



12 Bridge Street
Garstang
Preston
PR3 1YB

Primary vaccinations and health check advice

Vaccinations

Puppies: The earliest start for the primary vaccination is 7 weeks of age; a 2nd booster injection is required 2-5 weeks later. N.B. the 2nd injection cannot be given before 10 weeks old; this is because of residual maternally derived antibodies.

Kittens: Primary Vaccinations can start from 9 weeks old, 2 doses are required with an interval of 3-4 weeks.

A week after their 2nd injection it is safe for him/her to go outside and mix with other animals.

An annual booster is required thereafter to make sure immunity levels are maintained.

We advise that animals between their 1st and 2nd vaccinations should not mix with other dogs/cats. However, if friends and family have animals which are up to date with their vaccinations it is beneficial to the behavioural development of your puppy to introduce them to 'clean' animals.

Worming

Routine worming is part of responsible dog/cat ownership. This is for the animal's health and well-being but also, very importantly, it is for Public Health. Anywhere a dog/cat goes it can shed worm eggs/segments which in turn can be picked up by humans, especially young children. Worming should be carried out monthly until the puppy/kitten is 6 months old when they then go onto the adult regime of routinely treating every 3 months.

N.B. if dog/cat is a scavenger/hunter or if they are in regular close contact with small children increase the frequency of worming. Dose every 1-3 months dependent on animal's individual circumstances. It is safe to give dose monthly if you feel your animal is a higher risk animal.

Please also clear up faeces after your animal as this reduces transmission between other animals as well as to humans.

We encourage puppies and kittens to book weigh and worm appointments every month, this allows us to see how they are growing, dose correctly and the animals learn that a trip to the vets is usually a pleasant and non-scary experience! There is no charge, other than the cost of the tablet, for this service.

Flea treatment.

Routine flea treatment is advised to prevent your animal bringing fleas into their environment. We recommend Stronghold Plus, it kills the fleas that jump onto your dog and also prevents contamination of their environment by inhibiting development of flea larvae and eggs. Fleas live in the animal's environment (i.e. your house) and only jump onto animal to feed-so you will rarely see fleas on animal. If you have a flea outbreak it is advisable to treat the house with a good household spray especially in corners/nooks/crannies including hard surfaces and hot wash bedding to control the environmental reservoir. Fleas are an all year round problem, they are perceived as a summer problem but with central heating it means they survive over winter and prevention is required throughout the year. Make sure all animals in the household are treated properly.

Repeat treatments with Stronghold Plus for cats or Simparica for dogs. Cats every 4 weeks. Dogs every month for fleas and ticks.

Feeding

Whilst your puppy/kitten is growing it is important to provide their body with the correct nutrition for bone and muscle development. They should be fed on a puppy/kitten food until they are fully grown (usually 12-18 month old – dependant on breed). I'm a big fan of complete dry food. They provide complete nutrition and the chewing of the biscuits exercises the jaw muscles and helps keep the teeth clean...there is no need to supplement with treats or human food if it is a good quality food.

Correct nutrition whilst they are growing supports strong bones and muscles and there is no need restrict exercise, they can do as much running around as they want (within reason). NB if a puppy is likely to be over 25kg when fully grown a large breed puppy food should be fed, this will ensure they do not grow too quickly and that their bones develop properly.

Neutering

Although breeding can be very rewarding it is also a very stressful experience. If you are not thinking of breeding from your pet we recommend routine neutering. Neutering can be carried out from 6 months old. Routine neutering is part of responsible ownership as it eliminates unwanted pregnancies and straying behaviour. Medically, neutering eliminates pyometra (a life threatening infection within the uterus of female animals) and reproductive tumours and prostate problems. In bitches spayed before they have their 2nd season the risk of mammary tumours are greatly reduced. Behaviourally, neutering can often help keep aggressive and naughty behaviour under control. Unfortunately, if bad behaviour has become learnt/habit, neutering can help but it is not a cure.

Please note that animals have the tendency to put on weight post neutering (esp bitches) so monitor feed/weight. I suggest reducing feed intake of bitches by ¼ post-operatively.

Large breed bitches I tend to allow them to have 1 season and spay 2-3m post season as they can be prone to urinary incontinence in later life if done when they are too small.

Insurance

Insurance is invaluable if you need it! We can't recommend any company above another. Always read the small print, look for a company that will pay for on-going conditions and treatment – you pay for what you get. Or, think about a 'bank/savings account' for your pet(s)!

Behaviour/training

Put in the ground work now to get a good dog/cat! Up until 14 weeks of age they have a behavioural window in which they learn really quickly, so get socialising...people, children, animals, cars, loud noises etc. All a puppy wants is attention and they don't distinguish it to be positive or negative so the basics are to ignore bad behaviour and praise/reward good behaviour! Try to quietly divert bad behaviour to change it to a good behaviour/activity and praise the correct behaviour. Look for puppy classes in the area. These are great for socialising your new dog and also to help train YOU and your dog in basic obedience

Toilet training... be patient – very patient!!! Realistically by 5-6 months old they should be trustworthy with their toileting habits. Do NOT scold accidents, this will only encourage them to go off and do their business in private as you obviously don't like seeing them do it!!! Instead praise it when it's in the right place. To start with, cover a large area by door with paper, so it doesn't matter if accidents happen. Take him/her out (accompanied) as often as possible, especially after any form of excitement (waking up, feeding, playing), praise if goes outside, ignore accidents (quietly clean up). Gradually reduce area of paper. If you do catch them having an accident take them outside ASAP at ground level, showing the way to 'outside' and use the command 'outside' and praise if they go outside!

Letting cats out for the 1st time, only let outside when they are hungry, supervise initially and call in for food. Continue to do this and increase gap between letting out and calling back in for food.

Teeth

Routine teeth cleaning can be introduced from a young age using an animal tooth brush or a soft child's brush. Dry biscuit diets help maintain dental health and dental chews and toys are also available.

Microchip

It is a procedure that is as quick as an injection and it permanently identifies your pet for life! It can be carried out at the same time as the 1st vaccination but I tend to let the 1st visit to the vets be a pleasant experience. I advise microchipping to be carried out at the same time as 2nd vaccinations.