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**Our services:**

General Medicine  
Disease Prevention  
Laboratory Services

Surgery  
Dentistry  
Grooming

For after hours emergencies, please call:

South Metro Animal Emergency Care  
14690 Pennock Avenue  
Apple Valley, MN 55124  
Phone: (952) 953-3737

# Veterinary Visits

## Happy-Time Visits

\*Set up times with us to bring in your puppy just to visit with no poking, prodding or vaccines.

\*Bring along tiny, tasty treats. A high number of repetitions will make the experience more rewarding for the dog. Give treats when the dog is behaving calmly. You don't want to reward nervous or unruly behavior, but you don't want to punish the dog for it either. Rewarding calm behavior may need to begin in the parking lot.

\*Make these visits short, especially at first. You don't want to overwhelm your puppy. These visits give us (the staff) more chances to get to know you and your pet. This is the beginning of an important relationship among you, your pet, and us.

## Be Prepared

\*Communicate-If you are not able to administer a particular drug or treatment, let us know so something else can be tried instead. If you don't remember what to do when you get home, call and ask-we would be happy to answer your questions.

\*Follow Up-When one treatment doesn't work, that information can open the way to a diagnosis and effective treatment, but only if you give us the opportunity to help you and your pet.

## Handling Your Pet in the Hospital

\*It takes skill to properly restrain a dog and the staff at Dakota Pet have developed teamwork to coordinate their actions when working with your pet. Please don't be offended if you are asked to let the technician hold the dog.

## Vaccinations

Each puppy is an individual. A personalized vaccine schedule will be discussed at your first visit. The Doctor will discuss with you the best schedule for your dog based on factors such as age, health, what your dog will be used for (hunting, showing, family pet), and the amount and type of exposure your dog will have with other animals. If you have any questions about your puppy's schedule please ask.

### Vaccine Reactions

Vaccine reactions are allergic reactions, which occur infrequently in dogs and cats after being given a vaccination. A pet being quiet and running a mild fever is not an allergic type reaction and lasts only about 24 hours. It is NOT normal for an animal to develop vomiting and/or diarrhea from a vaccine. *Please call if you animal has any vomiting or diarrhea after a vaccine.*

Another type of vaccination reaction causes itching of the face and ears and sometimes the entire face may swell. Animals having this type of reaction will rub their faces on the floor and/or paw at it. It is best to bring the animal back to the hospital for observation and medication. This type of reaction may occur anywhere from 6-24 hours after the vaccination.

### **THIS IS AN EMERGENCY!**

Anaphylactic shock is the most severe and dangerous type of allergic reaction. It may occur not only after a vaccination but can also occur if an animal is severely allergic to an antibiotic or insect sting. This type of reaction typically occurs within 1 hour.

Dogs will usually stagger and fall over, or faint and have a difficult time breathing.

If you have already left the hospital - return immediately. If the hospital is closed, go immediately to the South Metro Animal Emergency Hospital (952-953-3737) located in Apple Valley. Fortunately this type of reaction is extremely rare, but when it does occur it must be treated immediately.

*Please report any type of vaccine reactions your pet may have had or any concerns.*

### **Why should I vaccinate my dog?**

The principal of a vaccination is to stimulate the body's defenses. Puppies are protected against many infectious diseases by antibodies present in their mother's milk (colostrum) which they receive in the first few hours of life. This protection from maternal antibodies lasts less than 3 months. For this reason vaccination schedules start with the initial injection around the age of 8 weeks (2 months)

## **What are we vaccinating against?**

[Rabies](#) is a deadly, yet preventable, viral disease most often transmitted through the bite of a rabid animal. The virus attacks nerve tissue, and death always occurs once a rabies-infected animal shows signs of the disease. All warm-blooded animals (cats, dogs, livestock, and wildlife) can become infected with the rabies virus. Rabies vaccines are required by law.

**The vaccines listed below are given together as one “Distemper-combo” vaccine.**

[Canine Parvovirus](#) is perhaps the most serious and common of canine infectious diseases. The onset is sudden, with vomiting and foul smelling, bloody diarrhea that leads to rapid dehydration and collapse. The death of your pet can occur within 24 hours.

[Canine Distemper](#) is a highly contagious viral disease that affects the respiratory and nervous systems. Those pets that survive are often left with permanent disability such as deformed teeth; nervous twitches or a predisposition to epileptic fits (seizures). It is a very serious disease that is almost always fatal.

