Longleaf ANIMAL HOSPITAL

Puppy Preventative Care Program

Part 1: Physical Exam

Part 2: Vaccinations

Part 3: Spay/Neuter

Part 4: The Internal Exam: Lab Tests

Part 5: Parasite Control

Part 6: Microchip

PREVENTATIVE CARE PROGRAM FOR YOUR PUPPY

This is an exciting time with the arrival of your new puppy whether this is your first or new addition to your growing family! The doctors and staff at Longleaf Animal Hospital want to provide the best medical care for your new pup. We have developed a preventative health program with the goal of keeping your family member happy, active and vital throughout their lifetime. Our preventative puppy program can be broken down into six (6) but equally important parts:

1. Physical exam
2. Vaccinations
3. Spay/Neuter
4. The Internal Exam: Lab tests
5. Parasite Control
6. Microchip

We like to start this process at 6-8 weeks age. In order to complete the program, we will be seeing you both every 3 to 4 weeks watching them grow with you until they are 4-6 months old. Do not worry if your puppy is a bit older than 6-8 weeks age when they joined the family. We will guide you through where your pup fits into this program and make sure they receive everything they need.

Vaccinations and parasite control prevent disease from ever hurting our pets. Physical exams and Lab tests can help us to detect any problems early before symptoms are noticed. This can allow us the potential to make simple changes that can prevent severe conditions or emergency visits in the future.

This handout is meant as a resource. Websites have been included if you are interested in more in-depth information about the recommendations.

1. **Physical exam** is the first step.
    a. Veterinarians use all their senses to detect any abnormalities in your family member by examining your dog from nose to tail (eyes, nose, ears, teeth, heart, lungs, abdomen, muscle, bones, lymph nodes, haircoat/skin etc.).
        i. Sight
            1. Example:
                a. General attitude?
                b. How do they walk on the scale?
                c. How do they interact with everyone in the room?
                d. Fat or thin?
        ii. Hearing
            1. Example:

a. Can you hear the pup breath? What does cough sound like? How many times did they sneeze or cough?
b. Use of stethoscope to hear heart, lungs, and gut sounds
c. Does their bark sound normal?

iii. Touch
1. Abdomen feels normal? Sensitive to touch?
2. Any lumps or bumps? Hernias?
3. Any swelling or wounds?
4. Haircoat texture and skin feel normal? Feel scabs?
5. Fat or thin?

iv. Smell
1. Bad breath?
a. Diabetes, kidney disease, and dental disease have a distinct smell
2. Bad body odor?
a. Ears and skin diseases can be suspected as soon as you walk in an exam room by the smell

b. Any abnormalities detected on physical exam can help us develop an individual plan which may include more specific diagnostic tests to identify the disease or injury
c. Serial physical exams during your puppy visits will also help identify any abnormalities that you pup may have been born with (i.e. congenital) or diseases that occur during growth.
d. As an adult, annual examination is the minimum recommended frequency. Depending on your dog's health status, we may recommend more frequent visits to detect changes in their health status quicker

2. Lifestyle Appropriate **Vaccine Protocol**
a. 2017 AHAA's Canine Vaccine Guidelines https://www.aaha.org/pet_owner/aaha_guidelines/aahas_canine_vaccination_guidelines.aspx
b. Core vaccines are recommended for every dog
i. DHPP (Distemper, Adenovirus type 2, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus) and Rabies are the core vaccines for canines no matter their lifestyle.
1. Vaccination for Distemper, Parvovirus, and Rabies have greatly reduced the occurrence of these fatal diseases.
2. Vaccinations are extremely important for your puppy because these youngsters are extremely susceptible at this age to Distemper and Parvovirus. Puppies are losing the natural immunity from their mother's milk (colostrum), but these antibodies interfere with the vaccinations we will be giving. We want the vaccinations on board as soon as your puppy has lost its maternal immunity and we need two of these boosters to work after the maternal immunity is gone. On the other hand, some puppies receive very little or no immunity from their mother's. These babies need protection from their vaccinations much earlier.

3. We are not able to tell which situation your puppy is in so we will follow the AHAA's vaccination guidelines
4. We recommend the DHPP every 3-4 weeks starting at 6-8 weeks of age making sure they receive two vaccinations after 12 weeks after of age
5. These vaccinations are extremely effective at preventing these diseases, but you must follow the protocol for the vaccines to provide adequate immunity

ii. Rabies is REQUIRED BY LAW! It is required for puppies greater than 16 weeks of age.
1. Rabies will be given between 12-16 weeks of age as we are finishing up your DHPP boosters.
2. The initial Rabies vaccination will last for 1 year

c. Non-Core vaccines are recommended for dogs at risk for contracting a specific disease based on your dog's age, lifestyle, and where you live
i. We have a series of questions that we will answer together at your puppies' initial visit that will help us determine which vaccinations are necessary for your puppy

3. Spay/neuter

a. Adapted from WebMD Veterinary Reference from the ASPCA
i. https://pets.webmd.com/reasons-spay-neuter-pet
ii. Spaying: removing the ovaries and uterus of a female pet-is a veterinary procedure that requires minimal hospitalization and offers lifelong health benefits.
iii. Neutering: Removing the testicles of your male pet-will vastly improve your pet's behavior and keep him close to home.

