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SECTION 1: HEALTH

Your Litter's Medical Schedule

Date	Action
	Born
	Vaccinated with _____ vaccine
	Negative fecal
	Start of the ' DangerPeriod ' — keep your puppy away from unvaccinated or sick dogs until he or she can respond to the next vaccine. See the next date.
	Date your puppy should receive its next vaccine, a DA2PP or DHPP
	Date your puppy should receive the first rabies vaccine
	Date your puppy should receive the second rabies vaccine

Chapter 1: Health Certifications & Your Veterinarian

Your puppy has received check-ups from three veterinarians: a general practitioner who was evaluating your pup’s overall health and soundness for sale, an ophthalmologist who ensured your pup has no debilitating eye defects, and a cardiologist who checked your pup for early onset heart disease. Unless I have spoken to you, your pup was found to be healthy by each veterinarian:

- Checkup for general health by our veterinarian: _____
who indicated your pup was in _____ health and provided a health certificate
- Eye exam from: _____
_____ ophthalmology staff
- Heart exam from: _____
_____ cardiology staff
- Other health check: _____

- Other health check: _____

Your Veterinarian

We hope that you will become a partner with your veterinarian for your dog’s health care. To support you in this effort, we recommend that you take this notebook with you for your pup’s first visit to the vet. We have also provided a letter to your veterinarian that outlines the past issues some dogs in our lines have experienced with anesthetics, antibiotics and vaccinations. Two copies of that letter can be found in **Appendix A, Letter for Your Veterinarian**--one for you and one for your vet.

For more info on choosing a veterinarian:

- www.avidog.com/choosing-the-right-veterinarian/

To learn how to teach your puppy to love going to the vet:

- www.avidog.com/teach-your-puppy-to-love-visiting-the-vet-part-1/
- www.avidog.com/teach-puppy-love-visiting-vet-part-2/

Your Veterinarian Contact Information

Vet's Name	
Clinic Name	
Clinic Address	
Clinic City, State, Zip	
Clinic Phone Number	

Dog-Human Age Equivalence Table

	Unit	Dog's Adult Weight			
	Pounds	1 to 20	21 to 50	51 to 90	> 90
	Kilograms	0.5 to 9.1	9.2-22.7	22.8 to 40.1	> 40.1
Dog's Stage of Life	Human Age (y)	Dog Age Equivalents			
Puppy	2 to 12	3 to 6 mo	3 to 6 mo	3 to 6 mo	3 to 6 mo
Adolescent	13 to 19	7 to 12 mo*	7 to 14 mo*	7 to 14 mo*	7 to 16 mo*
Young Adult	20 to 35	13 mo to 5 yr	15 mo to 5 yr	15 mo to 4 yr	17 mo to 4 yr
Middle Age	36 to 50	6 to 9 yr	6 to 8 yr	5 to 7 yr	5 to 6 yr
Senior	51 to 75	10 to 14 yr	9 to 13 yr	8 to 12 yr	7 to 9 yr
Geriatric	76+	15+ yr	14+ yr	13+ yr	10+ yr

Health and Development Schedule

	<i>Enter Date</i>	
Birth		Pups entered At-Risk period for distemper
2 weeks		Worm with toltrazuril
3 weeks		Your pup is in the Sensitive Period
		Worm with Safeguard (fenbendazole)

6 weeks		Your pup has entered At-Risk period for parvovirus
		Worm with Safeguard (fenbendazole)
8 weeks		Eye Check with Ophthalmologist
		Heart Check with Cardiologist
		Treat for heartworm (Ivomec)
		Health Exam with Vet
		Vaccinate with Nobivac DHPP
		Negative stool sample
		Microchip with an AKC Reunite microchip
		Health Certificates
9.5 weeks		Schedule checkup with your veterinarian to confirm your pup is healthy IAW our contract and warranty
		Take in stool sample
		Have your vet check and record your pup's microchip number
		Discuss alternatives for the prevention of fleas, ticks, and heartworms
		Do off-leash Adventure Walks at least once a week, ideally more, from now until 16 weeks. Only include other dogs once or twice prior to 16 weeks
		Start your pup on the Fit For Life Puppy (https://www.avidogzink.com/shop/owners/fit-for-life-

		puppy/) course. Limit your pup's fitness to flexibility, balance, proprioception and Good for the Soul exercises.
12 weeks		Vaccinate with DHPP or DA2PP vaccine, whichever your vet has on hand
		Switch your pup to an All-Life Stages food , if you've had it on a food formulated for puppies. Do not feed an AAFCO Adult Maintenance food to your puppy.
14 weeks		Draw blood for distemper/parvovirus titer to confirm your pup has immunity. Send <u>serum</u> to the Companion Animal Vaccine and Immuno Diagnostic Service Laboratory (CAVIDS) at the Univ of WI Vet School.
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DO NOT titer with Antech or Idexx labs this time because those titers do not allow you to distinguish maternal from individual immunity!!
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DO NOT vaccinate for leptospirosis, Lyme or Bordetella until 16 weeks at the earliest
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DO NOT ever vaccinate for coronavirus or Giardia
16 weeks		Your pup is now in the Juvenile Period. Expect an increase in independence and slower learning. Your opportunity to teach following through Adventure Walks has ended.
		Start your pup on joint supplements and OcuGlo Rx , eye supplement.
18 weeks		First Rabies vaccination (see Puppy Book for rabies protocol) after 16 weeks or by law in your state)
6 months		You can add Strength training exercises to your pup's fitness routine. Consider signing up for (https://www.avidogzink.com/product-category/dog-exercise-programs/) .
7 months		Your pup is an Adolescent now. Expect boundary testing, both with you and with other dogs. Have a plan to ensure your pup understands proper dog-dog behavior, despite raging hormones.

14 months		Your pup's growth plates are closed. You can transition to regulation-height jumps, teach weave poles, and start endurance training if you wish.
16 months		Give a Rabies booster with 3-year vaccine.
2 years		Your dog is either an Adult or nearly so. Take your pup for an annual checkup .
		Take in fecal to check for parasites.
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis .
		If you want to confirm your dog's immunity to distemper and parvovirus , run a titer through CAVIDS, Antech, Idexx or another reputable lab. Revaccinate ONLY if titer is ZERO. Any positive DP titer from now on is protective.
		Schedule health screenings: all _____ (Kennel name) dogs require OFA hip and elbow, OFA eye exam, OFA heart exam, _____, _____. PennHIP hip x-rays for dogs that may be bred. See Appendix for details on health screenings.
		OFA Eye Exam Result _____
		OFA Hip & Elbow Exam Result _____
		OFA Heart Exam Result _____
		This is the <u>earliest</u> you should spay or neuter your dog. Schedule surgery when you have two quiet weeks for recovery. Bitches should be scheduled to be spayed 3 months after their last season. Consider an ovary-sparing spay or vasectomy (https://www.parsemus.org/projects/ovary-sparing-spay/) to decrease your dog's risk of cancer, orthopedic problems and more.
3 years		Annual checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis

4 years		Annual checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
		Boost rabies vaccine with 3-year product
		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog's eye report to the OFA.
5 years		Annual checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog's eye report to the OFA.
6 years		Annual checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog's eye report to the OFA.

7 years		Annual checkup or Senior checkup – (see chart at beginning of Health Schedule - this has little effect on most dogs but you should begin semi-annual vet visits)
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
		Boost rabies vaccine with 3-year product
		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog’s eye report to the OFA.
7.5 years (if your dog is a Senior)		Semi-annual Senior dog checkup. Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
8 years		Annual checkup or Senior checkup – (see chart at beginning of Health Schedule - this has little effect on most dogs but you should begin semi-annual vet visits)
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog’s eye report to the OFA. <hr/> Example: The Golden Retriever Foundation will pay the OFA submission fee.

<p>8.5 years (if your dog is a Senior)</p>		<p>Semi-annual Senior dog checkup. Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis</p>
<p>9 years</p>		<p>Annual checkup or Senior checkup – (see chart at beginning of Health Schedule - this has little effect on most dogs but you should begin semi-annual vet visits)</p>
		<p>Take in fecal to check for parasites</p>
		<p>Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis</p>
		<p>Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog’s eye report to the OFA. _____ <i>Example: The Golden Retriever Foundation will pay the OFA submission fee.</i></p>
<p>9.5 years (if your dog is a Senior)</p>		<p>Semi-annual Senior dog checkup. Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis</p>
<p>10 years</p>		<p>Annual Senior checkup or Semi-annual Geriatric dog</p>
		<p>Take in fecal to check for parasites</p>
		<p>Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis</p>
		<p>Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog’s eye report to the OFA. _____ <i>Example: The Golden Retriever Foundation will pay the OFA submission fee.</i></p>

10 years (cont.)		Boost rabies vaccine with a 3-year product <u>or</u> Titer for rabies through Kansas State University Rabies Lab to ensure adequate protection before requesting a veterinary waiver and stopping vaccinating, if your dog has chronic illnesses.
10.5 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup with blood work (CBC, Superchem) and urinalysis
11 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog's eye report to the OFA. _____ <i>Example: The Golden Retriever Foundation will pay the OFA submission fee.</i>
11.5 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup with blood work (CBC, Superchem) and urinalysis
12 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis

12 years(cont.)		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog's eye report to the OFA. _____ <i>Example: The Golden Retriever Foundation will pay the OFA submission fee.</i>
		Titer for rabies through Kansas State University Rabies Lab to ensure adequate protection before requesting a veterinary waiver and stopping vaccinating, if your dog has chronic illnesses.
12.5 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup with blood work (CBC, Superchem) and urinalysis
13 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog's eye report to the OFA. _____ <i>Example: The Golden Retriever Foundation will pay the OFA submission fee.</i>
13.5 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup with blood work (CBC, Superchem) and urinalysis
14 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis

14 years (cont.)		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog's eye report to the OFA. _____ <i>Example: The Golden Retriever Foundation will pay the OFA submission fee.</i>
14.5 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup with blood work (CBC, Superchem) and urinalysis
15 years		Semi-annual Geriatric dog checkup
		Take in fecal to check for parasites
		Run bloodwork (CBC and Superchem) and urinalysis
		Annual eye exam with an ophthalmologist. These exams can be done at OFA clinics (http://www.offa.org/clinics.html) or directly with an ophthalmologist. Please submit your dog's eye report to the OFA. _____ <i>Example: The Golden Retriever Foundation will pay the OFA submission fee.</i>
15.5 years		Semi-annual Senior/Geriatric dog checkup with blood work (CBC, Superchem) and urinalysis

Chapter 2: Puppy Vaccinations

We follow and recommend a very specific **vaccination protocol** developed by Dr. Ronald D. Schultz, Professor Emeritus, Department of Pathobiological Sciences, School of Veterinary Medicine, University of Wisconsin Madison and co-author of the [2015 World Small Animal Veterinary Association](#) and [2017 American Animal Hospital Association Vaccination Guidelines](#). These revised protocols are in response to the veterinary and dog community's growing concerns about over-vaccination of dogs, which may underlie the increasing rates of cancer, autoimmune disorders and other health issues.

Vaccines are some of the most powerful drugs ever created. As such, they can both save your dog's life and cause serious, rarely fatal complications. They should never be used casually or passively. Maternal immunity can cause vaccine failures, keeping your puppy from mounting an immune response to a vaccination. Furthermore, vaccines can suppress your dog's immune system, thus limiting the effectiveness of subsequent shots. Finally, although adverse reactions are rare, they do happen, particularly with bacterial and killed vaccines. Usually adverse reactions are short-term and minor but some dogs can develop serious responses to vaccination that have long-term, even lifetime consequences.

Our Vaccination Protocol

Our vaccination protocol takes all of this into account as we seek to optimize rather than minimize vaccinations. That means we give the right vaccines at the right time to maximize our dogs' immune response to the diseases they are at risk for, while using all the tools at our disposal to confirm immunity.

We encourage YOU, too, to optimize your dog's vaccinations and to take personal responsibility deciding which vaccinations your dog gets, with the advice and counsel of your veterinarian and us. Please make sure you discuss this with your veterinarian during your first visit and insure you are in control each and every time your pup receives a vaccination during its lifetime.

Like other medications, you must weigh the costs and benefits of each vaccination you give. Our protocol balances a dog's need for immunity from potentially fatal diseases with detrimental effects on their immune systems caused by unnecessary vaccinations. It also seeks to time vaccines so we create a good, robust reaction that imprints the dog's immune system with an appropriate response, setting it up for lifetime protection.

Vaccination Priorities

We prioritize the vaccinations in our protocol based on the:

- specific disease risk
- maturity of the puppy's immune system
- safety and efficacy of the vaccine
- interaction between each vaccine and the pup's immune system

Our vaccination timing priorities are:

1. distemper and parvovirus
2. rabies
3. after rabies and only if needed, such as canine flu, *leptospirosis*, Lyme, *bordetella*
4. never, *Giardia* or coronavirus

We start with distemper and parvovirus for all of the reasons above. Both diseases are often fatal. The risk of parvo is greater than distemper these days but distemper is so serious a disease that we believe every dog should be vaccinated against it.

