



Points to Perfect Pet Care

1. Insurance

Advances in veterinary medicine mean we can do more for the health of your pet. These advanced procedures and medications can be costly. Pet insurance allows you to budget rather than face unexpected and potentially unaffordable bills. Having pet insurance means you can concentrate on what is best for your pet in an emergency rather than the vet bill.

2. Annual Health Checks and Vaccination

At your pet's annual health check we get your pet's health history from you, and check your pet from head to toe to ensure all is well. This is so we can detect problems early and manage them effectively. Depending on the findings of our discussion and physical examination we may recommend further urine and blood testing, particularly once your pet has become a senior. Vaccination for many diseases is best done annually. Together, we will determine the vaccination your pet needs when they come in for their annual health check.

3. Flea Control

Fleas cause terrible skin irritation, allergic skin disease, and can pass tapeworms to your pet. Preventative treatment all year round is required to prevent flea infestations establishing. 95% of the flea population lives in the environment, with 5% jumping on and off your pet. You will only see fleas on your pet once the infestation is at a high level. How often you need to treat for fleas depends on what product you use, some are monthly, others can last for 3 and 6 months.

3. Intestinal Parasite Control

Intestinal worms can cause illness in both pets and people. Regular de-worming is an important part of pet care. To prevent your pet contracting worms we recommend de-worming every three months as an adult. Puppies and kittens should be wormed every 2 weeks until 3 months of age and monthly until 6 months of age.

5. Dental Care

Dental disease is the most common condition that our pets suffer from. 80% of pets over 1 year old have some degree of dental disease. This can be painful and damage other organs like the heart and kidneys due to bacterial build up and inflammation. Teeth require home care every day and yearly check-ups with the veterinarian. Dental homecare looks like: toothbrushing, supplements such as plaque off, complete dental diets and dental chews. Many pets will need dental scale and polishing at some point in their life to prevent dental disease progressing to infected and rotten teeth, gum disease, and pain.

6. Nutrition

A high-quality diet, tailored to the age and health of your pet means your pet will live a healthier, longer life. We recommend premium pet foods such as Royal Canin and Hill's Science Diet because they contain high quality ingredients and are intensively researched to make sure they are optimising your pet's health.

7. Behaviour

Puppies

The most common reason that dogs are surrendered and euthanised is for behavioural problems. Teaching and encouraging good behaviour is literally lifesaving. Puppy preschool, obedience training, socialisation and enrichment are fantastic ways for you to lay down a good foundation for your puppy's future.

- Puppy preschool is a great way to learn about your puppy's physical and mental health and wellbeing, build a bond between you and start learning the basics in training. We offer puppy preschool classes here.

- Obedience training is a good follow on from preschool to practice what you have learnt and build on that.

- We want to introduce puppies to new items and experiences in a non-threatening way. Puppies should be neutral or positive to other dogs, people, other species, machinery, cars etc.

- Enrichment enhances an animal's environment to facilitate normal physical and social behaviour. Types of enrichment include social, physical, nutritional, sensory and occupational. This can look like: going on walks, playing with other dogs, playing games with you, food puzzles, chew toys, playing in water, obedience training, experiencing new places such as the beach etc.

Kittens

Kittens that are stimulated and handled from birth are more confident, more social, more exploratory, faster to mature and are better able to handle stress as they develop. The more handling the better; but even 15 minutes a day will help to improve later behaviour. Regular and frequent handling from birth increases the likelihood that the kitten will relate well to people when placed into a home after weaning at 6 to 9 weeks of age. Therefore, kittens obtained from a breeder or home where they have had frequent contact and interaction with the owners are likely to be more social and less fearful as they develop.

- Start Small. Gently pet and hold new born kittens for just a few seconds several times each day.

- At 2 weeks of age, pick up and hold the kittens in different positions for brief periods every day. As they get older, it is okay to handle them more frequently and for longer periods of time.

- By 4 weeks of age, intensify socialization:

* Introduce new textures by playing with kittens on carpeting, tile, wood, blankets, rugs, concrete, etc.

* Expose the kittens to household noises such as blenders, doorbells, banging pots, washing machines, alarm clocks, stereos. Muffle loud or harsh noises at first by covering the appliance with a towel or making the noise while the kittens are in an adjacent room.

* If there are no children living in or visiting the home, buy a CD with the sounds of children and play it frequently.

* Place items, such as winter boots, skateboards, bags of groceries, and books on the floor for the kittens to investigate.

* Offer a variety of objects for the kittens to play with, include empty plastic bottles, paper towel cores, and cardboard boxes in different sizes, as well as commercial cat toys.

* Continue to handle the kittens daily, include touching every part of their bodies.

* Put the kittens in a carrier and go to a friend's house for a brief play-and-cuddle session. If no one is available to host, simply go outside and come back in or go for a drive around the block. Play with the kittens as soon as you return home.

- At 5 weeks of age, more people should be interacting with your kittens. Expose the kittens to a variety of people for optimal socialization: young, old; male, female; wearing glasses; wearing a hat; light-skinned, dark-skinned; animated, laid-back; etc.

*If you have an older kitten or cat you can still try out these techniques to reduce anxious behaviour and reactivity however they are most effective when started from a young age. Older kittens and cats need a slower approach and if poorly socialised may never tolerate some of these things without significant anxiety. *