



PET
INSURANCE

Pet Safety Handbook

Provided by [petpartners](#) 





Table of Contents

Puppy Essentials

4

Be prepared to bring your new puppy home and start training.

Dog Health

10

What to expect at your first vet visit, vaccine overview, how to tell if your dog is sick or hurt, and how to protect them against parasites.

Top Poisons

18

A list of common items that are harmful to your pets.

Seasonal Safety

20

Keep your pet safe during all seasons.

Dog Care Tips

22

Tips on how to care for your dog.

Pet First Aid Kit

24

Learn how to make your own pet first aid kit.

Important Contacts

26

Important contacts and emergency information to keep your pet safe.

Puppy Essentials

Veterinarian

Have a veterinarian in place prior to bringing home your puppy. You will need to take your puppy for his first vet visit soon after getting him. It's best to have someone to call in the event of an accident or if you have questions or concerns about your puppy.

Crate & Bedding

Have a safe crate that your puppy is able to comfortably lay down, stand up, stretch, and turn around in. Be sure the crate is neither too big or too small for your puppy.

Bedding should also be prepared. Puppies have accidents, so make sure you choose something that is easily washable. Towels, blankets or dog beds are appropriate.

Collar, Leash, & ID Tag

Adjustable nylon collars are best for puppies since they grow quickly. Two fingers should be able to fit under the collar when worn. Do not use "slip" leads or "choke" collars on young puppies. The collar should have an ID tag that includes your puppy's name and your phone number. Tags can be made at your local pet store. When outside of the home, be sure your puppy has his collar and ID on at all times.

Food & Water Bowls

Ensure that you have appropriate food and water bowls before bringing home your pup. These can be ceramic, plastic or stainless steel and should not be too big for your young puppy. You may need to buy bigger bowls as your puppy grows, but it's better to start small.

Dog Food & Treats

Have dog food purchased before you bring your puppy home. Choose quality food specifically made for puppies and talk to the breeder, rescue organization from which you purchased your puppy, or your veterinarian about food choices. Age appropriate kibble will contain the appropriate vitamins and nutrients that are essential for your puppy's growth and development. It also has smaller kibble that are easier for your puppy to chew. Have some healthy, puppy-sized treats on hand to use as a reward or for training. Treats should be used sparingly to avoid weight gain, an upset stomach, or becoming spoiled!

Microchip

It is a good idea to get your puppy microchipped if your breeder hasn't already done so. Microchips are about the size of a grain of rice, and are encoded with a unique ID number that will be assigned to your pet. If your pet is ever lost or stolen, the chip will be scanned to help reunite you with your dog. Learn more about microchipping your puppy from AKC Reunite. AKC Reunite is a longstanding microchip service provider that can help you.

Bathing & Grooming Supplies

Have puppy-safe shampoo ready for baths. Other grooming items that are helpful to have on hand are ear cleaners, eye stain remover and nail clippers. Ask your veterinarian or your local pet store for recommendations on grooming supplies that are safe for puppies.

Toys

Choose puppy specific toys that are plush, rope, rubber, plastic or chew-friendly. They should be made with durable, puppy-safe materials that they can't destroy. Puppies should be supervised with their toys to avoid ingestion. Ask your veterinarian, breeder or local pet store for good, puppy-safe toy options.



KONG CLASSIC

Fill with moist dog food and freeze. Great for teething pups!



HARD NYLON TOY

Be sure it's large enough that your puppy can't swallow it!



THICK ROPE

Make sure it can't be torn apart!

Cleaning Supplies

You will want to have pet-safe cleaning supplies on-hand prior to bringing your puppy home. Puppies have accidents, so be prepared to clean. Ask your veterinarian, breeder or pet store for good cleaner options.

Emergency Contacts

Have a list of contacts readily available in case of an emergency. This list should include: your primary care veterinarian, a local emergency clinic, poison control, an emergency contact in case you are not available, and possibly your breeder.