The modified-live versions of these vaccines are quite safe and effective. When given together, or with adenovirus 2 and/or parainfluenza, these vaccines have a low rate of adverse reactions. When given at the right time, **they require only a single shot** for the dog to develop long-term, if not lifetime, immunity to both diseases.

Today, we can easily confirm our pups have responded to these vaccines using vaccine antibody titers. Most vets offer In-office or commercial laboratory versions of distemper-parvo titers. These vary widely in price so before requesting them, be sure to discuss the cost with your vet. We recommend the Companion Animal Vaccine and Immuno Diagnostic Service (CAVIDS) Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin Vet School because of the high quality and low cost of their titer testing. See CAVIDS' contact info below.

Once your pup has immunity against parvo and distemper, then you should focus on rabies. We have to pay attention to timing since both of these require an initial vaccination and then a booster. In the case of rabies, that booster should be given between 1 and 12 months following the initial shot, depending upon your local laws.

Only after we have ensured the pup is immune to distemper and parvo, has started on its rabies series, and has a relatively mature immune system do we consider non-core vaccines.

The Litter's Vaccine Nomograph

So, let's get started on protecting your puppy against distemper and parvovirus. To do this, we ran a **distemper-parvo antibody titer nomograph** on your puppy's mother to help determine when we should vaccinate the pups against these diseases. This titer nomograph was run by CAVIDS, run by Dr. Laurie Larson.

CAVIDs also runs titers for adult dogs, so you can use them for all of your dogs' titer needs. They are very reasonably priced (\$44 a/o 1/2020) and quick. For more on nomographs, including blood draw and shipping instructions, and fillable forms, go to avidog.com/canine-nomographs-ebook.

CAVIDS/Titer Testing Laboratory (608) 263-4648
Room 4337 School of Vet Med, 2015 Linden Drive West, Madison, WI 53706

At-Risk Period

Your pup's **At-Risk Period** starts when **the pups are born**. Your pup has a very high likelihood of responding to the distemper component of the vaccine at ___ weeks. From ___ weeks until you have a confirmed titer indicating your pup is protected, assume your puppy is at risk for distemper and parvo!

During this period, the only way to keep your pup safe is to ensure it does not get near animals that have distemper or parvo, unvaccinated dogs, their feces, and people who have come in contact with these things until it has responded to both the distemper and parvo components of the vaccine. We use the term **Savvy Socialization** to describe proper socialization and management of pups during this period.

Savvy Socialization

Savvy Socialization is a program that enables you to develop your puppy fully during its first year, including the critical Sensitive Period, while avoiding problems, in particular disease and fears. Focus on bonding with your puppy and allowing it to **develop trust** in you and any family members, as well as other caregivers, like vets and groomers.

You can also give your pup positive introductions to other people, places, things and activities while limiting its interaction with dogs until you know it is protected against distemper and parvo and unless you know the dogs love puppies. Take your puppy to garden centers, home improvement centers, hardware stores, your bank, nursing homes, daycare centers, colleges, and schools but avoid dog parks, pet stores, shelters, dog shows and places where dogs run loose or gather in large numbers. Be cautious taking your pup to your veterinarian's office (without calling to ensure they have seen no cases of parvovirus or distemper).

One dog-centered place that research indicates is both safe and beneficial are **Puppy Kindergarten classes**. Just be sure the facility requires all pups be vaccinated against parvo and distemper and instructs owners to stay home if their pup is ill.

Despite guidance to the contrary, introducing your puppy to a lot of dogs **is not beneficial**. In fact, recent research indicates that the earlier puppies are out on the street meeting strange dogs and people, the more likely the pup will be aggressive as an adult. Similarly, the more strange dogs a puppy meets in these early months, the more likely it will have problems with dogs in the future. In fact, it appears that a single traumatizing experience with adult dogs prior to 12 months of age can have lifetime, negative effects on puppies. Why might this be?

Likely the problem arises because of how and who the puppy is introduced to. If a puppy meets an aggressive or simply a frightening dog during its first year, when puppies are extremely impressionable, it is likely affected for a lifetime. Why risk that introduction with a dog you don't know? Instead, protect your puppy fiercely and trust it only to other similarly-aged puppies in puppy class and dogs and owners you know implicitly. There is time enough in the future for your puppy to meet and engage with other dogs.

For more on developing your pup in its first year, re-watch Intro to Savvy Socialization.

Confirmatory Titers

The only way to confirm your pup has responded to a distemper-parvo vaccine to run a **confirmatory vaccine antibody titer**. Since it takes 7 to 10 days for your puppy's body to respond to the vaccine, run this confirmatory titer through CAVIDS two weeks after vaccination. All of the details, forms and instructions are in this free e-book (avidog.com/canine-nomographs-ebook) and on the CAVIDS website. Since CAVIDS has all the information about the litter and dam, be sure to include your dam/bitch's name on your submission form. The submission cost is \$44 so bring along an extra check made out to the University of Wisconsin.

Even though the nomograph report indicates your pup needs two distemper-parvo vaccines, at 9 and 13 weeks, I think your pup can respond to a 12-week vaccine. You can then titer at 14 weeks to confirm your pup has developed immunity.

If your puppy's titer shows it has not developed immunity from its vaccinations per the **Development and Medical Schedule**, you should have your vet give a **5-component** (called either DA2PP or DHPP) from a major manufacturer (Merck, Pfizer, Intervet, Schering-Plough) that include **ONLY** modified live (MLV) vaccines for distemper, parvovirus, adenovirus and parainfluenza. In your pup's early months, there should be **no other** vaccine components in this combination product so do not give vaccines that include *leptospirosis* or coronavirus. Please be very clear with your vet and any technicians that are preparing your puppy's vaccination. Check the vial before the vaccine is given to ensure your puppy is getting the correct vaccine.

Positive DP Titer = Long-term Immunity

Once you have confirmed your puppy is protected against distemper and parvo, it is likely protected for the rest of its life. We have access to excellent quality distemper and parvo vaccines that result in long-term, sterile immunity in most dogs if given at the right time. Revaccination is rarely required once this immunity has been achieved.

Once sterile immunity has been achieved, distemper and parvo titer levels are a characteristic of the individual dog NOT a reflection of the number of vaccines it has received. Higher titers are not better! Giving more shots may increase the titers in the short term but the titers will eventually return to the previous level. Even dogs with very low, but positive, titers have memory cells that will enable their immune system to fight off a parvo or distemper infection.

Therefore, you should always titer before revaccinating your dog for distemper and parvovirus. If the titer is POSITIVE, regardless of how low the number, your dog is protected and does not need further distemper or parvo vaccinations.

Timing Other Vaccinations

The components of the distemper-parvo vaccines causes immune system suppression for about two weeks after vaccination, so take this into account as you time your pup's next vaccines, in

particular rabies and canine flu. You want to avoid giving any other vaccines sooner than 14 days after a parvo vaccine.

In addition, you want to avoid combining killed vaccines with modified-live viral vaccines because killed and bacterial vaccines have the highest number of adverse reactions. If given together and an adverse reaction occurs, you won't be able to tell which vaccine caused the problem. Killed and bacterial vaccines include rabies, *leptospirosis*, *bordetella* and Lyme.

Canine Flu Vaccines

In the past few years, there have been widespread outbreak of canine flu in the US and Canada so we are strong proponents of the canine influenza vaccine. Canine influenzas, H3N2 and H3N8, are new diseases in the US so 80% of our dogs that come in contact with the viruses will develop symptoms. Symptoms include sneezing, cough, low-grade fever, nasal discharge, and lack of energy and/or appetite. There have been some fatalities from the canine flu but they are uncommon. Dogs are contagious for over three weeks so once your dog becomes ill, it must be kept away from other dogs for a month.

Although a relatively new vaccine, there have not been many adverse reactions to the shots. You can give your puppy the **bivalent canine influenza vaccine (CIV)** against both H3N2 and H3N8 strains in conjunction with a DA2PP/DHPP or two weeks after that vaccine. Early indications are the vaccines are relatively safe and effective but do not cross protect between the two types. Vaccination against the flu requires two shots three weeks apart and immunity is not conferred until three weeks later so you should start vaccination soon after you get your pup home.

Rabies

Once your puppy has immunity to distemper and parvo, it's time to get your pup its first **rabies vaccine**. Like the flu, rabies is a two-shot series with an initial vaccination and a booster. Depending upon the rabies law in your state or province, you may use the traditional rabies protocol with two shots one year apart, or you may be able to use a compressed protocol with two shots 3-4 weeks apart. Both result in the same number of lifetime rabies shots but the compressed protocol ensures that puppies:

- are protected from rabies during the first year of their lives, and
- do not receive a rabies vaccine during adolescence.

The traditional rabies vaccine protocol is to give one vaccination in puppyhood, usually between 12-16 weeks, and then boost the rabies vaccine one year later. Dr. Schultz uses a different protocol for his own dogs and we recommend his schedule since he believes that it may be safer to give puppies two rabies vaccines three to four weeks apart, just as many vaccine manufacturers do when they test their vaccines. Dr. Schultz introduced this protocol because some dogs do not develop immunity from the first rabies vaccine while nearly 100

percent of dogs develop immunity after the second.¹ This means that with the typical protocol, a small percentage of pups will have no protection against rabies for a full year before their second vaccine, which is very dangerous in many parts of North America.

Furthermore, Dr. Schultz has seen a small number of dogs that develop **life-long aggression** when the rabies vaccine is given during adolescence. Although this is a rare phenomenon, it obviously has a detrimental effect on the dog's quality of life, as well as that of the owners.

Check your state's rabies law and/or talking to your vet about the compressed protocol since it may not be legal in your state based on how your rabies law is written. To check your state's law, go to avma.org/Advocacy/StateAndLocal/Pages/rabies-vaccination.aspx. The late Dr. Jim Zgoda, owner of Otterkill Animal Hospital, got approval to use this protocol in New York state so it is possible if you live there, but it may take some work on your part. If you simply cannot find a vet who will do this, then do a one-year rabies vaccine as late as is safe and then three-year vaccine as late as you can in adolescence.

What NOT to Vaccinate For: Coronavirus, Giardia

Our goal in establishing our vaccination schedule is to optimize protection against serious and/or fatal diseases using effective vaccines while limiting the assault on the dog's immune system. Based on this philosophy, you should NOT vaccinate your pup against **coronavirus** or **Giardia**. Neither of these vaccines is supported by independent research. As a separate disease, corona does not cause problems in older pups. The *Giardia* vaccine is not considered a useful vaccine for dogs in the United States. You should tell your vet that you do NOT want your pup to receive a vaccine that includes Corona at **any point in its life**.

What to Discuss with your Vet: Other Non-Core Vaccines Such As Bordetella, Leptospirosis, and Lyme

Non-core vaccines are vaccines that should only be given if your dog is at risk for those diseases because of prevalence in your area and/or from your dog's lifestyle AND the benefit from the vaccine outweighs the risks. Some non-core vaccines, in particular, the vaccines against bacteria, are the most likely to cause adverse reactions. These include the *bordetella* or kennel cough, *leptospirosis*, and Lyme vaccines.

The immunity that these vaccines provide is usually short lived (a year or less) and does not produce sterile immunity. As a result, the vaccine may not stop the dog from getting ill but often lessens symptoms or reduces their length. In addition, the adjuvant component of the vaccine can cause overreactions of the immune system and responses known as vaccinosis. We

¹ Two published articles revealing the inconsistency of a single rabies vaccine to develop immunity are (1) W. Tepsumethanon, C. Polsuwan, et al., Immune response to rabies vaccine in Thai dogs: A preliminary report. Vaccine Volume 9, Issue 9, September 1991, Pages 627-630, and (2) G. Sage, P. Khawplod et al., Immune response to rabies vaccine in Alaskan dogs: failure to achieve a consistently protective antibody response. Transactions of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene - September 1993 (Vol. 87, Issue 5, Pages 593-595)

prefer that you give **NO bacterial vaccines to your puppy** until its immune system is well developed, usually by 5 or 6 months of age.

Remember, vaccines should always be given to **HEALTHY** dogs or puppies. That means if your pup has diarrhea, vomiting or fever, it should not be vaccinated even if the shot will save you a vet visit. Remind the staff and your vet of this so they do not accidentally vaccinate your pup if it is ill, even if it's "due."

If you do give bacterial vaccines, be sure to time them according to the risk in your area. For example, the Lyme vaccine should be given in the spring or the fall, when ticks are most active. Similarly, lepto should be given just prior to the rainy season if you have one in your area. *Bordetella* (kennel cough) should be given 3-4 weeks prior to kenneling or showing your dog.

Leptospirosis. There are over 200 serovars (subspecies) of *Leptospirosis* in the world but canine vaccines only exist for four of them: *Grippotyphosa*, *Pomona*, *Canicola* and *Icterohaemorrhagiae*. Unfortunately, these vaccines do not protect against other serovars, in particular *Autumnalis*. If *lepto* has been identified in people or dogs in your area, give the 4-way lepto vaccine NOT the distemper-parvo vaccine that includes *lepto*. It takes two shots, given 3 weeks apart, for dogs to develop immunity so be careful until after the second shot. Immunity from the *Lepto* vaccine wanes rapidly so time the vaccine to coincide with the wettest weather in your area or swimming season.