[Canine Hepatitis](#) is a viral disease that affects the liver and eyes. In acute cases the death of your pet can occur within 24-36 hours. Those pets that recover from the disease may become carriers and spread the virus and infect other dogs.

[Canine Parainfluenza](#) is a highly contagious viral respiratory disease that can spread quickly from dog to dog. It is commonly referred to as “kennel cough.”

## **Additional vaccines**

[Bordetella](#) is one of the bacterial causes of “kennel cough.” Many boarding facilities require that your pet be vaccinated before boarding. We also recommend this vaccine for dogs that will be around other dogs frequently - such as at training and grooming facilities and dog parks.

[Lyme disease](#) is caused by *Borrelia burgdorferi*, a bacteria transmitted by ticks. The deer tick is the primary carrier. These ticks acquire the bacteria during their immature stages when they feed on infected animals. The ticks then transmit the bacteria to other animals or people when they attach and feed again.

[Leptospirosis](#) is a serious zoonotic disease. Your pet can be exposed to this bacterial infection through the urine of infected native wildlife. Typically found in marshy or wetland areas but can exist in other environments. This infection is transmissible to humans through urine contact

## **Spaying and Neutering Your Pet**

When spaying and neutering, certain reproductive organs are removed. If your dog is a female, the veterinarian will remove her ovaries, fallopian tubes, and uterus. The proper name for this operation is an ovariectomy, although it is commonly called “**spaying**.” The testicles are removed from a male animal. This operation is properly called an orchiectomy, although it is usually referred to as castration, or simply “**neutering**.”

### **What are the advantages?**

Spaying your dog will eliminate blood stains on carpets. There is no need to confine your pets during ‘heat’ periods and no unwanted litters. Surgical spaying eliminates a female’s chances of developing uterine infections and, if spayed before her first heat, will decrease her likelihood of developing mammary cancer by 95%.

Neutered males usually become less aggressive and spend more time at home, thus decreasing their chances of being injured in fights or automobile accidents.

### **Will it change my pet’s intelligence or disposition?**

The operation has no effect on intelligence. And most altered pets tend to be more gentle and affectionate. They become less interested in other animals and spend more time with the family.

### **Will it make my pet fat?**

Removing the ovaries or testicles does affect metabolism. This seems to make many altered pets put on weight more easily if permitted to overeat. The diet of every dog should be carefully regulated to prevent excess weight.

### **Is the operation painful?**

Spaying and neutering operations are performed painlessly while your pet is under general anesthesia. After the surgery there may be some discomfort, but this is part of the normal healing process and is controlled with pain medication.

# Parasites

## Intestinal Parasites

Intestinal worms are a very common problem in puppies. These worms are parasites; in other words, they live at the expense of their host's health. Intestinal parasitic infections may cause growth disorders, anemia, diarrhea and vomiting in puppies. **Prevention of these parasites is essential to protect not only your puppy's health, but also the health of other dogs and humans that your puppy may come in contact with.**

A stool sample (fecal) should be checked for parasites at your puppy's first visit. A sample, about the size of a marble, can be dropped off at the clinic at any time but an appointment will be needed in order to prescribe deworming medication if needed. *Yearly fecal checks are highly recommended.*

Some examples of parasites we test for are roundworms, tapeworms, and hookworms.

## External Parasites

Infestation with external parasites can cause far more than just skin irritation. Some can transmit serious infectious diseases to your pet. There are effective and safe treatments available, which can be used regularly on a long-term basis to protect your pet.

Some examples of parasites your dog may have include fleas, ticks, lice, and mites.

## Heartworm Disease

Heartworm disease is a parasitic infection that can be fatal if not treated. The parasite is a worm called *Dirofilaria immitis* and it makes its home in the animal's heart causing the animal to become very sick.

## How does a dog get Heartworm?

Heartworm is transmitted to a dog when bitten by an infected mosquito. Mosquitoes become carriers when they bite a dog that has heartworm. Young *Dirofilaria immitis* worms called microfilaria, circulate through the blood vessels of an infected dog and are drawn up with blood when a mosquito bites. The microfilaria mature into larvae, their next growth stage, within the mosquito, and are transmitted to other dogs through the wound produced when the mosquito bites them.

## Parasite Prevention

Nexgard Plus is a monthly flavored chew that prevents Heartworm, fleas, ticks and internal parasites.

