



## **Recommended Canine Preventative Health Care:**

**Routine Physical Exam:** It is recommended for all dogs until they reach senior age to have an annual wellness examination. This exam gives our doctors an opportunity to perform a thorough, comprehensive physical examination, as well as discuss with you any health concerns such as dental care, behavioral problems and weight management. In addition, our staff will perform intestinal parasite checks, heartworm checks, and other routine health care screens. Once your dog reaches their senior years, we recommend bi-annual examinations.

**Vaccinations:** Vaccine regimens are based on your dog's individual needs and risk factors.

**Puppies:** In order to ensure that all puppies become fully protected, a series of vaccines will be given starting as early as six weeks of age until they are fourteen to sixteen weeks of age. All puppies receive vaccination for Distemper Virus, Infectious Canine Hepatitis Virus (Adenovirus type 2), Parvo Virus, Parainfluenza Virus and Rabies Virus. These vaccines will be administered again at one year of age.

**"Homebody":** Dogs who stay primarily indoors, have a fenced in yard or rarely come in contact with other dogs or wildlife fit into this category. These dogs do not board or go to the groomers. Their vaccine needs are DA2PP (Distemper Virus, Hepatitis Virus, Parvo Virus, and Parainfluenza Virus) every 5 years and Rabies vaccine every three years.

\* For those dogs that live in rural areas, spend time at campgrounds, parks, beaches, or are in areas where wildlife may live, we recommend Leptospirosis vaccine annually.

**"Outdoorsman":** Dogs who spend time in parks, woods, etc. These dogs are at risk of exposure to fleas, ticks, and occasional wildlife. These dogs may also travel into the more endemic areas for lymes disease, such as North Carolina, Pennsylvania, and other Northeastern states. These dogs should receive Leptospirosis and Lymes vaccine annually, in addition to DA2PP vaccine every 5 years and Rabies vaccine every three years.

**"Traveler":** The traveler is a dog who spends most of their time in the home or yard but occasionally makes visits to a boarding facility or groomers. These dogs should receive DA2PP vaccine every 5 years and Rabies vaccine every three years and Bordetella vaccine annually.

**Dental Care:** Preventative dental care is one of the most important facets of preventative health care for your pet. Studies have shown a direct relationship of periodontal disease (gingivitis, halitosis, and calculus/tartar) and heart disease, kidney and liver failure. For most dogs, it is important to have the teeth cleaned annually as well as daily dental care at home. There are many options now available that have been proven to be easy, effective and enjoyable for your pet. Be sure to ask one of our health care team members about recommendations for daily dental care.

**Intestinal Parasites:** Parasitic zoonotic disease (parasites infectious to humans and animals) are a serious concern for all pet owners, especially if there are small children in the home. It is recommended that all dogs be tested annually for intestinal parasites as well as be on a monthly heartworm preventative which provides intestinal parasite control.

**Heartworm:** South Carolina is a highly endemic area for heartworm infection and disease. Heartworm infection is transmitted to dogs during the feeding of many species of mosquitoes and causes damage to the heart and blood vessels of the lungs. All dogs, regardless of housing status, should be on a heartworm preventative year round and tested annually. There are numerous monthly preventatives as well as long lasting injections available. Be sure to ask one of our health care team members which one may be right for you and your pet!

**Flea and Tick Control:** Fleas and ticks are not only a nuisance but they transmit diseases such as Lyme disease, Ehrlichiosis, and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. It is recommended that all dogs be on some form of external parasite control product. We now have many very safe and effective products without having to use messy dips, sprays or collars. Ask one of our health care team professionals about which one may be right for your dog.

**Spaying/Neutering:** Unless your dog is going to be used as a breeding animal, we recommend spaying/neutering your dog. Spaying your female puppy prior to her first heat cycle reduces the risk of breast cancer by greater than 95% and eliminates the possibility of uterine infections and cancer later in life. Neutering your male puppy reduces his desire to roam and almost entirely eliminates his chances of prostate and testicular problems later in life. Neutering early in life also reduces the risk of developing behavior problems such as urine marking and interdog aggression. This procedure provides a convenience to you and better health for your dog, and helps the serious pet overpopulation problems as well.

**Diet:** What your dog eats, from their very first day, will influence their general health for their entire lives. We recommend an appropriate life stage diet (puppy, adult, mature, and senior) for each individual dog. Many diets are now available to help with dental care, weight management, and other health issues. Our doctors are well trained in diet recommendations and are happy to help you in your choice of foods.

**Microchip:** Each year, the nation's animal shelters receive 8-12 million pets and euthanize 30-60% of these. With 75% of pets presented without collars or identification, only 2% are reclaimed by their owners. Thanks to new technology, those statistics can be changed. The chip is about the size of a grain of rice, which will never break, move, or be noticed. Once implanted, it can be activated by a special reader to transmit a unique code that identifies your pet. All animal shelters have access to these scanners. As a result, we recommend for all our clients to have their pet implanted with a microchip to serve as a permanent identification.

**Note:** Please inform the veterinarian if anyone in your household has any conditions resulting in a decreased immune system, as pets in such households require increased disease monitoring and parasite control.

**Specific Wellness Recommendations:**

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**Thank you for entrusting us with the care of your very special pet!**