Pet Insurance

Pet insurance is becoming an increasingly more common and essential part of pet healthcare.. It's best to enroll your puppy when he's young, prior to any health conditions becoming an issue. Enrollment costs are also lower the younger the age of the dog. There are a variety of coverage options available including coverage for accidents, illnesses, and wellness care.



PET INSURANCE



What is Pet Insurance?

Pet insurance is health insurance for dogs and cats. It reimburses for costly veterinary bills, allowing you to focus more on the health of your pet and less on how you're going to pay for bills.

What Does It Cover?

Choose coverage for:

- ✓ Accidents
- ✓ Illnesses
- ✓ Exam costs
- ✓ Routine care
- ✓ Wellness items
- ✓ Hereditary conditions

Get reimbursed for:

- ✓ Prescription medications
- ✓ CT scans & MRIs
- ✓ Surgery
- ✓ X-rays & ultrasounds
- ✓ Lab work
- ✓ Hospitalization

How Does It Work?

Puppies must be 8 weeks old to enroll in a policy. Choose the coverage options that best suit your needs and budget. Plans can start as low as \$15/month.

Since pet insurance works on a reimbursement basis, there is no network of veterinarians, which means you can go to any licensed vet of your choice. Simply bring your dog to the vet, pay the bill as normal, submit a claim form and invoice via mail, email or fax, and get reimbursed!

Training Tips

There's no question about it, training a new puppy can be hard! Incorporating training into your play can help to make learning fun for your puppy. Below are some tips to consider when it comes to training a new puppy.

House Rules

Before your puppy comes home, you should establish ground rules that all family members know to enforce. Be consistent with rules for your puppy, so he can understand what is expected.

Chewing

While your puppy may look cute chewing on a shoe twice his size, don't encourage destructive behavior. Give your puppy a teething toy and praise him when he chooses to chew on it.

"Puppy Time"

Remember that puppies have a very short attention span. If your puppy does something bad, be sure to reprimand him immediately. If you wait, even minutes, your puppy will not relate the correction with the bad behavior.

Training Aids

There are many options when it comes to training your puppy or dog. Clicker training, verbal praise, toys, and treats are all options. More high-tech products are now available to assist with training. Link AKC makes collars that offer a remote sound feature that can be used during training. Get help from a reputable dog trainer to determine what works best for your puppy.



Keep track of your best friend's
activity, location, & health.



When bringing home a new puppy, your number one priority is keeping them safe. A great way to do that is with the Link AKC smart collar. It's the only dog collar you'll ever need!

How It Works

Data is transmitted from the collar to a cellular network which allows you to know your dog's location, activity levels, and environment temperatures.

LOCATION Always know where your dog is or locate if lost.

WELLNESS Track your puppy's activity and health as they grow.

ADVENTURES Record and save your new pup's playtime and training milestones.

TRAINING Remote sound feature aids in training.

SAFETY LED light offers nighttime safety.

DURABLE Shock resistant and waterproof to endure puppy play.

For added protection, your Link AKC Smart Collar comes with a subscription to Pet Poison Hotline, offering you 24/7 direct access to veterinary professionals in case of poisoning—a \$59 value.

For new puppy owners, Link AKC offers a Puppy Guarantee allowing you to upsize your growing puppy's collar at no cost to you.

WWW.LINKAKC.COM | WESPEAKDOG@LINKAKC.COM

Keep track of your best friend's activity, location, & health.

First Vet Visit

Vet Visit Expectations

Your puppy's first vet visit should take place very soon after they come home. This allows your vet to get acquainted with your new pup—and to get a baseline on health status. It also gives you the opportunity to ask questions.

- ✓ **Weigh puppy**
- ✓ **Take vitals:** Temperature, heart rate and respiratory rate
- ✓ **Listen to heart and lungs**
- ✓ **Examine eyes, ears, nose and feet**
- ✓ **Examine skin and coat**
- ✓ **Check mouth and teeth**
- ✓ **Look at paws and toes**
- ✓ **Fecal exam**
- ✓ **Microchip**
- ✓ **Vaccines**

Your puppy may or may not need to be vaccinated at their first vet visit depending on your breeder's vaccination schedule. Bring your puppy's vaccine records from your breeder so the vet knows what vaccines your puppy has already received and when.

