



## **Wheatland Animal Hospital**

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On behalf of the doctors and staff, we would like to welcome you to Wheatland Animal Hospital. Our hospital is accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA). You may also visit our website at [www.wheatlandanimalhospital.com](http://www.wheatlandanimalhospital.com)

### **BEHAVIOR/TRAINING**

Training is a fun way for you to develop a strong relationship with your puppy. In many cases, sufficient training can be achieved at home with an appropriate home training guide. If you have any questions or concerns regarding training, feel free to contact your veterinarian! Veterinarians are highly trained in animal behavior and should be an initial source of information regarding this important topic. Many trainers use outdated or inappropriate training methods, so please ask for specific direction regarding methods or training facilities that we feel are a good fit for the needs of you and your pet. Below are some suggestions to facilitate basic training at home.

#### **New Dog Orientation**

We offer a free new dog orientation here at the hospital with one of our veterinarians once a month! Topics include (but are not limited to): daily care and challenges, behavior, and disease prevention. Please feel free to bring any additional questions or concerns for the doctor to address. This event is open to the general public, so family and friends are welcome to join you! Puppies are welcome to attend but do not have to be present. Check with your doctor or look on our lobby board and website ([www.wheatlandanimalhospital.com](http://www.wheatlandanimalhospital.com)) for the next scheduled date!

#### **General**

The first 14 weeks of your puppy's life is a critical learning period, so it's beneficial to get in good socialization and training habits at an early age. Rewarding good behaviors and ignoring bad behaviors is a fundamental component of training. For example, chewing/teething problems can be addressed by rewarding your puppy with treats or praise when they're chewing on items you want them to chew on. If you catch them chewing on something you don't want them to, simply replace the wrong item with one of their designated chew toys and then be sure to reward them for chewing on it.

#### **Potty Training**

There are several things that you can try at home to help ease the stresses of potty training your new puppy. First, keep your puppy on a schedule and have regular times that you go outside. Make sure to

go outside after eating/drinking, after long play sessions, first thing in the morning, before bed, and after naps. Try to stay on a proactive schedule rather than waiting until the last minute to take them out. Be sure to provide lots of praise or rewards when your puppy goes to the bathroom outside. It may also be helpful to go in a certain area of the yard each time you go out and try to use a cue word or phrase (ex: “go potty”). Refrain from letting your puppy have free, unsupervised access to the house as they can wander into another room and have an accident. If there is an accident, avoid scolding and instead, calmly take your puppy outside to the designated area immediately and reward him/her once they do go to the bathroom. For cleaning up accidents in the house, we recommend using an enzymatic cleaner. This will help to break down any odors that may entice your puppy to go back to that spot again.

### **Crate Training**

Having a crate trained puppy can be very helpful with potty training and to have a safe place for your puppy when he/she can't be directly observed. The crate should be a positive place, not a place for punishment. You can make it more comfortable with a blanket/towel and a toy or two. It should be left open throughout the day for your puppy to spend time in as he/she desires. If the first few nights in the crate are difficult for your puppy, you can try to provide a small light source or a quiet radio nearby. Try to avoid repeatedly going to the crate if they cry (unless it's time for a potty break), as this will reinforce the behavior.

### **Leash Walking**

Avoid choke and pinch collars when leash training. If your puppy doesn't want to walk and just sits down on the leash, he/she usually just needs help learning. Rather than forcing them to walk, try to encourage them! Talking to them, calling their name, or even using a trail of treats can be helpful to encourage walking. Once they do walk, be sure to provide treats and lots of praise. If your puppy pulls a lot on the leash, try not to pull against them because they will usually just pull back. Instead, simply stop walking and in most cases, they will stop pulling within seconds. It can be a little time consuming at first, but if you can stop each time they start to pull, they will soon learn that the walk is a lot more exciting if they don't pull. If you're looking for an alternative to a standard neck collar for walking, we recommend trying either a Gentle Leader or a harness that has a hook for the leash on the front (on the puppy's chest, not their back). Gentle Leaders strap over your dog's muzzle (but they aren't a traditional “muzzle” you may think of) and simply drop their head down when they pull. Front-hook harnesses provide a “hinge point” that doesn't give them any benefit to pulling. These are both options that don't inflict pain and in most cases are very effective for leash training.

### **Nail Trimming**

It is very important to get your puppy used to nail trimming at an early age. One of the easiest and most beneficial things to do at home is to play with your puppy's feet! This gets them used to some of the handling that is needed for nail trimming. When buying nail clippers for your home, try to buy those that use a scissor mechanism rather than the guillotine types. Avoid clipping the area known as the “quick” which contains blood vessels and nerves. If you do accidentally get to the “quick” and the nail begins to bleed, you can use styptic powder (found at pet stores) or even flour or cornstarch on the area to stop the bleeding. For detailed instructions on nail trimming, you can ask your veterinarian for a demonstration!

