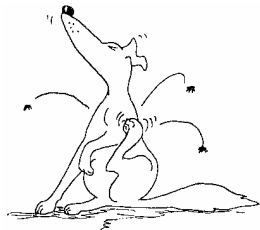


- Most worms will live in the intestine and feed on the partly digested food. Roundworms are spread through the environment, and Tapeworms are spread through an intermediate host (usually the flea).
- A dog will almost certainly suffer from a flea infestation at some point during its life, and one or two fleas would be quite enough to cause a marked irritation. If you notice your dog scratching a lot, inspect his coat carefully. Tiny reddish-brown specks near the skin may indicate that he has fleas.



- Fleas spend the majority of their life cycle in the home environment, therefore effective treatment and control involves treating both the environment and the dog. Treatment of the environment involves using a recommended aerosol spray and regular vacuuming including around the skirting boards, the dog bed, under furniture and under the sofa cushions.
- There are a large number of flea products available. Ask your local veterinary surgeon for advice on which products will suit you and your dogs needs. A variety of sprays, shampoos and powders are available to treat these. Your Vet will advise you which to use. Remember also to use a spray on the dog's bed and your carpets to destroy any flea larvae.

Older Dogs

- As with people, dogs suffer from various problems associated with old age. The most common is arthritis and general stiffness.
- Remember that your aged dog will neither want or need as much exercise as when he was younger. He will sleep more, too. He will also be inclined to eat less, but pay attention to his diet so that he does not become overweight. Bear in mind that his teeth may not be as strong, so he may not eat bones or hard biscuits. Take care to dry your dog thoroughly if he gets wet, and do not leave him outside for long periods of time on cold or damp days.
- Most importantly, if your dog starts to show any signs of unusual behaviour, discomfort or pain, seek your Vet's advice as soon as possible.

*For further information or to comment on this leaflet please contact the Environmental Protection Team
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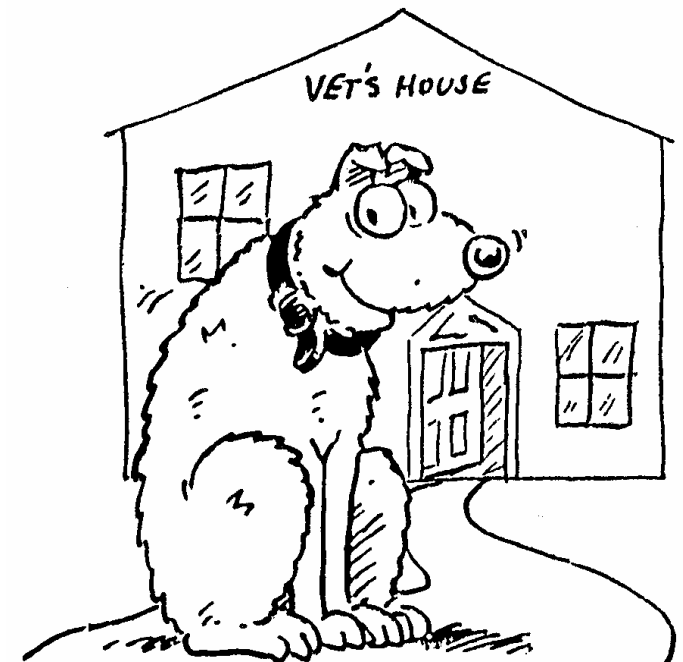
Communications are available in other languages, on CD Rom, email, in Braille, large print or audio tape. Contact Customer Service Team on 01327 322322



South Northamptonshire Council

Animal Welfare Service

Leaflet 5



Keeping your Dog healthy

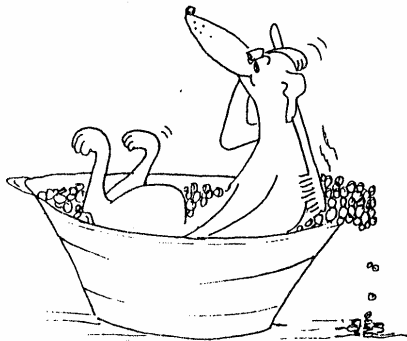
Keeping your Dog Healthy

A healthy dog is a happy dog, and dogs which are kept clean and healthy are a pleasure to own. Dogs with minor health problems, however, may become distressed which may result in destructive or aggressive behaviour, and certain diseases can be passed to humans.

Therefore the health of your dog is not only vital to his own well-being, but also to yours.

1. General Hygiene

- Grooming should be part of your dog's routine, even in short coated or wirehaired dogs. It is very important that your dog is used to being touched and handled all over in a pleasant way. If you, the owner, cannot groom your dog, then you will experience difficulties when visiting the vet or when trying to wipe muddy paws.
- Ensure that your dog has his own place to sleep and his own feed and water dishes – do not allow him to share yours.
- Remember to wash your hands after handling your dog, and do not allow him to lick your face.



2. Healthy Puppies

- When you go to buy a new puppy, ask to see the parents and take note of the surroundings. Puppies kept in a dirty environment may have underlying health problems which are not necessarily obvious at first. Never buy a puppy which is quiet or nervous, has a runny nose or eyes, a dull coat or a swollen tummy.
- The Kennel Club, your Vet or the Licensing Section at your local Council will be able to recommend reputable dog breeders.
- When you get your puppy, take him to the Vet for a check over.
- The Vet will also advise you on essential vaccinations to prevent your puppy catching diseases from other dogs.
- Puppies are most at risk from worm infections. Worms are passed from mother before birth and after, through the milk. Infestation can cause weight loss, vomiting, diarrhoeas, swollen abdomen and in extreme circumstances death. Puppies should be wormed from 2-3 weeks of age at 2 weekly intervals until they are 12 weeks of age, then every month until they are 6 months of age.
- You should also receive a diet sheet from the breeder. Try to use the same feed, to avoid any upsets.

3. Young Dogs and Adult Dogs

- Once your puppy has completed his initial vaccination course, you will be able to take him out and start training. Regular (usually once a year) vaccinations are necessary to boost the dogs immunity levels to ensure your dog remains protected against certain diseases. Dogs can be vaccinated against distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus, leptospirosis and kennel cough. Despite the availability of vaccines, many dogs die each year from these diseases in the UK.
- Teach your dog to behave calmly while you inspect his teeth, ears, eyes and paws. This will make your vets job easier if any problems arise, and will also help you to catch any problems early. Distracting your dog with a tasty chew, or smearing marmite or peanut butter on the fridge door at head height can be very effective.
- Tooth brushing when done regularly, is the most effective way of removing plaque from your dog's teeth and keeping the gums healthy. It will also prevent bad breath. Daily tooth brushing should start right away so that your dog/puppy will soon learn to accept this as part of its daily routine. It is important to use pet toothpaste. Your dog will swallow all the toothpaste, so it should not contain any ingredients which may cause him harm.
- Adult dogs should be wormed at least three times a year with a recommended veterinary preparation for the rest of the dogs life. The two main types of worms are Tapeworms (*Didyldium* species) and Roundworms (*Toxocara canis*).