- ✓ **Questions**

Bring a list of questions you may have about caring for your puppy. Your veterinarian can help you choose types of food and can explain options for preventative care. He can also give recommendations on microchipping and spaying or neutering.



Keep your pet safe with AKC Reunite. AKC reunite is available to all pets currently microchipped or to be microchipped. Once your pet is microchipped you must enroll the microchip ID with your contact information.

DID YOU KNOW?

1 in 3 pets will go missing in its lifetime.

What is a microchip?

A microchip is about the size of a grain of rice and is encoded with a unique ID number that is assigned to your pet. The microchip is inserted between your pet's shoulder blades under a veterinarian's supervision. It is a relatively painless procedure—similar to a vaccine.

How do they work?

A microchip is not a tracking device—it can only be “turned on” for a few seconds at a time by a hand-held microchip scanner. This scanner is passed over the area in which a microchip is implanted to read the microchip's unique ID number.

Veterinarians and shelters have these scanners and use them to help lost pets all of the time.

Recovery Process

If you realize your pet is lost call AKC Reunite's 24-hour Recovery Hotline. Once your pet is found, AKC Reunite will contact you to reunite you with your pet!

Types of Vaccinations

Vaccines

Vaccines protect against contagious, potentially fatal diseases. They work by triggering an immune response that prepares pets to fight future infections.

Dog Core Vaccinations

According to AHAA, these vaccines are considered core vaccines and are recommended for all dogs to protect against diseases that are more serious or potentially fatal. These diseases are found throughout North America and are easily transmitted.

- ✓ Distemper
 - ✓ Parvovirus
 - ✓ Adenovirus
 - ✓ Rabies
- } These 3 vaccines are often combined into the **DA2PP combo vaccine**.

Dog Noncore Vaccinations

These vaccines are often considered elective based on lifestyle or demographic location. Follow your veterinarian's recommendations for these vaccines.

- ✓ **Bordetella** (Kennel Cough)
- ✓ **Borrelia Burgdorferi** (Lyme Disease)
- ✓ **Leptospirosis**
- ✓ **Canine Influenza Virus**

Top Infectious Diseases

Staying up-to-date on your pup's vaccinations can help ward off preventable diseases and keep your pet healthy. Below is a list of diseases where vaccines are available.

Canine Influenza (flu)

Canine Influenza is a viral disease that attacks the respiratory tract.

Symptoms: Sneeze, cough, eye/nose discharge, lack of appetite, fever

Spread: Direct contact with dogs or items, inhalation of cough droplets

Treatment: Isolation, possibly antibiotics for severe cases

Leptospirosis

Leptospirosis is a bacterial infection that can lead to kidney failure.

Symptoms: Lack of appetite, lethargy, increased thirst, vomiting

Spread: Contact with contaminated water or urine

Treatment: Antibiotics, hospitalization for severe cases

Lyme Disease

Lyme Disease is caused by a bacterium that attacks the immune system.

Symptoms: Fever, mild lameness, loss of appetite, lethargy

Spread: Bite by an infected tick

Treatment: Antibiotics, hospitalization for severe cases



The AKC Canine Health Foundation is dedicated to advancing the health of all dogs by funding scientific research and supporting the dissemination of canine health information.

For more information on infectious diseases and other canine health concerns visit www.akcchf.org

Signs & Symptoms

Dogs may not be able to talk, but they do “tell” us when they are not feeling well. Below is a list of subtle signs and symptoms that may indicate a problem.

Pain

Dogs often express pain in very vague symptoms. Dogs are very stoic, so it's helpful to understand these signs.

