



NEW PUPPY INFORMATION

Getting a new puppy is a very exciting time, but for first time dog owners it can also be quite daunting. We have put together some information to help you know what to expect so that you can do the best for your new pet.

VACCINATION

We routinely vaccinate dogs and puppies against the following diseases:

Distemper – this disease is now very rare in the UK due to successful vaccination programmes. It can cause gastrointestinal signs, seizures and respiratory signs and is often fatal.

Infectious Hepatitis – this viral disease causes vomiting, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, bleeding disorders and enlarged liver.

Parvovirus – a virus that mostly affects unvaccinated puppies. It causes severe haemorrhagic diarrhoea, vomiting, cardiac problems and is often fatal, even with veterinary treatment.

Parainfluenza – one of the components of the kennel cough syndrome; a very infectious respiratory disease that gives a hacking cough, nasal discharge and a sensitive airway.

Leptospirosis – a bacterial disease spread by rat urine. It causes acute liver and kidney failure, bleeding disorders, shivering and spinal pain.

Kennel Cough – we vaccinate against the different components of kennel cough in a separate intra nasal vaccination.

We advise that you don't bring your new puppy into the practice until it has had a couple of days to settle into his or her new home, this will give you a chance to notice any problems or queries you may have.

PUPPY VACCINATION

Puppies can have their first vaccination from 8 weeks old.

They then require a second injection 2-4 weeks later.

Your puppy is not completely protected until 14 days AFTER their second vaccination, so we recommend that it does not come into contact with any unvaccinated or unknown dogs.

KENNEL COUGH

We advise that your dog receives the kennel cough vaccination at least 14 days prior to going into kennels.

MICROCHIP

We recommend that all dogs are microchipped from an early age. It is devastating for us to find animals that have strayed, or may be injured and be unable to locate their owners. Identity microchipping is the easiest solution to this. It is a very simple procedure that involves injecting a tiny microchip (about the size of a grain of rice) into the back of your pet's neck – a bit like a vaccination. It can be done conscious, is very quick and almost pain free.

DIET

Diet is one of the most important considerations for your new puppy. We wouldn't recommend changing your puppy's food straight away, as there are a lot of changes to adapt to in his/her new home. However, you may find another diet more suitable or just simply easier for you to obtain. We recommend a good quality, complete wet or dry puppy food. Some of the diets that our vets feed their own pets are Hills Vet Essentials, James Well Beloved and Burns, but please speak to your vet about what diet may suit your puppy best. Remember your puppy will need feeding 3-4 times daily up until about 4-6 months old depending on their size.

INSURANCE

We strongly recommend that all puppies are insured with a reputable pet insurance company. Something as simple as a fall or itchy skin can end up costing you thousands of pounds in vet's bills. With the increasing advances in veterinary knowledge and care available, we are able to offer advanced diagnostic tests, treatments and surgeries. Sometimes this may include referral to a specialist facility if we are unable to adequately treat your pet at Farthings. Insurance helps you to cover these costs and takes away those difficult decisions so you don't have to compromise your pet's care.

There are many different companies offering pet insurance and we would urge you to carefully consider the options before selecting your policy. Always read the small print and check what level of cover you will be getting. We advise a policy that covers your pet for life, so that if they are diagnosed with a condition that requires lifelong medication, this is all covered by your insurance company. Examples of these conditions are diabetes, heart disease and thyroid disorders but there are many more. Some insurance policies only cover you up to a limited amount, or for a set period of time, which can leave you facing vets bills alone.

Remember, once an animal has had a condition or symptom noted by the vet, it can be very difficult to get this covered by insurance, so the sooner you insure your pet the better. At Farthings we offer one month's free pet insurance with PetPlan, so please ask about this at your next visit.

SOCIALISATION

Puppies are most sensitive up to 16 weeks of age, and this is the time at which they can be most influenced by experiences and encounters. This is what we call the 'socialisation period'. During this period, it is important to expose your puppy to as many experiences, noises and places as possible. This makes them less likely to develop anxiety related behavioural problems later in life. Go through the checklist below to see how well socialised your puppy is and what areas may need improvement.

Farthings check list

People

The vet!!!
Men and women
Children of all ages (including prams/pushchairs)
Elderly people
Disabled people (wheelchairs/walking sticks)
Loud and quiet people
Various ethnicities

Noises

Traffic
Motorbikes
Planes
Gunfire
Loud music
Trains
Vaccuum cleaner
Fireworks
Phone
Sprays
Lawnmower

Experience

The vets (come in for cuddle appointments)
Pub
Travelling in the car
Busy town centre
Being left alone
Having paws/ears touched and looked at
Opening mouth and running fingers along gums (to mimic teeth brushing)

Animals

Other dogs of various sizes and age
Horses
Livestock
Cats
Other pets

Cuddle appointments

Coming to the vets can be a very scary experience for young puppies. We try to make this experience as positive as possible – it's no fun for anyone when your dog is terrified of the vets! Feel free to come in and meet the vets, nurses and receptionists without any scary needles or examinations. We always have treats and plenty of cuddles to offer so that your dog learns to love coming to Farthings. [[Puppy parties]] are also a fantastic way to get your puppy to love visiting the vets as well as a chance for you to chat to our very knowledgeable nurses and learn all about puppy health.