## **Puppy Proofing Your Home**

One of the most important things you can do for your puppy is give him a safe environment to live, play and explore. You can think of young dogs much like you think of toddlers: they are not entirely stable on their feet, they'll put almost anything into their mouths, and they're curious and get into everything. With that in mind, you can take a few of these precautions to keep your home safe for your new pet.

\*Keep toxic and dangerous materials, such as cleaning solutions, antifreeze, and medications in a locked cabinet or in a room that your pet doesn't have access to. Don't trust an unlocked cabinet near the ground. Inquisitive puppies have been known to paw doors open.

\*Some of the prettiest plants inside your house or in your yard may be poisonous to your puppy. Keep azalea, daffodil, rhododendron, oleander, mistletoe, hydrangea, morning glory, dieffenbachia, sago palm, Easter lily, and yew plants out of your puppy's reach.

\*Patrol your house keeping an eye out for small holes or gaps in floorboards, walls, baseboard, heating vents and anywhere else a small animal could squeeze into and get stuck. While you're at it, look over your furniture for potential hazards.

\*Try to remove everything that is small enough to be chewed and swallowed, including paper clips, coins, rubber bands, staples, pen caps, thread, dental floss, earrings, needles and thumbtacks. Larger puppies might even be able to swallow something as large as a pen, rock, or piece of silverware. Objects like these can choke animals if swallowed, or cause a lot of damage to the digestive system. Also be aware that puppies can electrocute themselves by chewing on electrical cords.

\*Until your little one becomes very stable on his feet, you may want to block off stairs and ledges with a baby gate or a wide piece of plywood. Remember, puppies and kittens can jump surprisingly high, so you'll want to use a tall gate.

\*Young animals need a safe haven to stay in when they can't be supervised. You can confine them to a crate or take one room of the house and make it into your pet's home for when you're gone. It should include a soft, warm place to sleep and plenty of toys, and it should be regularly examined for the hazards listed above.

## **Crate Training Puppies**

Every puppy needs to learn the skill of resting calmly in a crate. This skill will be needed at the veterinary hospital for traveling/boarding and for restricted activity due to illness or injury. It is also a life saver for many young dogs during the destructive chewing stage that starts at puppyhood and can last until age 2 or 3. A crate can also be used to manage separation anxiety.

### **Crate Training Tips**

\*Crate your puppy in your bedroom when you're sleeping. Do not give your puppy attention while he or she is in the crate. Having the crate in your bedroom for sleeping tends to help because your puppy can hear, smell and possibly see you. Not being alone, the puppy usually finds it easier to get used to the crate.

\*The worst thing that you can do is let your puppy yell for a long time, and then go to him or her. Doing that teaches the puppy to persistently make noise in the crate and someone will come. It also causes the puppy enormous stress that can become a lifelong response to being confined in a crate.

\*Keep your puppy on a good schedule of food, water, and outings so your puppy's body will have the best chance of making it through the night without a bathroom break. If your puppy does need a potty break, make it very low-key with dim lights and soft voices and no playtime. Remember that whenever your puppy's sleep is disturbed by anyone in the house waking up he or she will need to go out.

\*The goal is to let your puppy discover that nothing bad happens from being alone in a crate. Make the crate a pleasant place to rest. A few safe chew toys and a treat can help your puppy relax and drift off to dreamland. Everyone in the household can sleep better with a crate-trained puppy.

### **Handling**

Get your puppy used to being touched as soon as you bring him or her home. When he is calm and relaxed, try looking in his ears while you pet him. You can also gently play with his paws. You are going to want to get your pet used to being touched-this includes his or her stomach, armpits and groin area. Handling his or her muzzle is also strongly encouraged-this includes looking in his or her mouth. This will help your pet see this kind of touching as soothing and non-threatening, and it will also let you check for parasites, unusual lumps or wounds and other health problems. The key is starting slow. You should start with short sessions about 2-3 minutes as puppies and kittens have short attention spans. You can build up to longer sessions as your pet gets older. Pairing these exercises with something wonderful, like boiled chicken or freeze-dried liver, will help build a positive association. Think: body handling equals yummy food.

## House Training Basics

\*Keep your dog in a safe place when you are not home or are asleep. A crate just large enough that he or she can lie down and stand up is ideal. A small room with a baby-gate rather than a closed door will only work as long as this is not a place where your puppy will go to the bathroom. You are trying to help your puppy develop control.

\*When you are able to watch your puppy, always keep him in the same room with you. If you see your puppy start to have an accident, say, "No, Outside," at the very same time you scoop him or her up and run outside. For a dog that you cannot carry, use a leash.

