

HEALTH AND VETERINARY

Puppies will have been seen by a vet in the 7th week before leaving us and any veterinary information will be included in your puppy pack. Please make an appointment with your vet soon after bringing your puppy home for a check-up so you can discuss worming and vaccinations.

Unless you have asked to use a different vaccination schedule, your puppy will have received an initial vaccination for parvo, distemper, and hepatitis in the week before leaving. This is NOT adequate to provide full protection as some puppies will still have maternal antibodies at this age, and your own vet needs to administer a second vaccination at a later time, and until this has come into effect the puppy should be regarded as at risk for these diseases and not exposed to anything that would put it at risk (such as the floor in any public place, or dogs whose vaccination history is unknown). I recommend either a titre (to check antibody levels) rather than a third vaccination at one year old. The core vaccinations have been found to be effective for at least three years, so it is not necessary to revaccinate your dog every year for these diseases, but a titre every three years or so may be a good idea.

When you visit your vet to have your puppy checked, make sure to take the vaccination record you have been given and show it to the vet. The vet should either confirm that they carry the same vaccine from the manufacturer used, or if not they should agree to order it in for the puppy's next shot. Some vets will try to give two further vaccinations and claim this is because the vaccines they carry are from a different manufacturer. This is unnecessary.

You will need to discuss with your vet to decide whether vaccination for leptospirosis is necessary. If you decide it is, this requires two separate vaccinations a couple of weeks apart and will need to be redone once every year. It is recommended this is done in the spring to give best coverage.

Your puppy has been wormed with Panacur as follows:

2 weeks old
5 weeks old
7 weeks (before leaving)

Worming will need to be continued. Please discuss this with your vet. Also discuss flea and tick prevention to decide whether this is necessary.

You will also need to discuss with your vet future surgery to prevent breeding. The procedures I most recommend are a vasectomy for a dog and a hysterectomy with retention of ovaries and removal of cervix for a bitch. Current research suggests that dogs enjoy overall better health and longer life if they can keep their gonads, but the suitability of this needs to be weighed up according to the owner's situation and desired outcome. A bitch without a uterus will still have seasons, but she will not bleed and the risk of pyometra is removed. It is still important to be aware of the few days every six months or so she is likely to be sexually receptive, and it is inadvisable to allow her to mate with a dog as she could panic and be injured, or contract venereal disease. She is also at slightly higher risk of mammary tumours than is a spayed bitch, but regularly examining her and going to the vet if any irregularities are noted will enable them to be treated effectively. A vasectomied dog will still exhibit sexual behaviour when exposed to a bitch in heat (as many neutered dogs also can) but can likewise be injured or acquire infections if he is allowed to mate in uncontrolled circumstances. Any vet should, in theory be capable of performing these surgeries, but it may be difficult to find one willing as they are not currently routine procedures that vets are taught. They can be done at any age.

If you decide you would prefer to have your poodle spayed or neutered, it is best to wait at least until the puppy is a year old and has finished growing. Spaying dogs younger than this has been linked to developmental abnormalities such as hip dysplasia and urinary incontinence (bitches who wet themselves).

If you want to keep your dog entire, you must be responsible for it and not allow it to get into situations that could result in pregnancy. Careless breeding of mixed-up puppies either accidentally or as deliberately as novelties to sell is irresponsible when there are many dogs in shelters and when breeds are facing a crisis of genetic impoverishment, and this is why there are penalties written into our contract for allowing such things to happen. Owners of entire bitches should also be aware that any bitch with both her uterus and ovaries is at risk of pyometra, and the risk is greatest in older bitches who have never been bred.

We provide a health guarantee for hereditary and congenital conditions up to our puppies' 5th birthday. We feel that choosing to buy a poodle should mean you are getting a dog of an historical breed who is fit for purpose and that the best possible effort has gone into bringing this about, and that you should be entitled to at least 5 years of good health from your dog. Of course we hope you get far more than this and would like all the pups we breed to make it to double figures, but dogs are living things and are not infallible, and there are no absolute guarantees, just as with people. You must follow the recommendations we give as to diet, exercise, and veterinary care in order for the guarantee to remain fully valid.