Lyme. Tick-bite prevention is the foundation for avoiding not only Lyme disease but the many other tick-borne diseases (TBDs) that strike dogs, such as Rocky Mountain spotted fever, ehrlichia, and anaplasmosis. If you want to vaccinate, remember that the Lyme vaccines only protect against Lyme disease so do not assume your dog is protected from all TBDs just because it is vaccinated. In tick seasons or areas, you must still use tick prevention (see External Parasites) to protect your dog.

There are several Lyme vaccines on the market, including the newly released Vanguard® crLyme. In field tests, most are only 80% effective so you must monitor your dog for symptoms—lameness, anorexia, tiredness, fever, etc. We have not used any of the Lyme vaccines in over 25 years so cannot recommend one over the other.

BEFORE you give a Lyme vaccine, please have your vet run a Lyme titer or Idexx's SNAP 4DX test **FIRST** to ensure your puppy or dog has not been infected with the *Borrelia burgdorferi* bacteria. Per information from Cornell University, giving the Lyme vaccine to an infected dog can cause a fatal kidney disease (Lyme nephritis) in susceptible dogs, such as golden retrievers.

Kennel Cough. *Bordetella* is one of many kennel cough variants that can infect dogs. The *Bordetella* vaccine protects against one of those variants. It is usually only effective for twelve months at the most. Although an inconvenience, the disease is rarely fatal. However, it is an inconvenience when your dog coughs for a few weeks and, like colds in humans, the disease is highly contagious. Even you can pass kennel cough from one dog to another.

We recommend you do not use this vaccine except when your dog is at risk or it is required by a service provider, like a training center or kennel. If you must vaccinate with *Bordetella* in order to kennel or train your dog, we recommend that you use only the **intranasal** form of the vaccine (or find another kennel) three weeks prior to the date of kenneling. Neither the oral nor the injectable form of the *Bordetella* vaccine provides as much protection as the intranasal form.

Non-core bacterial Vaccine Summary. Remember, none of the non-core bacterial vaccines are particularly good vaccines, meaning they do not provide anywhere 100% protection against the diseases the dogs face. In addition, they are short-term vaccines so to get the best protection possible, we would have to vaccinate at least annually. And these are the very vaccines that cause a high number of adverse reactions in dogs. The *lepto* vaccine results in the highest number of moderate and severe adverse reactions, including fatal reactions, of any vaccine. The Lyme vaccine can also cause fatal problems if given to a dog already infected with Lyme disease and it does not protect against any of the other tick-borne diseases.

It is not wrong to use these vaccines sensibly as long as you are very aware of the risks. Sensible usage means vaccinating when the risk is highest, so springtime for both Lyme and *lepto*, and three weeks before your dog needs to be boarded for *Bordetella*. In addition, stay at your vet's office (or in the parking lot) for 20-30 minutes after the injection and watch for adverse reactions after the vaccine.

Anaphylactic Reactions

Each time your dog is given a vaccination, stay at the vet's for 20-30 minutes following the vaccination. **Anaphylactic reactions**, which are rare but serious and often fatal allergic reactions, typically occur within 5-30 minutes after injections. Symptoms include an itchy rash, hives, throat swelling, and low blood pressure. Anaphylaxis is a medical emergency and you want to be at your vet's office when it happens, not driving home.

Adult Dog Vaccination Schedule

Once your puppy has two rabies vaccines and you have confirmed it has immunity against distemper and parvovirus, you can begin its adult vaccination schedule.

- **Vaccinate for rabies** as required by law but not more frequently than every three years unless your dog comes in contact with a rabid animal.
 - Stay abreast of changes in the rabies laws for your state as most have increased the time required between vaccines to three years. The Rabies Challenge Fund has up-to-date information on rabies research and laws (<https://www.rabieschallengefund.org/>).
 - Do not allow your dog's rabies vaccine to lapse! Doing so puts it at risk of being impounded if it's in the vicinity when a human being is bitten. Please note, the

government can legally confiscate an unvaccinated dog if it was present when a person was bitten, even if that dog didn't do the biting.

- If your dog develops an immune disease, titer your dog through Kansas State University to confirm it has immunity against rabies. If it does not, you must vaccinate for you and your dog to be safe. However, if it does have adequate immunity, ask your vet to write a letter to your state requesting a waiver of future rabies vaccines. The AVMA recently came out in support of rabies vaccine waivers for at-risk animals (avma.org/KB/Policies/Documents/annual-rabies-vaccination-waiver-form.pdf).
- **Titer for distemper and parvovirus** every 3 years at the most. We titer no more than every 5 years. Titers do NOT drop quickly so there is lots of time to respond, if needed.
 - Once past puppyhood, if the titer indicates the dog has a positive titer, there is no need to give additional boosters regardless of how low the titer goes. Positive titers in adult dogs indicate essential immunity. Boosting a low titer will only increase it for a short period and then the dog's titer will drop again to the previous level.
 - If the titer indicates the dog has a zero titer and you are concerned, boost with a DHPP or DA2PP vaccine. In actuality, the dog is probably protected by memory cells.
- Vaccinate for the **H3N2 canine flu** every year there is an outbreak in your region. The flu travels quickly and the vaccine takes about 6 weeks to become effective, so don't wait for it to come to your town.
- Vaccinate for Leptospirosis, Lyme, and Bordetella **only when there is a risk** in your area. The paragraph under Puppy Vaccinations, What to Discuss with your Vet: Non-Core Vaccines Such as Bordetella, Leptospirosis, and Lyme, is equally appropriate for your vaccination decisions for your adults. You should NOT automatically vaccinate for these diseases but should discuss your dog's risks with your vet before doing so.
- **Never** vaccinate against coronavirus or Giardia.
- Be **cautious of any new vaccines** coming on the market unless we are in the middle of an epidemic and time is of the essence, such as the parvovirus epidemic in the 1980s or the 2017 Canine Influenza outbreak. There is minimal testing of dog vaccines before they come to market. Do not allow your dog to be part of an experiment so we recommend you wait three years before using a new vaccine on your dog.
- Read and provide your vet with the *World Small Animal Veterinary Association's 2015 Vaccine Guidelines*, <http://www.avidog.com/wp-content/pdf/WSAVA-Vaccination-Guidelines-2015.pdf>.

Chapter 3: Internal Parasites

Your pup had a negative stool sample when evaluated by our veterinarian. However, a negative fecal is not always accurate so you should take another stool sample into your vet on your first or second visit. From then on, your pup will require deworming when you see evidence of worms in its feces or symptoms such as dry coat, weight loss, or actual worms in its stool. Visible worms can look like long, stringy worms or small grains of rice. The latter are tapeworm segments which rarely show up on a stool test so tell your vet if you see them so you can get your pup treated. Tapeworms often arise from flea infestations so if your dog has fleas, it is more likely to need to be wormed for tapes.

Heartworms

Heartworms are a worm-like parasite transmitted by mosquito bites. They can grow in dogs' hearts and cause serious, even fatal, heart disease. We cannot yet prevent heartworm infection so we use heartworm treatment to kill the heartworm microfilaria (larval worms) that have been deposited in our dog's bloodstream by mosquitoes. Treatment is quite simple through regular medication.

Heartworm is endemic in most portions of the United States so nearly all American dogs should be treated at least part of the year and continued until the mosquito threat is over in your area. How do you know when that is? I use David H. Knight, DVM, Diplomate (ACVIM), and James B. Lok, PhD (1998), "Seasonality of Heartworm Infection and Implications for Chemoprophylaxis," *Clinical Techniques in Small Animal Practice* (vol. 13, no. 2), pp 77-82. Below is an excerpt of the predicted start and stop times for each state.

Mosquitoes reproduce when the temperature reaches 57°F for multiple days to reproduce and mature. The more consecutive days there are above that cut off, the higher the risk of heartworm infection. The fewer there are, the lower the risk. So, except in southern states, from Florida to Louisiana, there is little reason to treat dogs for heartworm year round most years and doing so is subjecting them to unnecessary pesticides. However, in northern climates with unusually warm winters such as 2015-16, continued treatment is necessary.

The figure below shows each continental state and the typical start and end month for heartworm treatment. So, 5/12 means start treatment in May, which in most years will start 4 to 6 weeks after the first warm spell (57°F for 3 consecutive days), and end in December.

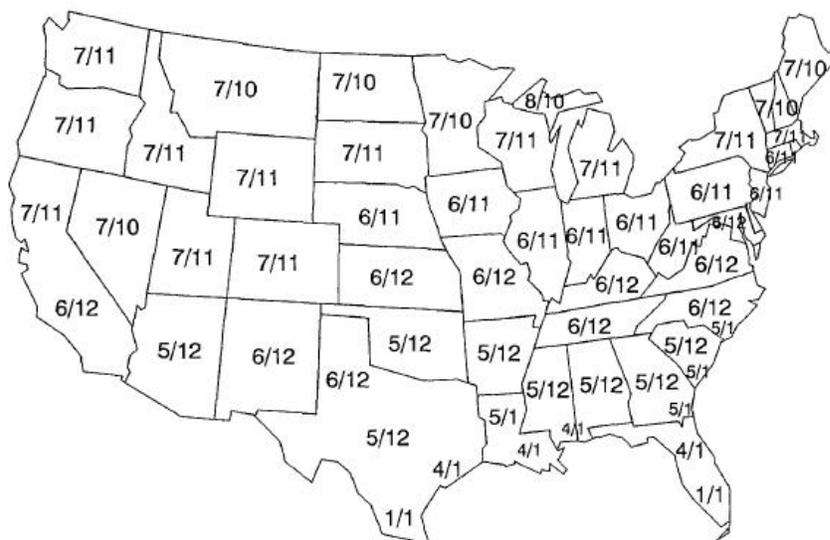


Fig 2. Each number represents the month of the year in which macrolide administration is recommended to begin and end in each state or geographic region. These estimates are provided as guidelines only and do not reflect smaller scale regional differences.

Inexpensive, Safe Heartworm Treatment

Heartworm treatment is often one of the larger routine expenses that dog owners face but the same protection can be gotten for much less money. This is how we do it.

Every six weeks during the mosquito season, we use **ivermectin**, which is available without a prescription through farm or ranch supply stores, because it is inexpensive and kills heartworms and other intestinal parasites. This is a relatively safe treatment because all of our dogs have tested free of the Multi-Drug Resistance 1 (MDR1) gene, common in collies and other herding breeds, which makes them sensitive to ivermectin.

1. If you want to use this method, purchase the 1% injectable **Ivomec** for cattle, a 50-ml bottle of which costs less than \$40 and will last you till the 3-year expiration date. Here is a link to Revival Animal Health <https://amzn.to/38NJCLM>.
2. You will also need a 1cc syringe (also called a tuberculin syringe) and a medical eye dropper from the drug store. Don't worry, you are not injecting anything into your dog; you need the syringe to get the liquid out of the bottle. You can get these syringe with needles online (<http://www.revivalanimal.com/MonoJect-Syringes-with-Needles.html?sku=30980-798>) or from your vet.
3. The dose is 0.003 cc (or ml) per 10 pounds of body weight but confirm the dosage with your vet because he or she may want you to dilute the ivermectin with vegetable oil for more accurate dosing. This dose is a very small amount so you can just use an eye dropper or the syringe itself. **One drop from either** is approximately 0.05 cc or mls so this is enough for any dog up to 100 pounds. Yes, you read that right...ONE DROP!
4. Put ONE DROP of Ivomec from the eye dropper into a small amount of your dog's food or on a treat, like a piece of bread and be sure all the food gets consumed.

Dog Aware has great information about the use of ivermectin for heartworm that you can find here: <http://dogaware.com/health/ivomec.html>

Expensive, Safe Heartworm Treatment

Despite the safety and cost of ivermectin, we know that most owners will use a monthly, chewable product. There are many choices on the market today, all of which require a prescription from your vet (except ivermectin above). We recommend that you select a product with a long history in the marketplace, not a newly released one. To save money, get a prescription and order the product online from a reputable North American retailer—the cost is often 35-50% less than from your vet. (We value our vets tremendously and never skimp on our dog’s treatments but we save our money for veterinary care not quality retail supplies that are safely available elsewhere.) See the table on the next page for costs and options.

Unlike ivermectin, which naturally kills intestinal parasites, some heartworm products include additional pesticides that kill intestinal parasites. For the vast majority of dogs, additional monthly parasite treatment is unnecessary so is riskier than beneficial. See the next section on Intestinal Parasites for information on treating them.

Heartgard Plus and **Interceptor** are our choice of heartworm treatment if you do not live where fleas are a problem. **Sentinel** and **Revolution** are good products in areas where fleas are also a concern.

Although they are called monthly treatments, these products protect for six weeks against heartworms so you can give them every six weeks during mosquito season if heartworm are your primary concern. If you have trouble remembering, give them once a month but it’s better to use only what the dog needs. However, they need to be used every month for flea protection. In heartworm-endemic areas, you can and should give the preventative year-round. Your vet will likely do annual or biannual blood tests to ensure the preventative is working and your dog remains heartworm free.

There have been some heartworm “breaks” in the southern US recently, where dogs that had been regularly treated with monthly heartworm preventative came down with heartworm. If you live in or travel to the southern US, be diligent in your treatment and go to an every four-week protocol.