- ✓ Limping, panting, or whining
- ✓ Painful to touch
- ✓ Disinterest in food
- ✓ Laying down
- ✓ Reluctance to get up or go on a walk
- ✓ Protecting a certain body part
- ✓ Unusual behavior such as aggression or hiding

Upset Stomach

Upset stomachs can be minor or serious and can sometimes be accompanied by vomiting or diarrhea. If this occurs, withhold food and water for a short period of time. Then, begin offering small amounts of water and bland diet, like chicken and rice, until your dog is feeling better.

- ✓ Excessive drooling
- ✓ Vomiting
- ✓ Lethargy
- ✓ Gulping water
- ✓ Inappetance
- ✓ Panting
- ✓ Depression
- ✓ Eating grass

Ear Problem

Eye and ear problems can progress quickly, so it's best to consult your veterinarian if you have any concerns.

- ✓ Scratching at ears
- ✓ Head shaking
- ✓ Reddening, swelling inside the ear
- ✓ Discharge
- ✓ Rubbing ears
- ✓ Loss of hearing
- ✓ Yeasty or foul odor

Eye Problem

Eye and ear problems can progress quickly, so it's best to consult your vet if you have any concerns.

- ✓ Squinting
- ✓ Reddening
- ✓ Tearing
- ✓ Discharge
- ✓ Scratching at eye
- ✓ Loss of vision



Parasite Prevention

Ticks

Ticks are external parasites that latch onto your dog's skin and suck blood. They are difficult to remove and can cause serious illness, like Lyme Disease. Always check dogs after they've been outdoors, especially if they've been in tall grass and wooded areas.

Common signs: Tick on dog, small bump or scabs, rash

Prevention: Topical and oral tick prevention is available. Many products treat both fleas and ticks. Ask your veterinarian what products are best for your pet and your region.

Treatment: Remove the tick with fine-point tweezers. Steadily pull upward and off the skin ensuring that you get full removal of the tick. Dispose of the tick by soaking in rubbing alcohol or flushing it down the toilet. If you are uncomfortable removing the tick or are unsure whether you removed the entire tick, contact your veterinarian for help.

DID YOU KNOW?

Ticks are drawn to warm, dark, moist areas.



Fleas

Fleas are external parasites who take residence on your dog. Though merely the size of a pinhead, their bites cause extreme itching. Excessive scratching and chewing can lead to skin infections and wounds. It's important to get ahead of fleas and treat your pet and their environment regularly.

Common signs: Severe scratching and chewing, red bumpy skin, hair loss

Prevention: Oral or topical medications, flea collars, regular grooming and bathing

Treatment: Call your vet for recommendations on the best treatment including, flea combs, shampoos, single dose oral medication.

Heartworm Disease

Heartworms are internal parasites that attack your dog's heart. Most commonly spread through mosquito bites, which allows larvae to enter the bloodstream. The larvae turn into worms inside the heart. Prevention is imperative! Heartworm disease is very serious and can be fatal if not treated correctly.

Common Signs: Coughing, lethargy, difficulty breathing

Prevention: Monthly, oral heartworm prevention is strongly recommended. You should also get your pet tested annually.

Treatment: If you suspect your dog has heartworm disease, contact your vet immediately. They will give you treatment recommendations which could include oral medications, injections or hospitalization in severe cases. Do NOT give heartworm prevention!

Top 10 Poisons

Depending on the substance, symptoms can include gastrointestinal issues, neurological problems, cardiac or respiratory distress, coma or even death.

