



## PREVENTATIVE HEALTHCARE IN DOGS

### Why prevent disease?

- **Prevention is better than cure:** There are no specific treatments for many of the viral diseases so treatment is often only supportive and may be unsuccessful.
- **Diseases cause suffering:** Most of us can't remember the last time someone suffered from Tetanus, Small Pox, Measles or Tuberculosis. These diseases have been eradicated or prevented in humans by vaccination – one form of disease prevention.
- **It saves money:** In most cases the cure is generally more expensive than prevention.
- **It increases** levels of pet health in our local community by reducing infectious diseases

**Our staff know that a healthy pet is a happy pet and we have devised the following nine point plan to try and keep your pet as healthy and happy as possible.**

### The 9 point plan.

#### 1. **Vaccination (see vaccination leaflet)**

- Parvovirus )
- Distemper )
- Hepatitis ) Not allowed on the floor in public places until
- Leptospirosis ) 1 week after 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination
- Parainfluenza virus )
- Kennel cough (Bordetella) – optional but sensible extra
- (+Rabies if you want to get a pet passport – vaccine needed at least 3 weeks prior to foreign travel)

#### 2. **Deworming** – All dogs have worms and there are more than a dozen different types. One of these, Toxocara (a roundworm) is a serious health issue to humans and can, in extreme cases, cause blindness. Children are especially at risk and dogs that have contact with young children must be wormed monthly. More than 90% of puppies are infected with Toxocara. These worms then develop throughout the first six months of life. Our recommended protocol for treatment is **Advocate** and **Panacur** at first vaccine, then **Advocate** monthly. Once 6 months of age we recommend **Advocate** monthly and **Droncit** every 3 months. **Droncit** is very effective against all types of worms, especially tapeworms.

**Advocate** is a great all round parasite control product and also kills fleas (see below), ear mites, fox mange mites and importantly, lungworm. Lungworm is thankfully not common, but it can be fatal and since it is caught by eating slugs and snails (or sometimes eating grass or drinking from puddles where slugs and snails have been), puppies are frequently affected.

#### 3. **Flea Control** – In a typical infestation only 5% fleas (the adults) live on your dog and 95% (the eggs and larvae) live in the home. Fleas can cause skin problems and anaemia in young animals. Our recommended protocol is **Advocate** applied monthly. This kills the adult fleas and larvae and makes flea eggs infertile, helping to break the flea life cycle.

#### 4. **Feeding** – Throughout each stage of their lives dogs have different nutritional requirements. We recommend a researched complete and balanced diet such as **Hills Science Diet**. This food and dry

diets generally, are better for the teeth than wet food. Larger breeds of dog should have a “large breed” puppy food.

5. **Dental and Oral care** – A dog’s mouth is similar to ours and so, like us, brushing teeth is the best option to prevent dental disease. Tooth brushing is best introduced when young, but preferably when they have finished “play-biting”. Dog toothpaste is the only golden rule. For those animals who will not tolerate brushing we recommend **Logic Oral Gel** and some suitable chews (**Dentagen** chews) or toys (Nylabones and Kong toys). Feeding **Hills t/d** or **Hills Vet Essentials** also helps to control tartar. There is a guide to introducing tooth brushing in the preventative health section of our website under dental and oral care  
[www.bansteadvillagevets.co.uk/preventative-healthcare/dogs.html#.W8CJaGhKi70](http://www.bansteadvillagevets.co.uk/preventative-healthcare/dogs.html#.W8CJaGhKi70)
6. **Neutering** – This helps to prevent diseases such as testicular cancer, prostate disease/cancer and tumours of the anal region in male dogs. Aggression towards other dogs and people, sexual behavior and roaming are also less likely when male dogs are castrated. Mammary cancer and uterine infections are two common, life-threatening conditions which are preventable by neutering (or spaying) bitches. The risk of mammary cancer increases rapidly with each season that bitches have. However, there is increasing evidence that neutering is best delayed until after the first season when they have reached sexual and skeletal maturity i.e. at 10-12 month of age, especially for larger breed dogs.
1. **Insurance** – Unexpected bills can be heartbreaking for both owners and vets if costs of treatment are prohibitive and the animal has to have less than optimal treatment or worse. Insurance represents a regular, worthwhile contribution to the health of your pet. Policies that provide lifelong cover are preferred over those which only offer 12 months of cover and then exclude the disease/condition in question from any further cover. We can introduce you to Petplan who can provide you with Free Veterinary Cover for 4 weeks and information about their other policies. If you would like us to make the introduction please tell a member of staff.
2. **Microchipping** – The best way of protecting your dog against theft and of re-uniting you with him/her in the event of loss. Nowadays, it is a legal requirement to microchip your dog. You should ensure that you change the details registered by the breeder over to your own contact details.
3. **Socialisation** – It is very important to get puppies used to the big wide world before the age of 12-14 weeks. See the enclosed socialization leaflet.

There are a few other points worth considering:

**Training classes** – Very useful for new pups and for owners too! We have a list of local classes at reception.

**Adaptil** – A synthetic version of a natural pheromone which helps to calm your puppy, settle it into your home (reduces crying at night) and greatly aids socialisation. The best version for puppies is a collar impregnated with the pheromone which lasts 1 month (you should only need one)

**Exercise** – Over-exercising your puppy can increase the chances of joint disease later in life, especially in larger breed dogs. A rough (but not very scientific!) guide is 5 minutes of exercise per month of age. This is not set in stone, but you should certainly try to avoid hard running on hard surfaces for prolonged periods.

Finally, do think about signing up to our **VIP Health club**. This will save you money on most of the preventative health care discussed above. Please speak to any member of staff if you are interested.