Intestinal Parasites

Dogs can also get a wide array of intestinal parasites or “worms” including round, hook, whip, and tapeworms. Symptoms of intestinal worms are poor hair coat (the coat feels thin and wiry to the touch) and poor body condition (thinner than the amount you are feeding would indicate).

There are three reasonable treatment schedules. Treat:

- when you see symptoms

- when you or your vet runs a fecal and sees evidence (eggs or tapeworm segments)
- once a year

We use **fenbendazole** (sold as Safe-guard or Panacur C), an inexpensive but very effective treatments for intestinal parasites. It can be purchased safely online for a very low price (see chart on next page). Fenbendazole is a very safe and effective since it kills round, hook, whip and tapeworms. Safe-Guard/Panacur C comes in granules or liquids that are mixed into your dog's food once a day for three days.

Coccidia

Coccidiosis is a parasite infestation that erupts when dogs are under stress. For puppies, this is usually weaning and during the transition to their new homes. You will know your pup has *coccidia* if it has diarrhea, and more rarely, vomiting. The diarrhea can come and go or it can be constant. If your pup has diarrhea for a day, make an appointment with your vet.

The best treatment for coccidia is an off-label use of **toltrazuril**. Because this is an off-label use, your vet cannot prescribe toltrazuril so you must order it yourself. It is worth it since it is the **ONLY** drug that kills coccidia! In fact, toltrazuril requires only a single dose to kill this resistant protozoan. The dosing form is on the next page. You can get it at horsepreprace.com. Here is research showing its effectiveness.

Toltrazuril treatment of cystoisosporosis in dogs under experimental and field conditions. A Dauschies, HC Mundt, V Letkova, *Parasitology Research*, 2000, Vol 86, Iss 10, pp 797-799
<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/11068811>.

The older, much less effective treatment for coccidia is ten days of Albon (sulfadimethoxine), which usually clears up the problem with one or two series. This drug does not kill the parasites; it disrupts their reproductive cycle so it does not work as well as Baycox. Albon is a sulfa antibiotic but it has been tolerated well by our dogs in the past although it tastes horrible so it can be a challenge getting it down. Be sure to give the Albon with food to hide the taste. Healthy adult dogs are usually resistant to the coccidia protozoa so your pup will be fine once it matures. You can also get Albon on line, if you choose, at <http://www.revivalanimal.com/product/albon-5-oral-suspension/cat-supplies>.

Our Heartworm and Intestinal Parasite Protocol

We treat our dogs for less than \$25/year with:

- **Ivomec** throughout the heartworm season. That is starting 6 weeks after the first 3 consecutive days that reach 57°F days until 6 weeks after the last 3 consecutive days that reach 57°F.
- **Safeguard-C**, annually or when we see symptoms or worms in stools.
- **Toltrazuril (Baycox 5%, 50 mg/ml)** when puppies or dogs have really smelly diarrhea. Coccidia has a very distinctive metallic odor.

Baycox (50mg/ml)

Weight (lbs)	Dose (ml)						
1	.18	28	5.09	55	10.0	82	14.9
2	.36	29	5.27	56	10.2	83	15.1
3	.55	30	5.45	57	10.4	84	15.3
4	.73	31	5.64	58	10.5	85	15.5
5	.91	32	5.82	59	10.7	86	15.6
6	1.09	33	6.00	60	10.9	87	15.8
7	1.27	34	6.18	61	11.1	88	16.0
8	1.45	35	6.36	62	11.3	89	16.2
9	1.64	36	6.55	63	11.5	90	16.4
10	1.82	37	6.73	64	11.6	91	16.5
11	2.00	38	6.91	65	11.8	92	16.7
12	2.18	39	7.09	66	12.0	93	16.9
13	2.36	40	7.27	67	12.2	94	17.1
14	2.55	41	7.45	68	12.4	95	17.3
15	2.73	42	7.64	69	12.5	96	17.5
16	2.91	43	7.82	70	12.7	97	17.6
17	3.09	44	8.00	71	12.9	98	17.8
18	3.27	45	8.18	72	13.1	99	18.0
19	3.45	46	8.36	73	13.3	100	18.2
20	3.64	47	8.55	74	13.5	101	18.4
21	3.82	48	8.73	75	13.6	102	18.5
22	4.00	49	8.91	76	13.8	103	18.7
23	4.18	50	9.09	77	14.0	104	18.9
24	4.36	51	9.27	78	14.2	105	19.1
25	4.55	52	9.45	79	14.4	105	19.3
26	4.73	53	9.64	80	14.5	107	19.5
27	4.91	54	9.82	81	14.7	108	19.6

9.1 mg/lb (20mg/Kg orally once daily for 2-3 days)

Comparison of Heartworm and Intestinal Parasites Treatment Products (higher dose needed)*

Product (The products we use are highlighted)	Cost (50-lb dog for 12 mos)	Recommended	Requires Prescription	Active Ingredients	Heartworm	Fleas	Intestinal Parasites					
							Round-worms	Hook-worms	Whip-worms	Coccidia	Tape-worms	
Ivomec	\$2.00	Yes	No	Ivermectin	Yes	No	Yes*	Yes*	Yes*	No	No	No
Safeguard for Goats/Panacur-C	\$16.98	Yes	No	Fenbendazole	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
Baycox	\$2.24	Yes (as needed)	No	Toltrazuril	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
Heartguard Plus	\$98.00	Yes	Yes	Ivermectin, Pyrantel pamoate	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Interceptor Plus	\$98.00	Yes	Yes	Milbemycin oxime/praziquantel	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Pyrantel Pamoate	\$0.99	Yes	No	Pyrantel pamoate	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Revolution	\$190.00	Yes	Yes	Selamectin	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Sentinel	\$96.00	Yes	Yes	Milbemycin oxime, lufenuron	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Iverhart Max	\$90.00	Ok	Yes	Ivermectin, Pyrantel pamoate, Praziquantel	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Trifexis	\$220.00	Ok	Yes	Spinosad, Milbemycin oxime	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No
Triheart Plus	\$61	Ok	Yes	Ivermectin, Pyrantel pamoate	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Ivomec Max	\$57.48	No	Yes	Ivermectin, Pyrantel pamoate, Praziquantel	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes

Chapter 4: External Parasites—Fleas and Ticks

You will need to develop a plan for ensuring your dog safely remains flea and tick free. We do not recommend using new products until they have been on the market three years after FDA approval.

We presently recommend and use **Seresto collars**, **Vectra 3D**, and **K9 Advantix II**. The last two are topical pesticides or spot-ons and Seresto is a collar the dog wears. Avidog's owners have successfully used **Simparica**, **Frontline**, **Bravecto**, **Nexgard** and **Advantage** in other areas of the country. Simparica, Bravecto and Nexgard are all under investigation by the FDA for increasing or causing seizures in dogs.

The **Seresto** tick collar is proving to be a very effective option because it can get wet and dogs can be bathed monthly while using it. However, if your dog swims every day, Bayer says neither the Seresto collar nor **K9 Advantix II** will be effective. The **Preventic** tick collar is another good tick product but cannot be allowed to get wet and should not be used on dogs that often play together.

Finally, [Capstar](#) is an option for immediate treatment if you find your dog has an unexpected flea infestation. Capstar quickly kills all the fleas on the dog, starting within 30 minutes. It is not appropriate for long-term or regular treatments but can be a lifesaver if you've found your dog has brought fleas home from a show or visit.

Other flea control methods that are effective include regular bathing *with a normal dog shampoo*, boric acid, and/or food-grade diatomaceous earth treatment of your house, and regular vacuuming. We no longer recommend flea shampoos and powders or insecticide sprays for your home because of their possible threat to your dog's immune system. Flea and tick collars should be used only during those periods when routine husbandry and topicals are no longer effective.

The most important aspect of treatment for fleas and ticks is vigilance and repeated, aggressive treatment. Take some time with your veterinarian and develop your plan of action. See next page for a comparison of flea and tick control products.

Comparison of Tick and Flea Control Products

Product (The products we use are highlighted)	Cost (50-lb dog for 8 mos)	Recommend?	Requires Prescription	Frequency	Ingredients	Topical, Collar, Systemic	Waterproof	Online or Vet-only	Ticks	Repels Ticks	Adult Fleas	Larval Fleas
Seresto collar	\$53.00	Yes	No	Every 8 mos	Imidacloprid, Flumethrin	Collar	Yes	Online	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
K9 Advantix II	\$96.00	Yes	No	Monthly	Imidacloprid and Permethrin	Topical	Yes	Online	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Vectra 3D	\$88.00	Yes	No	Monthly	Dinotefuran, Pyriproxyfen & Permethrin	Topical	Yes	Online	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Advantage II	\$109.88	Yes	No	Monthly	Imidacloprid, Pyriproxyfen IGR	Topical	Yes	Online	No	No	Yes	Yes
Frontline Plus	\$88.00	Yes	No	Monthly	Fipronil, Methoprene	Topical	No	Online	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
Preventic Collar	\$90.00	Yes	No	Every 3 mos	Amitraz	Collar	No	Online	Yes	No	No	No
Revolution	\$142.00	Yes	Yes	Monthly	Selamectin	Systemic	Yes	Online	Slightly	Yes	Yes	No
Nexgard	\$138.00	Yes	Yes	Monthly	Afoxolaner	Systemic	Yes	Online	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Program	\$89.00	Ok	No	Monthly	Lufenuron	Systemic	Yes	Online	No	No	No	Yes
Bravecto	\$120.00	Ok	No	Monthly	Fluralaner	Systemic	Yes	Online	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Comfortis	\$67.00	No	No	Monthly	Spinosad	Systemic	Yes	Online	No	No	Yes	No
Simparica	\$99.00	Ok	No	Monthly	Sarolaner	Systemic	Yes	Online	No	No	Yes	No
Biospot Defense & Fiproguard	DO NOT USE											

Chapter 5: Spaying and Neutering

Regardless of whether you have purchased a pet puppy or a performance puppy, we ask that you **wait to have your pup neutered until at least two years of age to give it the best chance for a long and healthy life.**

Effects of Spaying and Neutering

The hormones that we often call “sex hormones,” estrogen and testosterone, are important for a variety of physiological processes unrelated to procreation, such as bone density, growth-plate closure, influencing other essential hormones, and secondary sex characteristics. Example - Spayed/neutered golden retrievers have higher incidence of cancer, canine hip dysplasia and cruciate ligament ruptures. Research has shown that spayed/neutered dogs also show increased rates of compulsive sexual behaviors (such as humping), sound phobias (such as thunderstorm phobia), other fearful behaviors and, surprisingly, male aggression.

Obesity is also a risk in spayed or neutered dogs because their caloric needs drop by 40% almost immediately after the surgery. Plan for this when you spay or neuter your dog, reducing their food by about half right after the procedure.

We have a collection of research on spaying and neutering here <http://www.avidog.com/spay-neuter-research/> that you may share with your vet and friends.

Allowing a female puppy to have one or two heat cycles does slightly increase the risk of mammary cancer. This risk increases with each heat but remains low in goldens. The most common canine version of mammary cancer in golden retrievers offers a good prognosis when caught early. Spaying before their first heat reduces this risk by 95% but regardless, the risk is low for metastatic breast cancer in golden retrievers. Mammary cancer caught early by vigilant owners is usually treatable.

Conversely, spaying and neutering increases the risk of hemangiosarcoma, lymphosarcoma and osteosarcoma, three cancers that cause the deaths of many more goldens. There is also very strong evidence of other detrimental impacts of spaying and neutering. Research has found that goldens spayed and neutered before 12 months had significantly increased rates of:

- Hypothyroidism (increased 60% in bitches neutered young and 80% in dogs!)
- Weight problems and obesity (both)
- Lifelong incontinence and chronic UTIs (bitches)
- Increased risk for autoimmune disease (both)
- Cruciate ligament ruptures and other orthopedic disease

These are very real issues with dogs spayed young and the risks diminish as the dog or bitch is allowed more years intact.

In addition, dogs spayed/neutered after they are adults grow more appropriately--dogs neutered or spayed early grow up to an inch more than those that are allowed to develop fully

before neutering. Early-neutered dogs often look leggy and gawky, trapped in an adolescent body for their entire lives. This is also important because height is related to longevity; taller animals die earlier than shorter ones.

There is also evidence that intact males are more likely to develop prostatitis. Acute prostatitis can happen in a young male and is treatable with antibiotics. Chronic prostatitis rarely occurs in young dogs and neutered dogs. So, neutering non-breeding dogs can reduce the symptoms of this disease, should it arise. You do need to be aware that a few studies indicate that neutering may increase the likelihood of prostate cancer but, again, this is a very rare cancer in goldens.

By spaying/neutering after 24 months, your puppy will have decreased risk of osteosarcoma, hemangiosarcoma, lymphosarcoma, and lifelong chronic health problems such as hypothyroidism, weight gain, incontinence, and chronic UTIs. A golden that is castrated later will not be as tall as those castrated before two years, which also significantly increases their chance of living a longer life. Once spayed or neutered, your dog will have no chance of ovarian, uterine and testicular cancer.