Benefits of spaying and neutering

- **Spaying and neutering your pet is good for the community.** Stray animals pose a real problem in many parts of the country. They can prey on wildlife, cause car accidents, damage the local fauna and frighten children. Spaying and neutering packs a powerful punch in reducing the number of animals on the streets.
- **Spaying and neutering helps fight pet overpopulation.** Every year, millions of cats and dogs of all ages and breeds are euthanized or suffer as strays. These high numbers are the result of unplanned litters that could have been prevented by spaying or neutering.
- **It is highly cost-effective.** The cost of your pet's spay/neuter surgery is a lot less than the cost of having and caring for a litter. It also beats the cost of treatment when your unneutered dog is involved in a fight
- **Spaying or neutering will NOT make your pet fat.** Lack of exercise and overfeeding will cause your pet to pack on the extra pounds-not neutering. Your pet will remain fit and trim

as long as you continue to provide exercise and monitor food intake.

Spaying	Neutering
Your female pet will live a longer, healthier life. Spaying helps prevent uterine infections and breast cancer, which is fatal in about 50 percent of dogs. Spaying your pet before her first heat offers the best protection from these diseases.	**Neutering provides major health benefits for your male.** Neutering your male companion prevents testicular cancer and prostate diseases
Your spayed female won't go into heat. Heat cycles in female dogs reoccur every 6 months and have a discharge that lasts for approximately 3 weeks	**Your male dog won't want to roam away from home.** An intact male will do just about anything to find a mate! That includes digging his way under the fence and making like Houdini to escape from the house. And once he's free to roam, he risks injury in traffic and fights with other males.
	Your neutered male will be much better behaved. Neutered dogs focus their attention on their human families. On the other hand, unneutered dogs may mark their territory by spraying strong-smelling urine all over the house. Many aggression problems can be avoided by early neutering.

   b. https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/general-pet-care/spayneuter-your-pet
   c. While most puppies will do well with the common recommendation of spaying and neutering at 4 to 6 months of age, we will discuss the best timing for your puppy during their wellness visit based on their health status and breed.
4. "The internal exam**: Laboratory testing for parasites, parasitic diseases and general health**"
   a. Not all diseases can be detected with a physical exam. These are silent, but deadly diseases. Your dog may be acting completely normal at home.
      i. **Fecal exam**

1. A fecal (or stool) exam looks for intestinal parasites using a microscope because the parasites are not seen by the naked eye.
2. Many of these parasites such as roundworms, hookworms, and coccidia can cause diarrhea which may lead to life-threatening dehydration and hypoglycemia (low blood sugar)
3. Hookworms can suck enough blood from the small intestine that a puppy will require a blood transfusion in order to survive a severe hookworm infestation.
4. Roundworms and hookworms can be transmitted from their mother. They can cause disease as early as 2 weeks of age.
5. We want our children and grandchildren to able to play with their new puppy, but we must be aware that certain parasites such as roundworms and hookworms can cause serious diseases such as blindness and skin conditions in us too! To keep our children and whole family safe, our puppies and all pets must be kept free of these parasites!
6. We recommend that we obtain at least 2 fecal samples that have no parasites seen during their initial puppy exams
7. Companion Animal Parasite Council https://capcvet.org/guidelines/general-guidelines/

b. Age appropriate **bloodwork and urine tests**
   i. The physical exam is very useful for determining many abnormalities, but it will not detect subtle, internal changes.
   ii. Early detection can give us more time to intervene and change outcomes and it can also prevent emergencies.
   iii. These tests are helpful in identifying common diseases early like kidney disease, liver conditions as well as evaluate the condition of the circulatory and immune system
   iv. If you have chosen to have your puppy spayed/neutered, they are about to undergo their first anesthetic procedure. No anesthesia is without risk. We recommended that all pets receive pre-anesthetic bloodwork that helps to reduce these risks by detecting the internal abnormalities. In young animals, bloodwork can help identify congenital problems that may complicate anesthesia if left undetected.
   v. **Heartworm and vector-borne** ("tick") disease testing
      1. Heartworms and tick-borne diseases are prime examples of silent but deadly diseases that early detection is critical for treatment success
      2. For puppies less than 6 to 7 months of age, we do not need to test for these diseases; we need to start preventative measures such as heartworm and flea medication as soon as possible which we will cover under Parasite control.
      3. Annual heartworm testing is recommended for every adult dog (even if they receive regular heartworm prevention medication) starting at their first adult preventative appointment that is ~1.5 years of age.

