**NEW PUPPY INFORMATION SHEET**

Congratulations on your new puppy. We hope you find the experience of owning your puppy a long and rewarding one. Following is some information on looking after your puppy to help keep them healthy and happy.

**VACCINATIONS:**

Dogs need to be vaccinated against a variety of nasty diseases.

The core C3 vaccine will protect against:

**Canine Distemper** – a systemic viral disease, causing gastrointestinal and nervous signs.

**Canine Adenovirus** – a viral disease affecting the liver.

**Canine Parvovirus** – a highly contagious gastrointestinal viral disease, seen quite commonly, causing vomiting and diarrhoea.

The C5 vaccine protects against the above 3 diseases as well as:

**Bordetella Bronchiseptica** and **Parainfluenza Virus** – together, these form part of the ‘Canine (Kennel) Cough’ complex. This vaccination is recommended if your dog is in close, regular contact with other dogs (e.g. showing, obedience) and will be required if your dog goes to a boarding kennel.

Additional vaccinations are available against:

**Coronavirus** – a gastrointestinal viral disease, usually found together with other gastrointestinal infections.

**Leptospirosis** – a systemic bacterial disease affecting the liver, kidney and other organs.

Vaccinations should usually be given at 6-8 weeks, 10-12 weeks and 14-16 weeks. Puppies should avoid contact with other dogs until 2 weeks after the final injection, unless the vaccination history and health status of the other dogs are known. An annual booster is recommended thereafter.

**INTESTINAL WORMING**

All puppies are born with worms, which they contract from their mother. Some of these worms can also infect humans, so it is important to keep your dogs worming treatments up to date. Puppies should be wormed every 2 weeks from 2 weeks to 12 weeks of age, then every month until they are 6 months old, and then every 3 months for the rest of their lives. There are a number of different worming products available, such as tablets and top spot treatments. Our veterinarians can give you advice on which products would be the most suitable for your puppy.

**HEARTWORM**

Heartworm is a serious disease of dogs in Australia. It is spread by mosquitos, requiring no dog-to-dog contact. As the name suggests, the adult worms live in the heart and can cause cardiovascular and respiratory disease. Preventative treatment for heartworm should begin from 6-8 weeks of age and continue throughout life. The different products available include a daily tablet, a monthly tablet, spot-on treatments and an annual injection. Our veterinary and nursing staff can discuss which option is best for you and your dog.

**FLEAS**

All dogs will have fleas at some stage, as dogs are the natural host for fleas. They can be extremely irritating for the animal, and the owner! Some dogs are also allergic to fleas, and just one flea can cause major skin problems. Therefore monthly flea prevention is recommended, and there are a number of different formulations available, such as washes, top spots, and chews.

**TICKS:**

Dogs are commonly affected with paralysis ticks in this area. Signs include hind-leg weakness, vomiting and gagging, breathing difficulties and a change in voice. This is a life-threatening condition if left untreated and even with treatment, some animals will still die. Prevention is, therefore, very important. Tasty chews or top-spots can help kill ticks on your pet, but nothing can replace daily manual searching and removal of any ticks.

**DESEXING**

It is a good idea to have your pet desexed if you are not planning to breed from him or her. Desexing can prevent behavioural changes associated with females coming into heat, and males roaming in search of a female in season in the neighborhood. It can also help prevent some diseases, such as prostate enlargement in males, perineal hernias, mammary cancers (especially if desexed prior to the first heat), and uterine infections. Dogs should be desexed at about 5-6 months of age, preferably before the first season in females.

**MICROCHIPPING**

By law in NSW, ***all*** dogs must be microchipped and registered on the NSW Companion Animal Register. They can also be registered on the Australian Companion Animal Register, although this is not compulsory. Microchipping is a method of permanently identifying your pet, and means that they can be identified and returned to you if they ever stray or go missing. You must update any details on the register if they change. We will assist you in filling out the required forms, and lodge them for you. The microchip is injected under the skin between the shoulder blades, and must be done at the time of first vaccination or by three (3) months of age.

**DIET**

Puppies must have a balanced diet, with the right nutrients and energy levels. There are many different commercial foods available, and they should be fed a puppy formulation until they reach their adult size. They should be fed 3-4 meals a day, and this slowly tapered until they are on a 1-2 meals per day at about 6 months of age. The amount of food that each puppy needs varies with size and breed, and there are usually good directions on the food packages. Once the puppy is fully grown, they should be changed to an adult maintenance diet to avoid obesity, as their energy requirements are much less when adults.

Adult dogs should be fed a variety of raw whole bones, such as shanks of beef femur, or raw chicken wings for smaller breeds. This will help to keep their teeth clean and healthy. There are also a number of foods that dogs should never be fed, such as onions, garlic, chocolate, and nuts (especially macadamia and cashew nuts) as they can make them very sick. It is therefore best that they are not fed human food and table scraps. They should also ***not*** be given human medications, such as panadol, unless prescribed by a veterinarian, as they are different to us and some can make them very ill.

**PUPPY PRESCHOOL**

Puppy preschool is a good idea for your pet, as they will learn some basic commands and learn to socialize with and get used to other dogs. Puppy preschool will enhance and enrich your relationship with your dog, and help you develop a strong bond with each other. Ideally they should attend from about 8-16 weeks of age, but if they are older and have missed this period, they would benefit from obedience classes from 6-9 months of age.

Puppy preschool classes are regularly held at our clinic. Further information on our classes is available from our staff members.

If you have any concerns regarding you pet, or require any further details on any of the above information, our veterinarians and staff are always happy to help.