Responsible Ownership

At the same time, there is a difference between leaving a dog intact and breeding it. Simply because you have not yet neutered it does not mean your dog should be bred. Therefore, it is your responsibility to manage your intact dog carefully to ensure no unwanted pregnancies occur. Sexual maturity, or puberty, occurs between 6-10 months for males and at their first heat cycle, usually 10-12 months for many bitches.

Bitches should be kept away from intact males during the twenty-one days of their semi-annual season and for a few days afterwards until you know they are not receptive to male dogs. This does not mean that they must remain in the house but you should be sure to take them to places where you know there are no loose, intact males.

Males should be taught a strong recall and good manners around females and males alike. Like all of our dogs, they should not be allowed to run loose without supervision.

Spay-Neuter Alternatives: Ovary-Sparing Spay and Vasectomies

There are now alternatives in the US and Canada to traditional spays and neuters. They are the ovary-sparing spay (OSS) and vasectomies. These methods preserve the dog's hormones while ensuring they cannot reproduce.

We did our first OSS in 2014 and have done several more since then. We have been very happy with the outcomes. The bitches' bodies did not change in any way. They were able to eat her normal rations without gaining weight and their coats did not become "spay coats."

Bitches that have undergone an OSS do come in season, although they tend to bleed much less, if at all. However, intact males know they are in season so OSSs aren't of much benefit for bitches who live with unneutered males. You also need to know the regulations for each sport

organization with regards to showing OSS bitches. Vasectomized males are nearly identical to intact males except they cannot get a bitch pregnant.

If you are interested in an OSS or vasectomy or finding an experienced veterinarian for one of these surgeries, check out:

- Parsemus Group <https://www.parsemus.org/projects/ovary-sparing-spay/>
- Facebook group <https://www.facebook.com/groups/alternativealteringinfo/>

Spaying-Neutering References

I keep an Avidog page updated with research on spaying and neutering. Check it out [here](#).

Below are some of the important research papers you should consider before deciding when to spay or neuter your dog.

Farhoody, Parvene, I Mallawaarachchi, et al. (2019) Aggression toward familiar people, strangers, and conspecifics in gonadectomized and intact dogs. This large, comprehensive study demonstrates that, there is no evidence that gonadectomy at any age alters aggressive behavior toward familiar people or dogs, but there is a minimal increase in aggression toward strangers. *Frontiers in Veterinary Science*.

Farhoody, Parvene and M. Christine Zink. Behavioral and Physical Effects of Spaying and Neutering Domestic Dogs (*Canis familiaris*). Summary of findings detailed in a master's thesis submitted to and accepted by Hunter College, May 2010.

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Holland, C.C. Still, Spay or Neuter, *The Whole Dog Journal* (Vol 7, No. 9, September 2004)

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Sanborn, M.S., Laura J. Long-Term Health Risks and Benefits Associated with Spay/Neuter in Dogs, Laura J. Sanborn, M.S., May 14, 2007.

<http://www.naiaonline.org/pdfs/LongTermHealthEffectsOfSpayNeuterInDogs.pdf>

Sundburg, CR, JM Belanger, et al. 2016. Gonadectomy effects on the risk of immune disorders in the dog: a retrospective study. *BMC Veterinary Research*, Dec 2016.

<https://bmcvetres.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12917-016-0911-5>

Stewart, P and T. L. Entriken. 2019. Research update: Earlier age at spay/neuter a risk factor in obesity and orthopedic injuries. DVM 360 <http://veterinaryteam.dvm360.com/research-update-earlier-age-spayneuter-risk-factor-obesity-and-orthopedic-injuries>

Torres de la Riva G, Hart BL, Farver TB, Oberbauer AM, Messam LLM, et al. (2013) Neutering Dogs: Effects on Joint Disorders and Cancers in Golden Retrievers. *PLoS ONE* 8(2): e55937.

doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0055937 <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0055937>

Waters DJ, Kengeri SS, Clever B, et al: "Exploring the mechanisms of sex differences in longevity: lifetime ovary exposure and exceptional longevity in dogs." *Aging Cell*, October 26, 2009 <http://www.gpmcf.org/PDFs/Aging%20Cell.pdf>

Zink, M. Christine, "Early Spay-Neuter Considerations for the Canine Athlete: One Veterinarian's Opinion" 2005 (revised 2013) www.caninesports.com/uploads/1/5/3/1/15319800/spay_neuter_considerations_2013.pdf

Chapter 6: Puppy Medical Issues

This chapter discusses health issues your puppy may experience while it is maturing. All are puppy diseases that will eventually resolve but it is best to know how you may need to handle them in case they arise.

Puppy Heart Murmurs

Your puppy may be identified as having a low-grade (1 or 2 on a 6-point scale), intermittent, early systolic heart murmur. These are very common in growing puppies and for the vast majority of puppy murmurs are innocent murmurs that are developmental rather than indicative of disease. Unless we have already spoken to you, the vet believed this was the case for your puppy. There is nothing you need to do in terms of caring for your pup; these murmurs usually disappear by 16 weeks and certainly no later than 6 months of age. However, you should have your veterinarian listen to your puppy's heart on each visit. Note when your veterinarian can no longer hear the murmur and let us know.

If your puppy has a mid-grade murmur (3 on a 6-point scale) that has innocent murmur characteristics and if the murmur is still audible at 6 months of age, you will need to have it seen by a veterinary cardiologist between six and twelve months of age. Echocardiograms are done in the cardiologist's office and do not require sedation, surgery or an overnight stay. My cardiologist does not even shave the dogs, although some do. Some cardiologists will even let you remain with your dog during the echo to help keep your dog calm and so you can see your dog's heart. If you are interested, ask if you can be present during the procedure.

Pyoderma

Since their bellies are so low to the ground, puppies often develop puppy pyoderma, a skin infection on the belly caused by *Staphylococcus* or other common bacteria. Pyoderma is evidenced by pimple-like swellings, usually on the belly or inside the hind legs. If the infection is minor and the skin is dry, simply treat with **Clearasil**. If that does not work, get a chlorhexidine dog shampoo from your vet or online (we use [Duoxo Chlorhexidine](#)) and treat your pup every two to three days. After lathering, leave the shampoo on for 5-10 minutes before rinsing. However, if the infection appears as open sores, take your puppy in to your vet for oral antibiotics.

Urinary Tract Infections

Both male and female puppies often develop mild urinary tract infections (UTIs) while they are young, although they are more common in girls. Symptoms include a marked inability to hold their urine, frequent urination, and straining. You may even see blood in the urine and your puppy may run a fever. It may even become lethargic, refraining from playing or normal activities.

Prevention is ideal in the case of urinary problems in puppies. Begin by keeping the hair around your puppy's genitals trimmed short. Then wash the genital area with dilute [Nolvasan](#) every few days, wipe the genital region with an anti-bacterial wipe once or twice a day, and give your pup a cranberry supplement in its food daily. Cranberry has been shown to help dogs (and humans) resist bladder infections so you can help your puppy stay healthy with regular supplementation with cranberry. The cranberry powders that we use and recommend are [Cranimals Organic Cranberry supplement](#) or [NaturVet Cranberry Relief](#). Alternatively, you can purchase human cranberry supplement in your local grocery or health food stores but look for tablets or capsules with less than 300 mg cranberry extract, the daily dose for pups. The risk of UTIs dramatically declines as the pup's system matures (and they get further from the ground) so they only need this for the first 9-12 months.

If despite your best efforts, your puppy develops a urinary tract infection (UTI), take it in to your vet for treatment. Your vet should collect a urinalysis and do an analysis, and culture and sensitivity (C & S) on the urine to see which antibiotics will be most effective. He may start your pup on antibiotics before the C & S is back from the lab. Ask the vet to avoid using Primor, a sulfa antibiotic that has caused problems for our dogs in the past, or fluoroquinolone antibiotics. Once your pup is an adult, fluoroquinolones might be most effective for persistent UTIs but they are not safe for use in growing dogs.

We have found that a long run of Clavamox, twice daily for three weeks, works best for our pups but discuss treatment with your vet. Give the last dose as the puppy goes into its crate for the night so the antibiotic is in the system all night. You can also give Vitamin C to acidify the urine, making it less conducive to bacteria. Continue to trim the hair around the genitals to limit wicking of bacteria from the ground.

Unless your vet has done a C&S, do not accept Keflex or Amoxi alone and do not treat for less than three weeks. Remember, the bladder is at the end of the line so it takes a strong and lengthy dose of antibiotics to get rid of an infection. Maturity helps!

Puppy Vaginitis

Many female pups develop vaginal discharge before their first season. Although called vaginitis, it is usually **not an actual infection**. It appears as clear or creamy vaginal discharge, sticky or dirty hair around their vulva and licking of the area. In fact, this discharge is thought to be normal in puppy bitches.

Unless the puppy becomes ill, this disorder is usually self-limiting, and, in its typical form, should not be treated with medication. Puppies have immature immune systems and unnecessary treatment with antibiotics may result in sensitivities to medications that will not occur if given later in life.

The preventive care for avoiding puppy vaginitis is similar to that for bladder infections: keep the hair around your pup's genitals trimmed short, wash the genital area with [Nolvasan](#) every

few days and wipe the genital region with an anti-bacterial wipe once or twice a day. Puppy vaginitis usually goes away during the pup's first heat cycle.

However, if your pup's normal activities are being affected by the vaginitis or if she develops a fever, take her to your vet for an evaluation. Be assured, the vast majority of cases of puppy vaginitis will go away when she comes in season.

Ear Infections

Dogs with drop ears, like golden retrievers, are prone to ear infections, especially if they swim a lot or live in humid climates. We seek to breed dogs who do not have chronic ear infections but your dog's ear health will depend upon how much hair grows in and around their ear, the weather in your area and how much swimming your dog does.

Again, prevention is the best cure for ear infections. Your goal should be to avoid regular treatment with antibiotics and steroids. This requires a minimum of weekly examination and cleaning. Every few weeks, trim the hair inside and beneath your dog's ears so air can get in and around the canals. During periods when your dog is swimming regularly or the weather is humid, we recommend semi-weekly cleaning and treatment with one of the following treatments.

Respond as soon as you see redness, swelling, odor and gobs of black gunk in your dog's ears. Remember, ear infections can infect just one ear so check both and respond even if there are symptoms in just one ear.

Homemade Ear Treatment (This is our favorite during swimming season)

Ingredients:

- Monistat
- Neosporin
- Cortaid

Directions: Get tubes of the same size (I use 2-oz tubes). Mix all three together until well mixed. Put a pea-sized glob in your dog's ear and massage until it is in the ear canal. The ointment is well tolerated by dogs, even those with sore ears. Use twice daily for ongoing infections; once a week for maintenance.

Vinegar-Alcohol Ear Treatment

Ingredients:

- Isopropyl alcohol
- Distilled or apple cider vinegar

Directions: Mix equal parts Isopropyl alcohol and either distilled white vinegar or apple cider vinegar. Mix together in a bottle with a nozzle and shake well.

How to Treat Problem Ears

Evaluate the condition of your dog's ears before treating. If one or both ears are very inflamed and sore:

- Do not attempt to pull hair or clean out ear at all. Just flush and then wait until inflammation has subsided, which will be about two days.
- Warm the solution and shake the bottle each time before using.
- Flood the ear with solution (gently squirt bottle).
- Massage gently to the count of 60, wipe away the excess with a tissue.

On first treatment: flood the ear twice, wipe with a tissue, and leave alone without massage. The dog will shake out the excess, which can be wiped with a tissue.

Be gentle in your treatment. Sore ears can be very painful. You do not want your dog to resist treatment in the future so go slowly and gently. And, of course, always follow treatment with a good treat.

The schedule of treatment is as follows:

- Treat 2x per day for the first week to two weeks, depending upon severity of ears.
- After the 2nd or 3rd day you can clean out the ear with a Q-tip or cotton balls. Caution: when using a Q-tip, only insert it as far into the ear canal as you can actually see. Use care to prevent the gunk from falling down into the ear canal.
- Treat 1x per day for the next 1-2 weeks.
- Treat 1x per month (or even less frequently, depending on the dog).

If an infection seems to be remaining in the treated ear after the above course of treatment, there may also be some Pseudomonas bacteria in the site. This can be eradicated by using a gentle flush of raw apple cider vinegar and water (warmed). Use 2 Tablespoons of vinegar to one cup of water, twice per week.

Chapter 7: Pet Insurance

Avidog **strongly encourages** all dog owners to get accident and illness insurance coverage for their dogs. It used to be that we could self-insure by putting money away each month for future veterinary costs. However, the cost of veterinary care has now made pet insurance quite reasonable as long as you get “accident and illness” coverage not “routine care.”

The companies I recommend include:

Pets Best www.petsbest.com

Pet Plan www.gopetplan.com/

Trupanion trupanion.com/

Embrace www.embracepetinsurance.com/

Healthy Paws www.healthypawspetinsurance.com/

Nationwide (if you are going to breed your bitch, Nationwide’s Whole Pet with Wellness pays for nearly all breeding costs

https://www.petinsurance.com/bestpetinsuranceever_fb.aspx

You should pay less than \$45/month for your puppy’s initial coverage, if you select accident and illness, not well care. I paid \$29/month for 4-year old Glee with \$100 deductible and \$2500 max coverage per event through Pet’s Best. They have paid each time I’ve submitted a claim, including \$2500 when Glee was injured as a puppy. That’s 7-years’ worth of premiums paid out by Pet’s Best before she was 1-year old!

