

Nutrition for Puppies

Your puppy's health and vitality depends on what you feed it. Puppies need the right balance of nutrients carefully matched to their age and activity level. They need a diet that provides the right amount of quality proteins, fats and carbohydrates but also avoids potentially harmful excesses of minerals and salt. Fat, protein and minerals like calcium and phosphorus help build strong bones and muscles and they provide plenty of energy for growth and play. However too much of these can actually stunt your puppies growth and can lead to serious health problems including obesity, bone disorders as well as heart or kidney disease.

Nutritionally balanced formulas

- No need for added meat or supplements.
- Avoids nutritional excesses and deficiencies.
- High in essential fatty acids for a glossy, healthy coat.



Highly palatable and digestible

- Less odour and mess to clean up.
- Concentrated so a smaller amount of food is required.

Formulas matched to every pets 'life stage'

- Formulas are available to suit every life stage and activity level.
- Puppy food should be fed until 1 year of age, except in giant breed dogs which should be fed until 18 months of age – breed dependent.

Economical and convenient

- Cost effective pet food that provides better nutrition.
- The choice of dry, canned and 'treats'.

Antioxidant Protection

- Antioxidants help strengthen the immune system and avoid the risk of disease.
- Free radicals, such as UV light and pollution, attack cells causing damage which can result in a weakened immune system and possibly serious diseases.

Talk to one of our friendly staff to help you choose a suitable food for you puppy.

De-sexing

Statistics have shown that neutered animals are less susceptible to disease, live longer and fit into our society a lot better. The benefits of de-sexing are:

Males

- Neutering alters male behaviors but the changes are good.
- Most neutered males do not feel the need to urine mark their territories.
- Neutering reduces wandering, therefore reducing the risk of trauma (eg. road traffic accidents), upsetting your neighbours, or becoming impounded.
- Reduced aggression towards (especially other entire male) dogs, which will mean less fighting and dominance issues with your own dogs, as well as others.
- Reduced risk of prostatic diseases.
- Eliminates risk of testicular cancer and reduces risk of other cancers.
- **Prevention of unwanted pregnancies.**

Females

- Minimal changes in nature; although there may be a tendency to put on weight. This can be minimised by appropriate dietary management.
- Minimises wandering of male dogs on to your property.
- No inconvenience of seasons/heats
- If done at a young age, reduces the risk of mammary cancer.
- Eliminates risk of uterine diseases (such as pyometra) and uterine and ovarian cancers
- **Prevention of unwanted pregnancies, and any complications (for example caesarian section).**

De-sexing is recommended from 5-6 months of age.

The de-sexing surgery is performed under a general anaesthetic after receiving a complete physical exam to ensure your pet is in good health. A female desexing operation is called a “spey” and a male’s is a “castrate”. For males, the surgical procedure involves removing both testicles through a small incision in front of the scrotum. For females, it involves removal of the uterus and ovaries through an incision in the abdominal mid-line. All patients are closely monitored by an anaesthetic nurse during the procedure, whilst a fully trained veterinarian will perform the surgery.

Your pet will be ready to go home the same day and will require a few day’s pain relief and rest. Recovery is usually fast and uneventful.

Vaccination

Vaccination is recommended from the age of 6 weeks depending on your puppy's risk. This is important in order to prevent your puppy from picking up the potentially fatal diseases described below.

Your puppy will receive some "passive" immunity from its mother's colostrum in their early weeks of life. We then start vaccinations at 6-8 weeks of age, with most puppies requiring an initial series of 2-3 vaccinations. Annual boosters are given to maintain a good immunity. Your vet will discuss with you the best ongoing vaccination protocol to suit your pet.

Our "core" vaccinations are DHP (Distemper-Hepatitis-Parvo) and Leptospirosis. Kennel cough vaccination is optional.

Canine Parvovirus

The parvovirus is an extremely infectious and hardy virus. It can survive in the environment for very long periods of time. The main source of infection is from the faeces and vomit of infected dogs, but the virus can also spread on shoes, clothing and on the coat and paws of dogs.

Signs appear quickly and usually include lethargy, depression, severe vomiting, profuse smelly bloody diarrhoea, abdominal pain and refusal of food and water. This results in rapid and severe dehydration. Symptoms are severe in younger unvaccinated puppies and death often results. Treatment is best if started as early as possible but can be lengthy and expensive and some dogs will not be able to be saved.

Unfortunately we see this disease occasionally in Te Awamutu but vaccination provides excellent protection.

Canine Hepatitis

Canine hepatitis mainly attacks the liver and can be rapidly fatal (dogs can die within 24-36 hours). Transmission is by close dog to dog contact. Dogs recovering from the disease can still be a source of infection for 6 months and can have long term liver and kidney damage.

Canine Distemper

This disease is rarely seen as vaccination provides very good immunity. It may cause fever, coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of appetite and depression. As the disease progresses there may be muscle tremors, fits and paralysis. Recovery is slow.

Kennel Cough

This is a very contagious upper respiratory tract disease and occurs when dogs are in a shared airspace such as boarding kennels, dog exercise areas, shows, grooming parlours and in working dog kennels.

The usual sign is a persistent dry cough. Retching, mild lethargy, loss of appetite and a raised temperature may also be observed. Occasionally the disease can progress to pneumonia. Treatment may be required and recovery can take several weeks.

Vaccination is given intranasally.

If your dog is going to visit boarding kennels, it will require kennel cough vaccination (as well as Distemper/Hepatitis/Parvo) and a current vaccination certificate.