NEVER PUNISH your puppy for having an accident. It doesn't work for house training and can cause very nasty complications, such as your puppy having an accident out-of-sight to avoid punishment. Puppies are smart and they will learn when and where it is "safe" to go potty.

\*When you are outside in the right place for your puppy to relieve himself, use a cue phrase, such as "Go Potty." This phrase is only used at the time and the place where you want your puppy to relieve himself. Never say it before you take the puppy outside. While still in the house, only use the word "Outside."

\*When your puppy goes potty outside, praise sincerely and throw a treat party. He will remember the party next time you bring him outside

\*Every time your puppy has an accident in the house, it confuses him. Therefore, you need to supervise or confine your puppy 100% of the time. This may be done by using a crate, exercise pen or by fastening yourself to your puppy with a leash. If your puppy did not go potty when you took him outside, confine him for 10-15 minutes and try again. Repeat until he is completely empty.

\*If you find an accident in the house that you did not see happen-it is more YOUR mistake than your puppy's! Just clean it up and go on with your day. NEVER punish your puppy for your mistake.

\*Before using any other cleaning agents, treat the spot deeply and thoroughly with a bacterial enzyme odor eliminating product such as Nature's Miracle. These products kill the bacteria before they have a chance to seal the odor. If you don't get rid of the scent, it will draw the dog's instincts to use the spot again.

\*When you are at home and awake, take your puppy outside about once per hour. As time goes by, you will be able to tell just how often your dog needs to go out. During house training-you must go with your puppy-do not put your puppy outside without you and always use a 4-6 foot leash. That way you are there to praise him and know if they have urinated/defecated or not.

\*Puppies generally are not mature enough for full bladder and bowel control until at least 16 weeks of age. Just because your puppy can hold it all through the night (usually 8 hours) don't expect them to do that at other times. During sleep the body quiets the bladder and bowels to allow for this longer period of time.

\*Schedule food and water. Scheduled food/water going **IN** leads to scheduled stool/urine coming **OUT**.

## Feeding

Young animals develop at an amazing rate, and they need a lot of calories, fat, protein and vitamins to fuel their growth. Just after weaning, puppies need twice the energy requirements of an adult dog the same size. This need gradually decreases until they reach adulthood. Because of these high energy needs, you should feed your pet a *high quality* puppy food. Stay away from foods labeled "maintenance" or "adults only" as they don't contain a high enough percentage of fat and protein to meet a growing puppy's need. You can begin by setting out the amount of food recommended by the manufacturer. Keep an eye on your young animal's weight. Most dogs won't become overweight during their first six months, but it is possible. Starting at about six months you can start mixing the puppy food with adult food.

### Feeding Tips

\*Make sure your puppy is on top-quality dog food, and is free of intestinal parasites. Poor quality food and parasites can cause your puppy to have to eliminate more frequently or have a hard time controlling his or her urges.

\*Getting your puppy on scheduled feedings is one of the best things that you can do for your pet. Not only can you better regulate the amount of food/calories taken in by your pet but you can also monitor if they are eating well. A pet that stops eating is usually trying to tell you that something is wrong or that they are not feeling well. This may be the first sign that they can give you, so please pay attention to their eating habits.

\*Do not feed your pet table scraps. Most people's food is full of fat, salt, and other ingredients your pet doesn't need. These unwanted ingredients will cause him to gain unwanted pounds and sometimes cause indigestion or diarrhea.

\*Controlling calories can be done in several ways. Giving your pet less food is always effective. Feeding dry food, rather than canned food, can also help because dry food usually has fewer calories. If you can't resist those "puppy-dog eyes" try feeding your dog low-calorie treats. Many dogs like fruits and raw vegetables such as apples, oranges, carrots, broccoli, potatoes, and green beans. Ice cubes are also a great no calorie treat. **DO NOT GIVE** your puppy grapes, raisins, or onions. These foods are toxic.

## Grooming

With a young animal, you have a great opportunity to make grooming into a pleasant experience for both of you. Cats and dogs don't automatically hate nail clippings, ear cleaning and baths-they're just nervous and not used to being handled that way. You can avoid any negative association by starting when your pet is young. You can make grooming fun, with lots of petting, praise and treats. Eventually, the time you spend brushing, washing and handling your pet may become enjoyable to both of you.