In the last few years, some Avidog owners have had some serious injuries (back surgery from agility) and accidents (two hit-by-cars, including one while on leash) that cost many thousands of dollars. Pet insurance either did or would have helped. Don’t delay! Even puppies can get hurt!

Many people get caught up trying to find the “best” company. It’s better to pick one of the above since all are highly ranked in customer satisfaction and try them out. If you aren’t totally satisfied, switch but at least you’ll have some coverage.

SECTION 2: CARE AND FEEDING

Chapter 8: Feeding

Puppy Feeding Protocol

Your puppy has been raised on mama's milk, K9 Kraving Raw Diet and Farmina's N&D Ancestral Grain kibble for treats. Daily supplements have included Canine ProBalance Canine Wellness, Geneflora, and Grizzly Wild Salmon Oil.

We delayed feeding solid food until the puppies were four weeks old so they had the best possible nutritional foundation from their dam. The pups are still nursing at this point, although milk plays only a minor role in her daily nutrition and is providing more emotional support than anything.

Once the pups turned four weeks, they took immediately to ground raw food (bones, meat, organs and vegetables). Since then, we have introduced the pups to an array of protein sources over the past four weeks to help inoculate her against food allergies. The protein sources they have eaten include:

Chicken	Venison
Turkey	Pork
Lamb	Eggs
Beef	Mackerel
Buffalo	Salmon
Goat	Green tripe

What, When and How Much to Feed Your Puppy

You should begin feeding the following diet once you get your pup home. Aside from the probiotic, supplements can be given 6 days a week to give your dog's body time to clear out any excess vitamins on the seventh day.

16 oz raw or cooked diet or 2 cups super-premium ADULT freeze-dried, canned or kibbled diet (NOT grain-free!) divided over three meals per day

½ scoop [ProBalance](#), per day (we will send you home with this)

1 teaspoon [Grizzly wild salmon oil](#) per day

1 scoop Geneflora or other probiotic, per day. If Geneflora is not available, we recommend [Fortiflora](#) daily.

1 scoop [Naturvet Cranberry Relief](#), per day

Be sure to warm the raw food to at least room temperature and preferably 100°F for the first week or so. That will make it more palatable and will bring out the odors of the food to encourage your pup to eat.

The first week your pup is home with you, it may not eat very well. Do not worry if it skips a few meals. If that happens:

- 1) reduce the amount you are feeding,
- 2) warm the food or even give it a quick sauté,
- 3) feed your pup in the crate to avoid distractions.
- 4) give the pup only 10 minutes to eat. If it does not finish the food, put the food in the refrigerator and try again next mealtime.
- 5) Do not leave food down. Do not beg your puppy to eat. Do not hand feed. Do not add goodies to it after you have put it down. Do not try giving the food in an hour or so. All of these behaviors will encourage your pup to become picky about food.

You should feed your pup three times a day, breakfast between 6 and 9 AM, lunch between noon and 2 PM, and dinner between 6 and 8 PM. I highly recommend you weigh or measure (1 cup of raw food equals 8 oz) your pup's food for each meal to ensure you know how much you are feeding. If you wish to transition to another super-premium adult dog food, we have provided enough food for you to do so over a number of days. Start with 25% new food to 75% raw food. Gradually increase the amount of the new food you feed each day until your pup is eating all new food. Watch for loose stools during this period; if they get soft, slow down the transition.

Your pup should eat three meals a day until 5 or 6 months of age when you can cut back to twice a day feedings. You should feed twice a day for the rest of your dog's life.

Although the amount of food that puppies need varies based on their growth and activity (3.5% to 10% of their body weight per day), **most pups will eat 12-18 ounces a day till they are four to five months of age**. Do not increase your pup's food amount too quickly and do not increase it simply because your pup is older. Instead, check your pup's weight each day by running your fingers over its ribs to ensure you can feel each individual rib. Adjust the food amount in response to what you feel. If you cannot feel individual ribs, reduce the daily ration by 25%. If the ribs are visible, increase food by 10%. Keep your pup slightly underweight until fully grown to reduce the possibility of orthopedic problems. Keeping your dog slightly underweight as an adult may extend its life by nearly two years.

Avidog Adult Dog Feeding Protocol

To give you an idea of what to feed your dog after a year of age, here is our food and supplement protocol for our adult dogs. We feed two meals a day and vary whether we feed whole bone or ground raw mixes. We also vary the protein sources that we feed every few days. They include chicken, turkey, beef, lamb, pork, beef tripe, rabbit and eggs.

Breakfast

4-16 oz ground commercial raw food OR
~2 cups All-Life Stages NOT Grain-free
premium kibble (amount depends upon
the dog's metabolism and exercise level)

1 heaping scoop [ProBalance Canine
Wellness*](#)

1 scoop [GeneFlora](#) or [Fortiflora](#)

2 T coconut oil

1-2 [Ocu-Glo](#)

Dinner

1 chicken frame
OR

3 duck necks
OR

4-16 oz ground commercial raw food
OR

~2 cups All-Life Stages NOT Grain-free
premium kibble (amount depends upon the
dog's metabolism and exercise level)

1 Tablespoon [Grizzly salmon oil*](#)

[Arthra-Pro*](#) or 1-2 [Dasuguin Advanced](#) tablet,
based on weight

1 Tablespoon blueberries, fresh, dried or
frozen (no sweetener)

1 [Ocu-Glo](#)

We use other supplements for specific ailments or conditions in our dogs but this is the foundation of their nutrition.

How to Feed Your Dog

Before we talk about WHAT to feed your dog, let's go over HOW to feed. First, your dog should be fed regular meals during the day and **not** have free access to food all the time. This latter feeding approach is called free feeding and research has shown that it contributes to orthopedic problems, obesity and decreased longevity. You should give your dog 10 minutes to finish meals. If food remains after that time, remove it until the next meal.

Second, your dog should be fed the amount appropriate for its body and physiology, not the amounts written on the dog food bag, can or what the other dogs in the household eat. Most dogs need far less food than either we (or they) think they need. Want to know more about determining how much to feed your dog? Dr. Chris Zink and I have created <https://www.avidogzink.com/canine-fitness/>, a physical conditioning program for dogs that includes a regular evaluation of your dog's body condition, as well as fitness.

Third, teach your dog to wait politely for you to prepare meals, set the bowl down, and be released to its meal. This means no barking, jumping or other impatient behaviors.

Fourth, your dog should be trained to eat when and where you ask. This skill is especially important when your dog is ill or kenneled; it can literally save its life. Feed your puppy in each room in your house, the crate, the car, outside and more.

When to Feed Your Dog

Until your dog is 4-6 months old, feed three times a day. After that, most nutritionists now recommend feeding dogs twice a day, morning and evening. This is considered better than a single daily meal and more likely to avoid the life-threatening health condition called bloat or torsion.

While you are housebreaking your puppy, it is best to stick to a regular feeding schedule so you know when your puppy is going to need to eliminate. However, once your dog is housebroken, I recommend you vary your feeding times. Dogs have very accurate internal clocks so if they are fed at the same time every day, they will become anxious if you miss that time due to an emergency. Anxiety can be dangerous in dogs, causing them to act out and increasing the risk of bloat.

We feed between 6 and 9 in the morning and between 6 and 9 in the evening. Our dogs know not to pester us about meals. If they do, we leave the room they are in, moving further away from the kitchen. Even visiting dogs learn to relax and be calm about mealtime within a few days.

Although very cute in puppies, it is particularly important to not respond to vocalizations from your dog around mealtime. Do not even look at your dog and certainly do not talk to your dog if it barks to get you to feed it. Instead, each time it barks, move further away from its food. If you need to go lock yourself in another room, do so. Only come out or move toward the food when your dog is quiet for more than five minutes. If it starts barking again when you begin food preparation, immediately leave the area. Teach your dog that being polite ensures it gets fed while being demanding does not.

What to Feed Your Dog

Now, what should you feed your dog? There is no easy answer to that question since there is no “best” food for every dog and dog owner. Every dog is an individual with a unique physiology and metabolism. So, while there may be similarities between dogs of similar age, breed, or condition, each individual dog has a unique physiology and metabolism.

Like people, each dog’s personal preferences and sensitivities are unique, too. Some dogs will not touch food that contains beef, while others turn up their noses at the smell of fish oil. More importantly, there are dogs who vomit and suffer from diarrhea if they eat corn and those who cannot stop itching for a month after consuming a meal that contained chicken. In addition, the dog’s age, weight, and activity level affect what and how much it should be fed.

There has been a revolution in dog foods over the past 10 years so you will be faced with many contradictory beliefs if you start investigating dog foods. For the most part, everyone agrees that dogs fed high quality foods will be healthier, have smaller stools (requiring less clean up), and have more energy. A few sturdy dogs can thrive on the cheapest supermarket foods. However, many dogs respond to such fare with poor coats and condition, gas, bloating, diarrhea, vomiting, or allergic itching.

However, there are some general guidelines regarding feeding dogs:

- There is little distinction between good “people food” and good “dog food” with a few exceptions. Fresh meats, steamed vegetables, fruits, and oils are as good for dogs as they are for people. The key exceptions are **cooked bones, chocolate, onions, raisins, grapes and raw white potatoes**—none of which you should ever feed your dog. Feeding your dog meat in its dish will not teach it to beg for your hamburger (but feeding pieces of that hamburger at the table will).
- Fresh is best. The fresher and least processed your dog’s food is, the better.
- Dogs are carnivores and thus need an Atkins-like diet with high quantities of protein, moderate amounts of fat, and low amounts of carbohydrates in their diet. Unlike humans, dogs use fats for energy so low-fat diets are bad for dogs, even older or fat ones.
- Meat is not only good, it is essential. Dogs’ carnivorous nature demands high quantities of meat/poultry/fish protein, fat and bone to be healthy. They need small amounts of vegetable matter. Most dogs have no physiological need for grains or cereals (corn, wheat, soy, millet, oats, barley, etc.), or legumes (peas, garbanzo beans, alfalfa, etc.).
- All dogs should be on a minimum of a daily general vitamin-mineral supplement. Other important supplements include fish oil, probiotics, and joint supplements for dogs with or prone to arthritis.

Whatever you choose to feed your dog, we recommend you rotate both the manufacturer and protein sources you use. This reduces your dependence on the manufacturer’s quality control and ethics, while providing your dog an array of amino acids and micronutrients. Select several foods for your dog and choose between them every bag or two. If you feed kibble, add fresh or raw foods several times a week.

There are three main types of dog food that are commonly fed to US pets:

- Natural foods, either raw or cooked
- Dry or kibbled foods
- Canned foods

Raw/freeze-dried or homemade diets are relatively new and are based on the philosophy that dogs are carnivores, best suited to eat primarily meat (which also includes poultry and fish) diets. These diets are made from fresh meat/bone mixes with small amounts of fresh or frozen vegetables, organs and sometimes, grains. Some are complete diets and others require

supplementation appropriate to the individual dog. These diets are available in frozen or freeze-dried forms and are fed raw or cooked. Some owners make their own but most purchase one of the commercial products on the list.

Dry foods or kibble are the most processed and thus least healthy of the three types of food but are the most common dog food in the US. They are available in a wide range of qualities and prices. Most are complete diets but we recommend you add a general vitamin-mineral supplement since the manufacturing process reduces the quality and availability of many nutrients.

In order for a food to be “kibbled,” it must consist of around 50% carbohydrates. Those carbs are usually grains or legumes, foodstuffs that are not natural to dogs. Recently, potato- and legume-laden kibbles have been suspected in many cases of taurine-deficient dilated cardiomyopathy, a serious and sometimes fatal heart disease. In July 2019, the US [Food and Drug Administration](#) (FDA) issued a [warning](#) about legumes in dog foods. [Dr. Josh Stern](#) and others at the University of California at Davis are [investigating this issue](#). See Appendix E for more information. Because of these concerns, we highly recommend you avoid foods manufactured by Champion Foods, specifically Acana Singles. Zignature foods have also caused DCM but unlike Champion, they have chosen to add taurine to their foods.

Canned foods lie in between natural foods and kibble in terms of the amount of processing they have undergone. High quality canned foods are better for your dog than almost all kibbles. Unfortunately, canned foods are expensive and so are best fed to small dogs.

Mixing types food types is acceptable and does not cause problems for dogs. Yet most will agree that even a little fresh food is better than none so adding fresh vegetables to kibble is good for your dog.

Dog Food/Feeding Bibliography

[*Natural Nutrition for Dogs and Cats The Ultimate Pet Diet*](#), by Kymythy R. Schultze, C.C.N., A.H.I.

[*K9 Kitchen: Your Dogs' Diet, The Truth Behind The Hype*](#), by Monica Segal

[*Raw Meaty Bones Promote Health*](#), by Tom Lonsdale

[*Switching to Raw*](#), by Sue Johnson

[The Whole Dog Journal](#) approved dog food list

Food Manufacturers That We Do NOT Recommend

These manufacturers are subsidiaries of larger conglomerates that do not specialize in dog foods. Although they may have made higher quality products in the past, they no longer specialize in quality dog foods with human-grade ingredients made in the United States. Many

foods are made in China, the source of the largest dog food recall which caused the death of thousands of dogs.