## **Brushing Teeth**

Dental disease is the number one health problem in all pets and can affect their entire body. For this reason, we recommend brushing your puppy's teeth daily and getting them used to brushing as early as possible. All you need is a children's toothbrush with water. Toothpaste for dogs can be used if desired, but it isn't necessary (do not use human toothpaste). Simply lift their lip on each side, brush the outsides of the teeth, and you're all done! There's no need to brush the biting surface or insides of the teeth.

## **PARASITES**

### **Heartworm**

Heartworm disease is a life-threatening disease caused by a parasitic worm that lives in the bloodstream and infests that heart and lungs. Dogs become infected with heartworm through the bite of an infected mosquito, but the parasite cannot be transmitted by an infested dog. The treatment for heartworm disease is very costly and can have life-threatening complications, so we recommend that all dogs be on a heartworm preventative - Sentinel.

(Go to the Virbac website to find out more information about Sentinel: <https://us.virbac.com/product/parasiticides/sentinel-flavor-tabs>)

The climate in our area enables mosquitoes to survive outdoors for a majority of the year, but they can also easily get indoors. Therefore, we recommend that all dogs be on heartworm preventative year round starting at 6 weeks of age. Heartworm testing is performed on all dogs at 8 months of age and then annually thereafter.

### **Intestinal parasites**

There are several intestinal parasites that can infest your puppy and cause vomiting and diarrhea. Most of these parasites are zoonotic, meaning they are contagious to humans and other animals. Dogs usually come into contact with the parasites in the environment but some can also be transmitted to puppies from their mother. In order to detect these parasites, we ask that you bring in a stool sample for a fecal centrifugation test. By performing this test regularly, we can detect early stages of the parasites and treat before an infestation occurs to hopefully prevent your other pets or family members from contracting them. We recommend checking at least two stool samples on puppies during their vaccination series and then annually thereafter. Sentinel (our recommended heartworm preventative) also provides intestinal parasite protection against hookworms, whipworms, and roundworms, which is another reason we recommend using this preventative year round.

### **Fleas**

Fleas can parasitize many mammals, including: dogs, cats, rabbits, opossums, and raccoons. The nature of the flea lifecycle puts all dogs at risk for potential exposure. Fleas mate on a parasitized animal and drop eggs in the environment (inside the house, under the deck, in the yard, etc.). If we or our animals tread through these areas, it is very easy to bring flea eggs into the house. Fleas multiply rapidly and can carry dangerous bacteria that can make dogs or humans sick. Sentinel (our recommended heartworm preventative) provides monthly flea protection in addition to heartworm and intestinal parasite protection and should be given year round to protect against fleas since both adults and eggs/larvae can survive indoors.

(Go to the Merck website to find out more information about Bravecto:

<https://us.bravecto.com/>)

## Ticks

Ticks are common in areas that are wooded, have a water source, or have tall grasses. Preventatives are important if your dog is at risk for tick exposure since there are several diseases that can be transmitted by ticks. Your dog's risk can be discussed with your veterinarian. We recommend using one of our oral preventatives for tick prevention due to the rapid speed at which it kills ticks.

(Go to the Zoetis website to find out more information about Simparica: <https://www.zoetis.com> or visit <https://www.simparica.com/>)

## VACCINATIONS

There are several diseases that your puppy can contract which can be prevented through proper vaccination. Your puppy should be vaccinated for the following diseases:

- **Distemper (D):** this is a highly contagious viral disease of dogs as well as several wild animals (wolves, coyotes, raccoons) and ferrets. Distemper can be contracted by contact with contaminated objects and can affect multiple organ systems. Signs include: runny eyes and nose, diarrhea, vomiting, and seizures. This vaccination is given 4 times as a puppy, once at 1 year of age, and is boosted every 3 years thereafter.
- **Infectious Hepatitis (H):** canine hepatitis is a serious viral disease that affects the liver, kidneys, lymph nodes, eyes, and other organs. It is spread through any bodily secretion and signs will often develop about 1 week after exposure. Signs include: fever, loss of appetite, increased thirst, and reddening of the lining of the mouth, throat, and eyelids. This vaccination should be given 4 times as a puppy, once at 1 year of age, and boosted every 3 years thereafter.
- **Leptospirosis (L):** this is bacterial infection that affects dogs, raccoons, opossums, rats, and even people. In our area, raccoons and opossums are the most common carriers. Leptospirosis affects the kidneys, liver, and nervous system. Any animal that recovers from the infection can still shed the bacteria in their urine for up to 1 year. This vaccination is given twice as a puppy and annually thereafter.
- **Parainfluenza (P):** parainfluenza is a viral disease with varying signs, including: coughing, discharge from the eyes and nose, or even vomiting and diarrhea. This vaccination should be given 4 times as a puppy, boosted at 1 year of age, and then every 3 years thereafter.
- **Parvovirus (P):** this is a highly contagious viral disease that is spread through contact with the stool of an infected dog or from a contaminated environment. The virus is very resilient and can survive in your house or in the ground for a long time. This disease causes severe vomiting and diarrhea that often contain blood. Therefore, infected animals will often dehydrate very rapidly. This vaccination should be given 4 times as a puppy, boosted at 1 year of age, and then every 3 years thereafter.
- **Bordetella:** bordetella is a bacterial disease that causes the condition commonly known as