- ① **Prescription Medications** Antidepressants, anticonvulsants, blood pressure heart medications (Atenolol, Enalapril)
- ② **Rodenticides and Insecticides** Rat and mouse poison, bug sprays, snail bait, topical flea tick products (if ingested)
- ③ **Over-the-Counter Medications** Acetaminophen (Tylenol), ibuprofen (Advil), naproxen (Aleve), as well as some herbal and nutraceuticals
- ④ **Pet Medications** Overdose of pain medications (carprofen, Derramax, Previcox), cardiac and blood pressure medications, diabetes medications (insulin)
- ⑤ **Foods** Alcohol, avocado, macadamia nuts, grapes/raisins, caffeine, onions, and mustard
- ⑥ **Chocolate** Dark and purer forms of chocolate that contain more of the toxic ingredient, theobromine, are more likely to cause severe symptoms
- ⑦ **Xylitol** Artificial sweetener found in many chewing gums, liquid human medications, some peanut butters
- ⑧ **Household Products** Cleaners, bleach, paint thinner, anti-freeze, pool chemicals, polishes, detergents

- 9 **Lawn and Garden Products** Fertilizers, sprays, weed killer
- 10 **Plants** Marijuana, Azaleas, rhododendrons, poinsettias, tulips, daffodils, lilies, sago palms, some mushrooms

If you suspect your dog has come in contact with a toxic substance, call your veterinarian or Pet Poison Helpline immediately. If your pet is already experiencing symptoms, bring them to the closest 24-hour emergency clinic. Be prepared and know the type of substance, ingredients, strength (if medication), approximate quantity and time that the incident occurred.



Nearly **50%** of the poisoning cases managed by Pet Poison Helpline **involve human medications**—both over-the-counter and prescription drugs.

Warm Weather Safety



OUTSIDE °F	INSIDE CAR °F	
	10 min	30 min
70°	89°	104°
75°	94°	109°
85°	104°	119°
95°	114°	129°

DID YOU KNOW?

Cracking windows or leaving your car in shade has **very little** effect on the car's internal temperature.

Hot Car Safety

Temperatures inside a car are alarmingly higher than outdoor temps. What might feel pleasant outside can be dangerously hot inside a car! High temps and lack of available water can quickly lead to heatstroke or even death.

Sun Protection

Sunburns aren't just for humans! Limit your dog's sun exposure and apply sunblock to the ears and nose 30 minutes before going outside. Keep in mind that dogs with short hair, white fur, and pink skin are at a higher risk for sunburns.

Hot Paws

Hot pavement can burn your dog's paw pads! Check sidewalks with your hand or foot for 10 seconds. If it's too hot for you, it's too hot for them! Restrict activity to earlier or later in the day when it's cooler. If you see your dog limping, licking his paws or if the paws appear damaged, take your dog to your veterinarian for treatment.

Cold Weather Safety

Snow Melt

Steer clear of de-icers such as rock salt when walking your dog. They can hurt their paw pads and are toxic to ingest. Make sure to rinse and dry your pup's paws when you get home.

Paws & Snow

Trim the hair between your dog's toes. This will help prevent ice balls from forming. Try rubbing a small amount of petroleum jelly on your dog's paw pads before you go for a walk to help repel the snow.

Cold Car Safety

Never leave your dog alone in the car on cold days. The same way your car heats up in the summer, it gets extremely cold in the winter.

Antifreeze Warning

Avoid spilled antifreeze in driveways. It smells and tastes good to dogs, but it is lethal if ingested. Opt for a pet-friendly antifreeze, which contains a much less toxic chemical and doesn't taste as pleasant to animals.



Dog Care Tips

Taking Temperature



Quick Read
Thermometer



Petroleum
Jelly



Rubbing
Alcohol



Treats

DID YOU KNOW?

A dog's average body temperature is **101°-102.5°F.**

Step-by-Step Guide

Step 1: Clean the thermometer with rubbing alcohol.

Step 2: Dip the thermometer into petroleum jelly.

Step 3: Lift your dog's tail and slowly insert the thermometer into rectum about 2-3 inches and wait for reading.

Step 4: Give them a treat for good behavior.

Step 5: Wash thermometer.



Ear Cleaning

Ears should be cleaned at least once a month—more often if your dog is prone to ear problems. Check for dirt, scratches, parasites, discharge, or any unpleasant odor. If these do occur, contact your vet. To clean the ears, moisten a cotton ball with ear cleaner and gently wipe out the ears, going no deeper than the first knuckle on your finger.