WORMING

Puppies need regular protection against intestinal roundworms (*Toxacara canis*), tapeworms (*Taenia spp*, *Dipylidium caninum*, *Echinococcus spp.*), whipworms (*Trichuris vulpis*), hookworms (*Ancylostoma caninum*, *Uncinaria spp*), and lungworm (*Angiostrongylus vasorum*).

Your puppy should have been wormed by your breeder regularly from 2 weeks old. We then recommend that you worm your pet again with Panacur® liquid, paste or granules daily for 3 consecutive days at 8 weeks old. We can discuss this with you in detail at your first vaccination appointment.

At 12 weeks, we then recommend that you move onto Drontal® worming tablets every 3 months (based on your pet's weight). This continues into adulthood.

FLEAS AND OTHER PARASITES

We advise regular treatment for parasites. Your pet should be protected from fleas, mange mites, biting lice, ear mites and ticks. There are many products available that prevent against some or all of these parasites. The product that we recommend is Advocate® Spot-on every month. This is a product that is applied to the skin on the back of your pet's neck (so they can't reach it to lick) every 4 weeks. It prevents fleas, ear mites, mange mites, lice, some intestinal roundworms and heartworm. Advocate® is also the only product licensed for prevention of lungworm in dogs, a disease increasing in incidence in the UK. Lungworm is spread by slugs, snails and even their slime trails and causes a nasty cough, bleeding disorders and can be rapidly fatal.

There are a number of diseases that are spread by other biting parasites such as ticks, sandflies and mosquitoes. If your pet is prone to ticks, or if you are planning to travel abroad, we recommend monthly applications of Advantix®. This repels biting insects, including fleas before they can bite and transmit disease.

There are many different parasite treatments on the market, but veterinary licensed products such as Advocate® and Advantix® are proven to be more effective than pet shop brands. Other veterinary products such as Frontline Combo® (different to Frontline Spot-on available from pet shops) and Program® are also available to control fleas, however they do not protect against many of the other parasites mentioned above.

If your puppy or kitten is too young (puppies less than 7 weeks, kittens less than 9 weeks) or too small (less than 1kg bodyweight) for Advocate® Spot on, we recommend Frontline® spray, which can be used from 2 days old. This should be effective against fleas for 3 months in dogs and 2 months in cats, and is effective against ticks for 1 month.

Treatment of the environment is important, especially in the initial stages of control of an infestation of parasites. Use Indorex®, Acclaim® or RIP® spray and ensure that all people, animals and fish are safely out of the way before using.

NEUTERING

We advise that all dogs and bitches are neutered at around 6 months of age. Routine neuterings are usually outpatient procedures. We ask that your pet has their normal evening meal the night before their operation, but then no food from about 10pm. They can have their water bowl throughout the night and then come in to us first thing in the morning, after a trip to the garden. Your pet will usually be back with you later that day.

Bitches

Spaying a bitch involves removing their ovaries and their entire uterus through an incision in their tummy. Bitches usually have their first season between about 6 and 9 months (it tends to be slightly later in larger breeds). We generally advise spaying before their first season as this gives the highest level of protection against mammary tumours in later life.

Advantages of spaying

- Prevention of unwanted puppies
- Elimination of behaviour associated with reproductive cycle (vulval bleeding, trying to escape)
- Prevention of medical conditions eg. Pyometra (pus filled uterus), false pregnancy and reduced likelihood of mammary tumours (if neutering performed before the second season)

Disadvantages

- Can increase tendency to put on weight. We advise feeding slightly less to spayed bitches to avoid this
- Urinary incontinence – rare
- Can cause changes in coat texture/colour in some breeds

Male Dogs

We advise castration from 6 months onwards, though in larger breeds we may advise later castration so that your dog is fully grown. The procedure involves removing both testicles. The scrotum is not usually removed but will shrink in time.

Advantages of castration

- Elimination of unsociable sexual behaviour
- Reduces the chance of developing painful prostate disease in later life
- Reduces chance of other testosterone dependent tumours
- Less inclined to wander
- Can reduce aggression, but please discuss aggression problems with your vet first

Disadvantages of castration

- Can increase tendency to put on weight. We advise feeding slightly less to castrated dogs to avoid this
- Can cause changes in coat texture/colour in some breeds