“kennel cough.” It is spread through contact with a contaminated object. Initially, dogs will show respiratory signs, including: discharge from the eyes and nose and a dry, hacking cough. If left untreated, it will often develop into pneumonia. Dogs that go to training classes, boarding facilities, dog parks, dog shows, grooming facilities, or spend a lot of time with other dogs are the most at risk. This vaccination should be given twice as a puppy, boosted at 1 year of age, and is then given annually thereafter for dogs considered at risk for the disease.

- **Rabies:** rabies is a fatal viral disease that can affect all warm-blooded animals, including humans. It is spread through a bite from an infected animal. The signs can vary significantly, so diagnosis can be difficult while the animal is alive. The only prevention for rabies is through vaccination. Puppies receive their first rabies vaccination at 16 weeks of age, which will last for 1 year. The vaccine should be boosted the following year with either a 1 or 3 year vaccination.

**The vaccination schedule for your puppy should be as follows:**

**6-8 weeks of age: DHPP**

**9-11 weeks of age: DHPP and Bordetella**

**12-14 weeks of age: DHLPP and Bordetella**

**15-17 weeks of age: DHLPP and Rabies 1 year**

There are also several diseases that can affect your puppy depending on their individual needs. The following vaccinations can be discussed with your veterinarian to ensure that your puppy is properly protected.

- **Canine Influenza:** this is a virus that is spread by respiratory particles or contaminated objects. It was first recognized in Florida in 2004 and has since been reported in 40 states (including Illinois). Dogs that are at risk for contracting this disease are those in close contact with other dogs (boarding or grooming facilities, shelters, training classes, etc.) and these are the dogs that are recommended to be vaccinated. Canine influenza can be contracted at any time of the year and signs include: lethargy, cough, low-grade fever, and nasal discharge. In mild cases, a cough can persist for 10-21 days and in severe cases, it can develop into pneumonia.
- **Lyme Disease:** lyme disease is caused by bacteria (*Borrelia burgdorferi*) and can affect dogs, cats, horses, cattle, birds, and people. It is transmitted by several different species of ticks. In order to transmit the disease, the tick must be attached for 10-24 hours. Dogs that are used for hunting, go camping with their owners, or are exercised in forest preserves are at the greatest risk for encountering ticks. Signs of lyme disease are nondescript and can include: rash, fever, joint swelling or pain, and/or swollen lymph nodes. If untreated, more serious signs can develop (nervous system, cardiac, or joint disorders). Prevention of this disease can be achieved by using a tick preventative (Parastar) and with a vaccination for dogs that are frequently at risk of exposure.

## FUTURE CARE

### **Spaying or Castrating (Neutering)**

There are many benefits to neutering your puppy. First and foremost is eliminating unwanted pregnancies and litters. If you have a female dog, spaying her before her first heat will drastically reduce her chances of developing mammary cancer and eliminate her chances of developing uterine or ovarian cancer. It will also eliminate the chance of her developing a potentially life-threatening uterine infection. If you have a male dog, the risk of testicular cancer is eliminated and the chances of developing prostatic abscesses are drastically reduced. In addition, it may help control marking or roaming behaviors. We typically recommend neutering around 4-6 months of age, but this can be discussed further with your veterinarian.

### **Microchipping**

Microchipping is a form of permanent identification for your dog and is a very helpful utility if he/she ever gets lost. The very small microchip (about the size of a long grain of rice) is placed under your dog's skin in the area between their shoulder blades. Once registered with the microchip company (we will take care of the registration for you if your pet is microchipped at our hospital), the chip can be scanned by animal shelters or other animal hospitals nation-wide and can greatly increase the chance of your puppy being returned home. We always offer microchipping at the time of spaying/neutering but it can also be performed at any regular appointment!

### **Pet Health Insurance**

The popularity of pet insurance has been increasing in recent years and there are over 20 companies that you can investigate for insurance. Often times, it is best to start these plans when your dog is still young since many companies won't provide coverage for preexisting conditions. There may also be some restrictions for conditions that certain breeds are predisposed to. There are a variety of different plans/coverage available and we encourage you to try to find a good fit for you and your pet if it's something you're interested in. If you have any additional questions regarding pet health insurance, feel free to ask your veterinarian.

### **Summary of Important Future Visits**

- \*6-8 weeks of age: DHPP
- \*9-11 weeks of age: DHPP and Bordetella
- \*12-14 weeks of age: DHLPP and Bordetella
- \*15-17 weeks of age: DHLPP and Rabies 1 year
- \*4-6 months of age: Spay/Castration
- \*8 months of age: Heartworm test
- \*Don't forget to get monthly preventatives throughout your visits to best fit your puppy's weight as he/she is growing!