### Professional Grooming Appointments

Many dogs such as poodles and doodles require regular grooming. Most owners choose to use professional groomers to provide care for their pets. In order to make sure your puppy enjoys the experience, they should go to the groomers early in their life and often. This is to help reduce any potential stress of being in a new environment and acclimate them to handling, brushing and bathing.

### Brushing

Brushing can help keep your pet clean and reduce shedding. Start by simply showing him the brush, letting him or her sniff it while praising or treating him or her. Again, go slow. Don't try brushing out any mats or tangles or anything that can cause pain.

### Trimming Toenails

Puppies can grow sharp little claws very quickly and they need to be trimmed as often as once a week for the first few months of life. This can be a challenge with young dogs, because their nails are small and it is difficult to see the nail's quick, which supplies blood to the nail. Start by only snipping off the very tip of the nail. Always have a supply of **Kwik Stop** if you are going to trim nails at home. This product should stop any bleeding that may occur.

## Exercising Your Puppy

Just like people who aren't used to exercise, puppies should start off slow. Moderately paced walking or swimming (10 to 15 minutes) are a good way to start. Once your pet has adapted to the exercise, you and your dog can run and walk to your heart's content.

**Concrete and asphalt are tough on the paws, especially on hot days. Try to run on dirt paths or grass as much as possible. Gravel, cinders, and road/sidewalk salt can also irritate paws.**

## Socialization

The most critical period for a puppy's socialization is between the ages of 6 weeks and 4 months. Whatever the puppy experiences during those times helps determine how the puppy will be as an adult. You cannot over socialize a puppy but you can definitely under socialize. Always make sure experiences are positive and avoid high traffic dog areas, where you don't know if the dogs are vaccinated. Take treats or toys with you wherever you and your puppy go, ask people to give your puppy treats or give them yourself when in new situations.

## Training

A well-behaved companion animal is a joy. Teaching your dog the basic sit, stay, come, down, off, heel, and leave it, will improve your relationship with both your dog and your neighbors. Start teaching your puppy manners as soon as possible!

Pay attention to your **actions, body language and voice** and how they affect your dog. Dogs should receive immediate acknowledgement for their actions. If you want to encourage a behavior, reward it as soon as the dog performs. Timing is critical. **Remember your puppy will learn faster with positive rewards versus negative corrections.**

Examples of rewards for your puppy:

**Verbal Praise:** the tone of your voice is more important than what you say.

**Petting or Stroking:** can be pleasant stimulation for your puppy.

**Play Time:** not an immediate reward, but powerful.

**Food:** often the strongest and most effective reward.

We offer training classes here at Dakota Pet Hospital!

We strongly encourage the use of one of the following training professionals:

### Dog Training

[www.delighteddogsmn.com](http://www.delighteddogsmn.com)

info@delighteddogsmn.com

### The Dog Evolved

Thedogevolved.com

### Leaps and Hounds Behavior

[www.leapsandhoundsbehavior.com](http://www.leapsandhoundsbehavior.com)

info@leapsandhoundsbehavior.com

### Paws Abilities

<https://pawsabilitiesmn.com>

paws4umn@gmail.com

## **Exercises for Families and Puppies**

Practice these exercises as the situations occur throughout the day. They will help turn your puppy into a confident, friendly dog that is well-behaved for all members of the family – adults and children alike.

### **DO:**

Have your puppy sit and wait while you go first through outside doors.

Teach your puppy to accept when people approach him during meal time.

Have your puppy perform a behavior, like sit, before receiving attention.

If your puppy stares at you, stare back until he looks away.

Play games, like fetch, and tug-o-war, to encourage appropriate play behaviors.

Teach your puppy that hands are not appropriate chew toys.

Practice touching and handling your puppy's feet, mouth and ears.

Practice a down-stay to teach your puppy to remain calm.

Speak in a soft, high-pitched, praising voice so your puppy is eager to pay attention and please you.

Comfort your dog during scary times, like thunderstorms and fireworks.

### **DON'T:**

Let your puppy run through the doorway ahead of you. This is a dangerous habit!

Put your hand in your puppy's food dish when he is eating.

Pet your puppy if he demands attention from you.

Stare at your puppy if he is uncomfortable.

Suddenly run around screaming as that can startle your dog and cause fear.

Play roughly with your puppy to avoid teaching him to mouth during play.

Avoid touching your puppy's feet, mouth and ears.

Put your puppy on his back, or knee him in the chest when he jumps on you.

Speak in loud, low tones (firm, threatening voice) so your puppy knows you mean business.

Make your dog "learn to cope" by ignoring him when he is afraid.