- Acana
- Zignature
- Science Diet
- Eukanuba
- Hills
- Pedigree
- Purina (including ONE, ProPlan, Beneful)
- Alpo
- Iams
- Nutro

Supplements

Because the vitamins and minerals in our nation's food stuffs have declined over past decades, even the best quality foods no longer contain the nutrients that they used to. To ensure your pup is getting all of the nutrients it needs, give a general vitamin-mineral supplement six days a week. We have tried many supplements over the years and have settled on and highly recommend [AVN ProBalance Canine](#) for your dog's lifetime. Your pup should get ½ scoop right now and then follow the dosing on the package.

Goldens are predisposed to a number of cancers. In addition to high quality food, other nutrients you can use to help your dog avoid cancer are essential fatty acids, particularly Omega 3s. According to Dr. Greg Ogilvie, an important essential fatty acid called docosahexaenoic acid (DHA) has chemo-preventative properties. One of the best sources of DHA is wild salmon oil, hence our recommendation of daily salmon oil. We recommend and use [Grizzly Wild Salmon Oil](#), having read the reports on its quality and purity. Start at 1 pump per day, increasing as your pup grows until you are up to 3 pumps per day.

Probiotics have been shown to boost immunity, including boosting vaccine titers, as well as aiding in digestion. We recommend all of our dogs stay on [Geneflora](#), [Fortiflora](#), or other quality dog probiotic for life. Geneflora contains a bacterium that is highly recommended for people and dogs because it does not require refrigeration and encysts so it can survive the acid in a dog's gut. Most human probiotics and those in yogurt cannot survive intact to a dog's small intestine. Look for products shown to work for dogs or just stick with Geneflora.

We highly recommend you keep your pup on [cranberry](#) during its first 6 months to avoid or limit urinary tract infections (UTIs), a common puppy ailment for both sexes although female pups get them with more frequency than males. According to the National Institute of Health (NIH), cranberry extract reduces the frequency of UTIs in people. Many dog owners have found similar results. Use cranberry as a preventative not a treatment if your puppy develops a UTI.

Since dogs of our breeding, like other North American goldens, are at risk for pigmentary uveitis, we recommend a vision supplement, [Ocu-Glo Rx](#), beginning at six months of age. We don't know that this will enable dogs to avoid PU but research has shown that affected dogs on OcuGlo do not progress.

We give **joint supplements** to our young performance dogs from four months of age on. Any of the good quality joint products are appropriate. We use [Dasuquin Advanced](#) or [ArthraPro](#), but also trust the Synovi products, [Glycoflex](#), etc.

Recreational Bones

Your pup should have regular access to recreational bones, such as beef or buffalo ribs, marrow or knuckle bones. Recreational bones are not meant to be eaten fully but are for chewing. Your pup has enjoyed marrow bones with the litter.

Training Treats

We have used primarily Fresh Pet Select cat food and Farmina's N&D Ancestral Grain Canine Codfish & Orange kibble as training treats for your pup. You can continue this practice for a short while but as your pup realizes how interesting the rest of the world is, you will need to increase the value and variety of your treats. We encourage you to use minimally processed treats with no preservatives or additives (including "natural smoke flavoring"). Some of the treats that we use are string cheese, all-natural turkey hot dogs, dried liver, dried fish, Zuke's Minis, Plato's treats, Real Meat Treats and Charlee Bears. We carry an array of all-natural treats so give us a call or drop us an email if you need some.

Chapter 9: Your Puppy's Weight, Body Condition and Fitness

Your Puppy's Weight and Condition

Your pup's present weight is annotated on its health certificate. Be ready, it is going to grow by leaps and bounds over the next year. You should seek to keep you pup's growth slow while ensuring it does not become too thin. The following chart gives you appropriate weights for your pup as it grows:

Age in weeks	Male	Female	Age in weeks	Male	Female
9-10			15-16		
11-12			17-19		
13-14			20-22		

<https://www.avidogzink.com/canine-fitness/> **Tissue Tent Test**

(<https://vimeo.com/263045357/dcadac218c>) gives you the ideal way to ensure your pup maintains an appropriate weight throughout its life. You want to be able to distinctly feel your pup's and adult dog's ribs while not easily feeling either hip bones or spine. Remember, this is good since recent research indicates that dogs kept slightly underweight live nearly two years longer than those kept at what had been considered a "normal" weight.

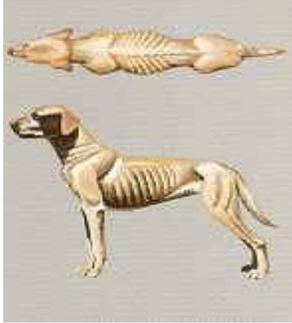
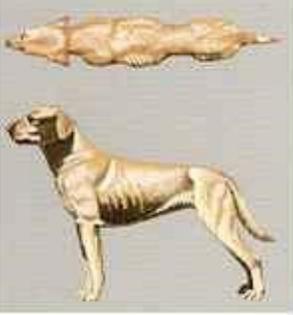
Weight is not the sole determinant of condition. You also want to regularly check your dog's muscle tone and size, ensuring you are providing enough of the right kinds of exercise to keep your dog in hard working condition. Despite many owners' beliefs, dogs should not put on weight or lose condition just because it is winter or hot out. There are many conditioning exercises you can do in your living room that will help keep your dog healthy and sound for a lifetime.

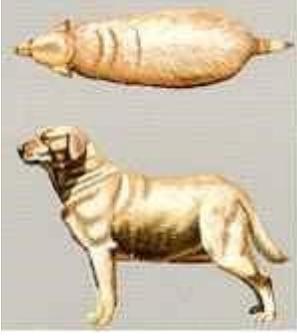
Start slowly to condition your pup, especially while it is growing. This litter has walked up to 45 minutes outside with us, albeit at their own pace. We meander while the pups (and dogs) run hither and yon. Until your pup is 15 months old, the majority of its exercise should be free running at its own pace, if at all possible. Repetitive exercise, such as jogging or biking on leash, early in their lives can cause orthopedic problems in young dogs. Leash walks are fine but rarely provide adequate exercise for healthy dogs like, golden retrievers.

We highly recommend *Fit for Life*, a lifetime fitness program for dogs that you can start as soon as you bring your puppy home. This program has been developed by Dr. Chris Zink and Gayle to use simple exercises to develop dogs' balance, proprioception, flexibility, and core, rear and front strength. Period to 6 months of age, you can do all but strength training with your puppy.

After 6 months, *Fit for Life* enables you to evaluate your dog's progress monthly and, based on this progress, provides you a tailored fitness program for your dog.

CANINE HEALTH BODY CONDITION SYSTEM™

	<p>1 -> EMACIATED Ribs, lumbar vertebrae, pelvic bones and all bony prominences evident from a distance. No discernible body fat. Obvious loss of muscle mass.</p> <p>2. VERY THIN Ribs, lumbar vertebrae and pelvic bones easily visible. No palpable fat. Some evidence of other bony prominence. Minimal loss of muscle mass.</p>	
	<p>3. <- THIN Ribs easily palpated and may be visible with no palpable fat. Tops of lumbar vertebrae visible. Pelvic bones becoming prominent. Obvious waist and abdominal tuck.</p> <p>4. IDEAL Ribs easily palpable, with minimal fat covering. Waist easily noted, viewed from above. Abdominal tuck evident.</p>	
	<p>5. -> AVERAGE Ribs palpable without excess fat covering. Waist observed behind ribs when viewed from above. Abdomen tucked up when viewed from side.</p> <p>6. OVERWEIGHT Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering. Waist is discernable viewed from above but is not prominent. Abdominal tuck apparent.</p> <p>7. <- HEAVY Ribs palpable with difficulty, heavy fat cover. Noticeable fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent or barely visible.</p>	

	<p>8. OBESE. Ribs not palpable under very heavy fat cover, or palpable only with significant pressure. Heavy fat deposits over lumbar area and base of tail. Waist absent. No abdominal tuck. Obvious abdominal distention may be present.</p> <p>9. -> GROSSLY OBESE. Massive fat deposits over thorax, spine and base of tail. Waist and abdominal tuck absent. Fat deposits on neck and limbs. Obvious abdominal distention.</p>	
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Chapter 10: Identification

Microchips

Your pup has been implanted with an **AKC Reunite ISO microchip**. This is a small microchip about the size of a grain of rice that was injected under the skin between the shoulder blades where it should stay for life. If your pup is ever lost or stolen, a special scanner can read the code in the chip. You should register this information, as well as your address and phone number, with the **AKC's Reunite program** or one of the other online registries so anyone finding the dog can contact them and reunite you and your dog.

You should also have your vet scan your puppy's microchip during your first visit and then at your pup's annual visits to ensure the microchip is still working and has not migrated from between its shoulder blades. If you want to be extra careful, take your dog to your local dog control officer and shelters in your area to be sure that their scanners can read the chip.

Collars & Tags

There are times dogs can safely wear collars and times they should not. The greatest risk that collars present is when dogs are playing with each other. As you know, dogs love to grab each other by the neck or collar. In doing so, their jaws can get caught in the collar. This is an immediate emergency since as the dogs struggle to get apart, they can fight and/or strangle each other. Do not ever allow your dogs to play with collars on.

Slip collars--chain, nylon or prong—present another hazard. Even if you use one while training, don't ever leave it on your dog at any other time. Many dogs die each year in their struggle to free themselves when their choke collars get caught on something. For the same reason, we do not keep tags on our dogs since anything dangling from the collar just increases the risk of getting caught.

However, your dog should always wear a buckle collar while traveling or away from home. This collar should have your **cell phone number** on it, either embroidered or on a metal plate.

We recommend the following collars for contact information:

- AKC Reunite (www.akcreunite.org) --these collars have the AKC Reunite 1-800 phone number, your dog's microchip number and its name. You can order these when we register your puppy's microchip or through the AKC CAR website. These are good puppy collars but usually do not hold up well to teenage or adult dog activities.
- Orvis (<http://www.orvis.com/p/personalized-adjustable-dog-collar/9x3y>) -- make good quality flat, nylon collars that can be embroidered.
- Cabela's (www.cabelas.com) --make good quality flat, nylon collars that can be embroidered.

Chapter 11: Grooming

We have been grooming your pup regularly throughout puppyhood. You should continue teaching your pup to accept grooming immediately. You will need a **medium metal comb, pin brush, grooming shears, and pliers-type nail clippers**. Use treats, praise and gentle touch to teach it to accept short sessions (1-2 minutes) at the beginning.

To work on handling, touch your pup all over its body, gently pulling limbs, tail and ears this way and that. Touch all its toes and check its teeth. Give treats and praise as you go so it learns to associate this attention with positive things. It will make all the difference when you are trying to pull that burr out of its coat in a year or two. In particular, trim the nails and hair on your pup's feet and around its genitals every two weeks or so to keep it neat and tidy. Check teeth and ears for accumulated debris. Clean ears gently with a Q-tip or cotton balls.

Caring for Nails

Nail clipping should not be traumatic for puppies or owners. We have clipped or Dremeled your pup's nails every three days since birth. To continue this routine, start now by teaching your pup to accept you handling its feet. A couple of times each day focus on one foot. Hold it, pull gently, and check out the toes. Do not release the foot if your pup pulls away. Instead, use your voice to calm it but hold the foot firmly until it stops struggling. Then praise your pup for its tolerance. If it allows you to hold the foot, give a treat with lots of praise.

You should trim or grind every nail every week or two so start within a few days of getting your pup home. Once it is comfortable with those activities, start clipping the nails on one foot in a session. Don't try to do all the nails at once or you will teach your pup to hate the process. It's fine if you only do a nail or two in a session. Just do multiple sessions each week.

If your pup's nails are clear, clip or grind off the very tip of the nail, where you can see there is no blood vessel. If the nails are black, clip off the tip of the hooked end. Either way, if you keep up with it, nails are not difficult to do.

One of the reasons that dogs learn to hate having their nails done is dull blades on the clippers. When blades are old, they crush rather than cut the nail, causing the dog pain. Old dremel wheels increase the heat put out during the grinding process, also causing discomfort. Thus, make sure you are using sharp tools when doing nails.

[Dremel Micro Rotary Tool Kit with Light](#)

[Epica Nail Clippers](#)

Baths

Baths are another important activity to get your pup used to early on. You should give your pup a bath every two weeks while it is small just to get it accustomed to the process. You don't actually need to bathe you pup, just go through the motions of getting it wet, pretending to

apply shampoo, rinse, etc. Again, be sure to use lots treats and praise. I actually smear peanut butter on the edge of the sink or tub and let my pups spend time licking it off. The point of these baths is less to get your pup clean but rather to teach it to tolerate (few dogs I know actually like) baths.

When bathing, use warm water and a shampoo formulated for dogs. Wet your pup thoroughly. Start lathering from the **shoulders** and move backwards and down. Lather the neck last since water on the head and ears are most likely to make your pup shake, getting you all wet. Carefully wash its face with a washcloth so you will not get soap in its eyes. Be careful not to get water in its ears, either. Rinse well with more warm water and dry thoroughly. A variable power dog dryer or an electric hair dryer set on low or no heat will enable you to dry your pup down to the skin. Start very slowly with only a few seconds of blow drying, then towel dry. Gradually increase the blower time until your pup is comfortable being completely dried with the blower.

