms:

- Transmission is from ingesting a flea or rabbit/rodent carrying tapeworms.
- Transmissible to humans: Yes

Hookworms:

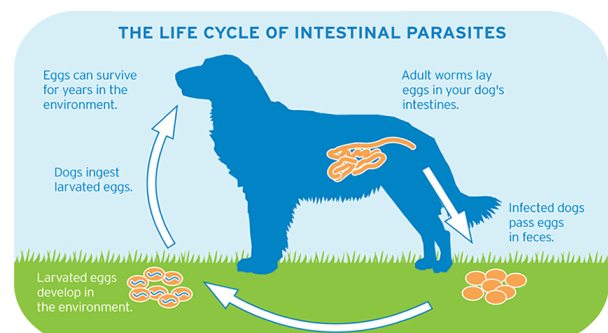
- Transmission is from ingestion from soil/feces infected in the environment OR by direct penetration through the skin.
- Transmissible to humans: Yes

Whipworms:

- Transmission is from ingestion of infected eggs from the environment.
- Transmissible to humans: Yes
- The eggs are very resilient and can survive in the environment for many years even through freezing and high temperatures.

Coccidia:

- Transmission is from ingesting infected rodents or feces from infected animals.
- Transmissible to humans: potentially, but not likely.



Heartworm Disease and Preventatives

What are heartworms?

Heartworm is a parasite that is transmitted by mosquitos. When mosquitos bite our pet, they spread the parasite and it gets into our pet's bloodstream. The heartworm then lives and reproduces in the arteries close to the heart.

How does heartworm affect my pet's health?

Many pets can have heartworm disease without showing signs for quite some time. However, these parasites keep reproducing until the worm burden becomes so significant that clinical signs are then seen. The clinical signs associated with heartworm disease are those related to congestive heart failure: coughing, decreased exercise tolerance, and poor doing.

What can I do to prevent heartworm disease in my pet?

It is required that your pet be tested annually for heartworm disease before starting prevention. This is required when they are 12 months old; but can be done as soon as 8 months. Even if your pet has been on prevention year-round the test is still required. A preventative is then recommended to adequately prevent the disease once your pet has tested negative. There are many different products on the market ranging from topical, oral or injectable. We can help you make the best decision based on the needs of your pet.

We also test for three tick borne diseases while testing for heartworm disease:

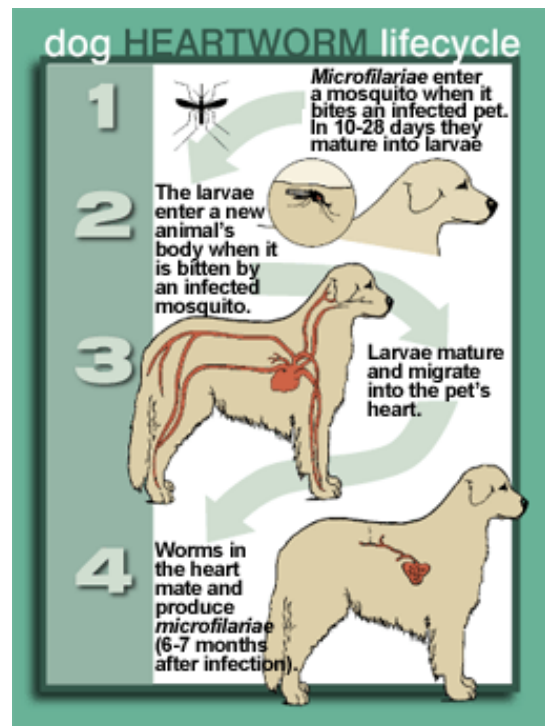
- Ehrlichiosis
- Anaplasmosis
- Lymes

What happens if my pet gets heartworm disease:

There is treatment available if your pet contracts heartworm disease. However, prevention is much cheaper, easier, and safer than treatment.

Flea and Tick Prevention

There are many flea and tick preventatives available for your pet. These preventatives are recommended year round as both fleas and ticks can be active when the weather is above freezing. Talk to us today about what option is best for you and your pet.



Reason to Spay or Neuter your Pet

Benefits of Spaying:

- **Mammary cancer** is a serious concern in intact females. Spaying your pet prior to 1 year of age prevents mammary cancer by 90%. We recommend spaying your pet between 5-6 months of age, before their first heat cycle. After 1 year of age, the benefits of spay preventing cancer dramatically decreases, but still does help.
- **Pyometra**: This is an infection of the uterus. This infection comes on very suddenly and is considered life threatening if an emergency spay surgery is not performed.
- Intact females will have bloody discharge and spot around the house.

Benefits of Neutering:

- Helps prevent or decrease some bad behaviors such as wandering, marking territory, and also aggression.
- Helps prevent prostate and testosterone related cancer.

Know your Breed

Many breeds have breed specific diseases or problems. Understanding and being aware of these common problems can help you better prevent these diseases and/or enable you to be more prepared for looking for the signs of the disease.

- **Dental Disease**- Very common in toy and brachycephalic breeds (Ex: Pugs, Shih Tzu, Bull dogs).
- **Hip Dysplasia**- Common in Golden and Labrador Retrievers.
- **Skin Allergies**
- **Ear Infections**- Certain breeds have ear conformations that make them more prone to ear problems/infections.
- **Eye disease/Glaucoma**- seen more in brachycephalic breeds, basset hounds.

Ask us about your dog's breed and what you can do to help prevent future health concerns.