Teeth Cleaning

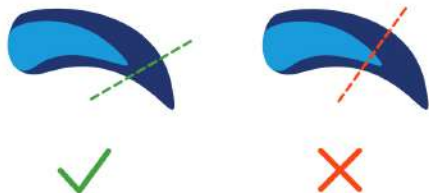
Begin by gently scrubbing the teeth with a finger brush or gauze pad. Later you can graduate to a toothbrush and canine toothpaste. Toothbrushes should be soft, and toothpaste **must** be formulated for a dog's system. Teeth can also be cleaned with a paste made of baking soda and water.

Nail Trims

Start handling your puppy's paws early on to get them used to you gently manipulating nails and toes. During the trimming process, reward your pup with treats. Using dog nail trimmers, clip only the curved part of the nail. If you accidentally hit the quick, put a small amount of antiseptic powder on a gauze pad and gently press it into the bleeding nail for 1 minute.

HOW TO TRIM NAILS

Grasp toe with thumb and forefinger to extend the nail. Clip just the tip of the nail straight across. Avoid clipping past the curve or you will risk hitting the quick.



Pet First Aid Kit

Be prepared in case of an emergency and make your own Pet First Aid Kit. Keep it in your house and bring it on long trips. Check your first aid kit at least once a year to ensure it stays stocked and up-to-date.

Phone numbers Including your Veterinarian, Emergency clinic and Pet Poison Helpline

Medical records including medications, vaccine history and allergies

Leash to transport your pet (if your pet is capable of walking)

Towels and/or blanket to keep warm, comfortable or to clean up

Absorbent gauze pads to control bleeding, wound cleaning or applying topical medication

Cotton balls and swabs for cleaning wounds or applying topical medications

Bandage tape for securing gauze wrap or bandage. (ie. cloth tape, bandage tape) *Do NOT use human bandages (eg, Band-Aids®) on pets

Self-cling bandage wrap to secure bandage (ie. VetWrap or Coflex)

Non-latex disposable gloves to maintain cleanliness for you and your pet

Sterile saline for cleaning wounds

Eye wash to flush foreign material out of eye

Povidone iodine solution for cleaning wounds

Digital thermometer for taking your dog's temperature. See page 22 for tips

Petroleum jelly to lubricate the thermometer

Eye dropper or large syringe without needle to give oral treatments or flush wounds

Tweezers to remove foreign objects, like splinters, from skin

Bandage scissors to cut away potential hazards (collar, leash, fabric)

Milk of magnesia or activated charcoal* to absorb poison in the stomach

Hydrogen peroxide (3%)* to induce vomiting

Anti-histamine medication* (Benadryl®) to treat an allergic reaction



*Always consult your veterinarian before administering any oral medications. Get your veterinarian to give you appropriate doses for the size of your dog. Giving the wrong medication or wrong dose can be fatal.

Important Contacts

Pet Poison Helpline

(800) 213-6680

www.petpoisonhelpline.com

\$59/per incident fee paid by credit card

AKC Pet Insurance

(866) 725-2747

www.akcpetinsurance.com

info@akcpetinsurance.com

Veterinarian: _____

Clinic Name: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Emergency Clinic: _____

Phone: _____

Address: _____

Breeder: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Pet Information

Pet's Name: _____

DOB: _____ **Breed:** _____

Color: _____

Medical Conditions: _____

Allergies: _____

Medications: _____

Special Instructions: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Phone: _____

Call or visit us online to get your Free Quote today!



**PET
INSURANCE**

www.akcpetinsurance.com

(866) 725-2747

The Exclusive Pet Insurance Provider of the American Kennel Club

Since 2002, AKC Pet Insurance has been helping pet owners plan for the healthcare needs of their pets by providing affordable, comprehensive pet insurance coverage to dogs and cats in all 50 states.

Special thanks to the American Kennel Club®, Link AKC, AKC Reunite, and AKC Canine Health Foundation for providing us with such useful information for new pet owners!



**AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB™**