Canine Leptospirosis

In New Zealand Leptospirosis is most frequently seen in the upper North Island but it appears to be slowly spreading south. Brown rats are the source of the disease and it is spread via contact with the infected urine by sniffing areas where the rats have urinated.

The liver and kidneys are the main organs affected. Signs include a high temperature, severe thirst, lethargy, abdominal pain, vomiting, diarrhoea and jaundice.

If not treated early this disease can be fatal.

Leptospirosis is contagious to humans and people may catch the disease by exposure to the urine of infected animals. To protect you and your animal from Leptospirosis vaccination is required annually.

Worms

An adult worm can lay up to 20,000 eggs per year and some eggs can survive for up to 5 years in the environment.

After hatching, worms can infect your pet via ingestion or skin contact, some types of worms can be transmitted to puppies before they are born (trans-placenta).

Intestinal worms can infect humans. Children, who are often closest to the family pets and play in dirt, are most at risk. Signs in children can be severe in some cases can include neurological signs and lifelong vision impairment.

If your pets are not regularly wormed they may show these signs

- Anaemia, including pale gums and skin
- Diarrhoea
- 'Pot belly' appearance, particularly in puppies
- Weight loss, despite eating well
- White segments in their faeces
- 'Scooting'
- Dull or poor coat
- Coughing
- Depression

To prevent worms infecting your environment

- Clean kennels
- Control fleas
- Do not feed raw meat/offal
- Feed your puppy quality pet food
- Wash your hands after playing with your puppy
- Remove faeces from your back yard regularly. Do not let dogs and cats have access to sandpits where children play.
- Control intermediate hosts– rats/mice

Types of Worms

Hookworms

Hookworms are the most dangerous of all the intestinal worms. Hookworms survive by burrowing into your pets intestinal wall and sucking blood. Your dog could experience enteritis, diarrhoea, dehydration and ultimately even death from anaemia if puppies are infected.

Roundworms

Roundworms can be passed on to humans – especially children. They can also be exceptionally good survivors and are able to live outside the animal for several years. Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhoea, ‘pot belly’ and abdominal pain.

Whipworms

Whipworms live in the lower bowel of pets and can survive up to a year, laying over 2000 eggs per day. Eggs can also survive in the soil and in the pet’s surroundings for years. Symptoms include pain, diarrhoea and weight loss.

Common Flea Tapeworm

The common flea tapeworm larvae develop inside the flea. When your puppy eats the infected flea (whilst grooming itself), the tapeworm develops in your puppy’s gut. The common tapeworm causes itching and is often responsible for your puppies ‘scooting’.

Taenia Ovis Tapeworm (common name—Sheep Measles)

Found in areas where sheep and dogs are in close contact. Dogs become infected by eating raw sheep/goat meat. Worms can shed 250000 eggs per day and survive on pasture for 6 months. This worm is important to farmers as the worms form cysts in sheep meat, resulting in downgrading of carcasses and lost income.

Treatment of Worms

Puppies should be wormed every 2 weeks from 2 to 12 weeks of age. From 12 weeks to 6 months dogs and should be wormed monthly. Once 6 months and older, worming should be done every 3 months with a good broad spectrum wormer. A pregnant female should be treated during pregnancy and 3 weeks after giving birth.

Talk to our staff for more information on the best product for your pet.

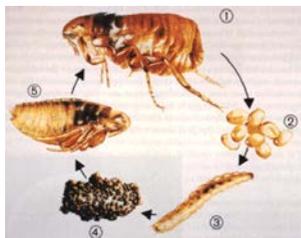
Fleas

Fleas can affect all animals, even the most looked-after pet. Although you don't always see them, they are a year-round problem. Fleas may be picked up while walking, in the garden and from other animals that they have contact with. If your pet is scratching more than normal, losing hair or getting bald patches over the back and around the tail you should suspect fleas. If you part your pet's fur you may see fleas or flea droppings (tiny black specks which will stain red if placed on white damp paper).



The Flea Life Cycle

Each flea can lay up to 50 eggs a day into the surrounding environment. Eggs hatch into larvae which make up 50% of the flea population. Larvae feed on the faeces of the adult flea, then pupate and develop into adults. They can develop in 5 days in ideal conditions (during Summer and in warm homes), but can also remain in the environment for 140 days (such as when a house is uninhabited). They emerge from pupae in response to ground vibrations or other similar stimuli, so can await a host for a long period of time.



The adult flea begins to feed within seconds of finding a host and may bite humans before finding a preferred host. They can survive for up to six months without a blood meal and can live for up to two years producing 50 eggs per day. Adult fleas only make up 5% of the flea population which is why year-round flea treatment of ALL pets is vital. When a severe flea infestation is present it can take up to one year to gain control of flea burdens due to the number of immature flea stages in the environment.

Flea treatments are now available in topical or tablet forms.

Talk to our qualified staff to discuss the most suitable treatment for your pet.

Microchipping

Microchipping is now legally required in all non-working dogs and is necessary for registration with your local council.

A microchip is a small implant which contains a unique number. It is approximately the size of a grain of rice and sits under the skin for the lifetime of your pet without causing any pain or irritation. Microchipping can be done at any age, it is a minor procedure that is done without anaesthetic. The microchip is applied with a needle into the scruff of the neck. We often insert them during your pup's 14 week vaccination; or desexing operation.

The New Zealand Companion Animal Register (<http://www.animalregister.co.nz>) has been set up to provide a 24 hour-a-day database so that lost and found pets can be quickly returned to their owners. Your details can be updated online at any time at no charge. Registration to this database is optional so please ask if you would like your pet to be added (a small once-off fee applies).