4. American Heartworm Society https://www.heartwormsociety.org/

5. **Parasite control** is another important part of preventative care because parasites can cause serious diseases themselves as well as transmit disease
    a. Heartworm, intestinal parasite, flea, and tick medications
        i. Many of the heartworm, intestinal parasite, flea and tick medications used to prevent infestations of these parasites are safe to start as early as 8 weeks of age
        ii. Deciding what products are right for your dog is a discussion needed with your veterinarian based on your dog's health status and your lifestyle.
    b. Companion Animal Parasite Council https://capcvet.org/
    c. American Heartworm Society https://www.heartwormsociety.org/
6. Microchip
    a. A microchip is a permanent form of ID for your pet
    b. Microchipping is a simple procedure. A veterinarian simply injects a microchip for pets, about the size of a grain of rice (12mm), beneath the surface of your pet's skin between the shoulder blades. The process is similar to an injection and takes only a few seconds. No anesthetic is required.
    c. The microchip itself has no internal energy source, so it will last the life of your pet. It is read by passing a microchip scanner over the pet's shoulder blades. The scanner emits a low radio frequency that provides the power necessary where the chip is located to transmit the microchip's unique ID code and positively identify the pet.
    d. If your pet gets lost and is taken to an animal shelter or veterinarian, they will scan the microchip to read its unique ID code. This is the number used by HomeAgain to identify the pet and retrieve your contact information, which is used to contact you and reunite you with your pet.
    e. https://www.homeagain.com/what-is-a-microchip.html
    f. Longleaf Animal Hospital places the HomeAgain microchip
        i. This microchip can be read by scanners worldwide which is required for families who want to travel with their pets overseas.
    a. By having a HomeAgain microchip, you can obtain free advice from a toxicologist at the SPCA pet poison control hotline (1-888-426-4435)
        ii. Without the microchip, the consultation fee would be $65 per case.

General resources:

2. For all your after-hour questions and emergencies, call Small Animal Emergency Services
    a. "When we are closed, they are open!"
    b. Phone: 910-246-0405
    c. 5901 US Highway 1 North, Vass, NC
    d. Website: http://www.saesnc.org/
3. ASPCA pet poison control
    a. Great resource to quickly answer: "Is this poisonous or not?"
    b. Staffed 24 hours a day/7 day a week by toxicologists
    c. https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control
    d. 1-888-426-4435
    e. One time $65 consultation fee unless you have Home Again Microchip then it is FREE!
4. Veterinary Partner Website https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/ is a great general resource on everything to do with veterinary medicine written for owners that is trusted by veterinarians
5. On our website, www.longleafanimalhospital.com, you can find links to:
    a. Our on-line pharmacy, Vetsource, through the Home Delivery button at the bottom left of our home page
    b. Here under client center, you will find ways to connect with us electronically by signing up for Petly where you can request appointments and prescriptions on-line, send a message, and view your pet's medical history yourself.

Canine Vaccination Protocol

Name of Core Vaccine	Disease	Booster interval
DHPP combo	Distemper, Adenovirus type 2, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus	Starting at 6-8 weeks of age Repeating boosters every 3 to 4 weeks until 2 vaccinations are received at 12 weeks or older The first adult DHPP will received 1 year after initial series and repeated every 3 year as an adult
Rabies	Rabies	Every 3 years after initial 1-year vaccination

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Name of Non-Core Vaccine	**Disease**	**Booster interval**
Bordetella bronchiseptica +/- Parainfluenza	Kennel Cough	Annually
Leptospira 4-serovar	Leptospirosis	Annually *
Borrelia burgdorferi	Lyme Disease	Annually *
Influenza (H3N8 and H3N2)	Canine Flu	Annually *

*The initial vaccination is followed by a booster 3-4 weeks later then the vaccination is booster annually.

Answers to these questions will help determine your non-core vaccines

Questions from the AAHA lifestyle-based vaccine calculator:

(2017: AAHA canine vaccine guidelines)

Select all that apply to the dog:

- [ ] Has close contact with coughing dogs
- [ ] Enjoys meeting or playing with other dogs
- [ ] Stays in a boarding kennel
- [ ] Spends time in doggie daycare
- [ ] Attends or participates in dog shows
- [ ] Lives in, may live in, or visits a shelter environment
- [ ] Groomed in a grooming facility
- [ ] Visits dog parks
- [ ] Spends time in a yard currently or previously used by livestock
- [ ] Spends time in an environment with a high population of wild rats
- [ ] Swims or wades in freshwater rivers or lakes
- [ ] Drinks from freshwater rivers, lakes, or puddles in
- [ ] Walks or lays on soil where wildlife or livestock could have urinated
- [ ] Lives in or travels to an area where Lyme disease is common
- [ ] Lives in or travels to an area where tick bites are common (specifically from the eastern or western black-legged ticks, *Ixodes scapularis*or *Ixodes pacificus*)