Chapter 12: Basic First Aid

You can handle many of your dog's preventive care, minor illnesses and injuries at home with a few easily obtained items. Below is our recommendation for items and over-the-counter medication that you should have on hand for your dog's medical care. Please show this list to your veterinarian during an early visit so you can get their guidance on the use and dosing of these medications.

One of the most important tasks you should learn is how to take your dog's temperature. There are ear thermometers on the market now although most of us still do it the old-fashioned way--rectally. If you are using any digital thermometer, ear or rectal, take it to your vet's and calibrate it with their thermometer. Normal body temperature for dogs is 100.5 to 102°F. Practice taking your pup's temperature, using this time to cuddle and give belly rubs and treats, so that during an emergency your dog will think nothing of it. Some dogs do best lying down for this process, others prefer to stand. Do what works for you and your dog.

We have also included an Emergency Information Sheet to keep in your car so your dog will be handled carefully and treated by a veterinarian in case you are incapacitated in a car accident (Appendix C, Emergency Information Sheet tab).

First Aid Tips

Always consult your veterinarian for your dog's health problems. See Appendix D for a list of first aid items and safe, over-the-counter medications to have on hand in your home and car.

Poison Control Hotline

If your dog ingests any chemical or medication, immediately contact the 24-hour Animal Poison Control hotline at **855-764-7661** or <http://www.petpoisonhelpline.com/>. Time is often of the essence so best to keep this number in your cell phone and posted next to your home phone.

Bug Bite or Bee Sting

If your dog's face begins to swell, immediately give it Benadryl at the dose in the Appendix D, even if you are going to the vet. Continue treatment for at least three days. The sooner you get Benadryl into your dog, the less swelling and edema will occur.

Car Sickness

Address car sickness in your puppy as soon as it appears! The sooner you resolve it, the easier it will be. None of the pups in this litter have been carsick so do your best to keep it that way.

Avoiding car sickness:

- Try not to drive winding or stop-and-go trips soon after meals. Better to not feed than to develop a car-sick pup.

- Take short trips to fun places. Do not make trips to the vet the only car trips your pup gets for its first few months. Go to parks, Home Depot or the bank on other days.
- Give your pup something to do in its crate to occupy its mind during trips—stuffed Kongs, marrow bones and bully straps all work wonders.
- Keep the temperature in the car quite cool so the pup is not uncomfortably warm and panting.
- Cover the puppy's crate if there is any evidence of car sickness.
- If your pup gets sick on a trip, review the hints above and try these options:
- Spray lavender in the car and crate before trip and at stops
- Spray [Adaptil](#) in the crate/car or put an [Adaptil collar](#) on your pup before trip and at stops
- Feed your dog a small piece of raw ginger or several ginger snaps 30 minutes before the trip and occasionally during the trip.
- Turn your dog's crate sideways.
- Cover the crate so the dog cannot see out.

Diarrhea

Soft stools are not uncommon in dogs when they are under stress, ate something they should not, or are ill. For animals that naturally scavenge for all manner of things, dogs' guts can be remarkably sensitive. Once things begin to go downhill, owners usually need to step in to get their dog's digestive system back on track; ignoring diarrhea rarely ends well.

There is a range of normal stool consistency in dogs, particularly those fed a raw diet, that range from hard, white stools that turn to powder in a week or so all the way what we call "soft-serve" since its consistency is similar to soft-serve ice cream. All of these are normal but when your dog's stool is soft and unformed like a cowpie or even watery, you need to treat it before dehydration sets in. This is particularly critical in puppies and seniors. Other characteristics of problem stools are an increase in stool volume, frequency, or urgency, possibly with frank (red) or dried (black) blood or mucous. We consider all of these latter problems as "diarrhea."

To treat diarrhea in your dog:

- **Fast your dog for 24 hours** (12 hours if it is a puppy less than 5 months of age) to rest its gut.
- Immediately treat with Imodium AD, Pepto-Bismol, [Animal Essentials Phytomucil](#) or slippery elm. Doses are in Appendix D.
- Continue your dog's normal probiotic at double the normal dosage but also add [Geneflora](#) or [Fortiflora](#) daily for seven days to your pup's food.
- Assess the consistency of the dog's stool following treatment.
- If the stool remains watery for 1 day in pups under 5 months of age or three days for older animals, make an appointment to see your veterinarian.

- If the stool begins to get firmer, continue with the following treatment.
- Re-introduce food slowly with small, frequent meals of very mild food such as boiled rice and chicken or boiled rice and hamburger. Ensure you drain all fat off the meat.
- Feed small meals initially.
- Begin mixing your dog's normal food back in after a few diarrhea-free days.

Getting Pills Down

If it is okay for your pet to eat, use these methods to teach and get your dog to take treats <https://vimeo.com/277981400/5a48ede38f>.

If your dog is not allowed or will not eat any food, ask your vet to teach you how to "pill" her. Be sure to follow pilling with lots of praise and petting.

Inducing Vomiting

Syringe or carefully pour 1-3 tablespoons of hydrogen peroxide into your dog's mouth every 10 minutes. Repeat up to 3 times.

Protecting Bandages

Dogs will often bother bandages, surgical sights, wounds or stitches, causing further problems. To stop this:

- Put a small sock over a foot problem.
- Use a t-shirt to cover problems on the dog's torso.
- Our favorite bandage or surgical site protectors are Katahdin Dog Jackets (<https://squareup.com/store/katahdin-mushing-supplies>). They are fabulous!
- Use a Kong Cloud, Bite Not or Bite-Free collar. If you must use an Elizabethan collar, clear ones tend to reduce dog's panic and apprehension.

Sharp Objects

If your dog eats sharp objects like glass, contact your vet immediately. If unable to get through to vet, do not induce vomiting.

Instead, feed your dog $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ loaf of white bread broken into pieces. The bread coats the object, helping it to move safely through the dog's system.

Or soak cotton balls in cream and feed to the dog: 1 or 2 for a small dog; 3-5 for a large dog. The cotton balls will catch the shards and help them pass through your dog's system. This is a medical emergency so contact your vet as soon as you can.

Skunk Deodorizer

Many Avidog dogs have tangled with skunks. If this happens to yours, DO NOT PUT WATER ON YOUR DOG'S COAT before using the following deodorizer. Water will cause the odor to bond with the hair so you will smell it for months. Instead, use the following:

Ingredients:

- 2 quarts fresh hydrogen peroxide (unopened bottle)
- 1/2 cup baking soda
- 2 teaspoons liquid dishwashing detergent

Instructions: Mix in an open container. Using gloves, apply to dog without applying water to the coat first. Leave on for 15 minutes before rinsing. Do not get in the dog's eyes, ears or mouth. Use a washcloth to apply carefully to face and muzzle. This must be mixed fresh each time and cannot be stored in a closed container.

Sliced Foot Pads

- [EMT Gel](#) or spray works well to hold the edges together.
- If you have nothing else, Super Glue will also work.
- Cover foot with a sock or bandage and limit exercise.
- However, if you are seeing 1 inch or more of the interior of the foot pad or any bones, ligaments or tendons, take your dog to your vet for stitches. Wounds should be stitched within 24 hours of the injury so do not delay.

Chapter 13: Introducing Your New Pup to Other Pets

Obviously, you want all your pets to get along. Thus, introduction of your newest family member to the others is critical. Take some time to properly introduce dogs, cats and other pets to your new puppy so they have a good initial impression of their newest family member.

Dogs

If your other pet is a dog, do the initial introduction outside, in an open, neutral area, ideally off of your property. We are happy to help you introduce your pup, if you have brought your other dog along.

Choose A Neutral Location: Introduce your dog to your new puppy in a neutral location so that your dog is less likely to view the newcomer as a territorial intruder. Each dog should be handled by a separate person. With both dogs on a leash, take them to an area with which neither is familiar, such as a park or a neighbor's yard. If you frequently walk your older dog in a park near your house, it may view that park as its territory, so choose another less familiar site.

The key to a good introduction is to have the dogs do something, ideally go for a walk. Pushing dogs together and standing around watching them tends to make some very uncomfortable and can result in anxiety and even fights. This is particularly true for adults and very small puppies. So, plan a short walk, even if it is just around the block.

Have one person hold the older dog on leash and the pup in your arms. Let the dog sniff the puppy while in your arms if it wants, but do not force it to interact with the pup. Don't worry, it knows the puppy is there. Quietly praise your older dog for being polite and/or curious. Once the older dog is satisfied, put the pup on the ground away from the dog and on leash, keeping the puppy from approaching the adult. There is no reason for the dogs to touch each other.

Head off on a walk with the dogs either walking parallel with neither dog able to touch the other, nor the puppy following the older dog. Allow the older dog to sniff the puppy, if it is normally good with puppies. Do not allow the puppy to run up to or jump on the adult. The goal isn't that they interact physically, only that they spend time getting accustomed to each other.

After 10 minutes or so, load the dog and pup in the car and head home. By the time you get home, the older dog will have figured out the puppy is coming along.

Do not use food during this initial introduction because one of them may become obsessive about or protective the food. Better to avoid temptation and instead use quiet praise and petting to reinforce your older dog for tolerating the puppy.

The vast majority of the time, the older dog ignores the puppy after an initial sniff. This is normal and is the ideal situation. Do not demand that the older dog pay attention to or engage with the puppy.

Be Aware of Body Postures: Watch carefully for body postures that indicate an aggressive response, including hair standing up on the dog's back, teeth-baring, deep growls, a stiff legged gait or a prolonged stare. If you see such postures, interrupt the interaction immediately by scooping up the puppy and getting the dog interested in something else.

Taking the Dogs Home: When you go home, let the puppy in the house first, allowing it time to investigate this exciting, new place. We firmly believe that puppies should be supervised and on leash from the beginning at home so you can show them appropriate behavior in the house. Give the pup a short tour and let it explore before putting it in a crate or x-pen in the house.

Now, bring the adult dog in and allow it to investigate the pup's smell in the house. The pup should be confined with a crate or x-pen most of the time, so start now. Be aware that restricted spaces such as hallways and doorways are more likely to cause aggressive interactions since the dogs are less able to give each other space. Praise the dog whenever the puppy is around. Spend some time with your older dog and tell it how wonderful it is for tolerating the youngster.

More Than One Dog: If you have more than one resident dog in your household, introduce the resident dogs to the new puppy one at a time. Two or more adult dogs may have a tendency to gang up on or simply run over the newcomer.

Use Positive Reinforcement: After the first meeting, you want your older dog to expect "good things" to happen when the puppy is around. Your older dog should get more treats, more praise and more play when the puppy is visible, even if contained.

Aggressive Dogs: If your dog is known to be aggressive or intolerant toward puppies, keep them physically apart until your pup is sturdier and has had the opportunity to meet other adult dogs with good temperaments. Very dogs are not fragile, but they are breakable.

You can do the neutral introduction described above but if you see any aggressive behavior, call the dog to you and break off the introduction. Just as you would not go out of your way to introduce children to felons, do not let your puppy know there are mean dogs in the world for a good while. Early attacks on pups have been shown to cause lifelong dog aggression and/or anxiety, so protect your puppy.

Dogs Are NOT Babysitters: Older dogs should not be seen as babysitters nor should they be forced to tolerate those puppy teeth constantly; puppies usually pester adult dogs unmercifully. Do not allow your puppy and dog to be unsupervised until your pup is four or five months old. Although your puppy has been raised with good-tempered dogs who have taught them some canine language, before the age of four months puppies are not good at recognizing subtle body postures from adult dogs signaling that they have had enough. Keep your puppy contained in an exercise pen, crate or powder room so that your older dog has time away from the new arrival.

Well-socialized adult dogs with good temperaments may set limits with puppies with a growl, snarl or snap-correction; it is important that you do not stop this. These behaviors are normal and not only should be allowed, they should be encouraged. Let your adult dog growl a warning or two, or even put the pup on its back. It may sound terrible but if no biting takes place, your dog is only teaching the pup some well-needed manners. However, you should step in quickly if the older dog grabs or bites the puppy.

Adult dogs that are not well-socialized or that have a history of fighting with other dogs, may attempt to set limits with more aggressive behaviors, which could traumatize or physically harm the puppy. It is better to delay the introduction than to cause lifetime problems for your pup.

A puppy should not be left alone with an adult dog until it is housebroken and the adult dog has shown you that the puppy is not in any danger. Be sure to give the adult dog some quiet time away from the puppy, and perhaps, some individual attention as described above.

You should also be cautious of rough play between an older dog and young puppy. As resilient as puppies are, they can be seriously hurt in a playtime accident. Most broken legs in puppies are caused by rough housing with older dogs. Remember, **puppies are not fragile but they are breakable.**

The Puppy Scream. A correction from an older dog is very likely to elicit the “puppy scream.” This sound is protective since most dogs will move away from a screaming puppy. If your pup was corrected for inappropriate behavior by an older dog, do NOT pick the pup up and calm it. Let the lesson sink in so that the pup learns polite canine interactions. In addition, do not correct the adult dog for teaching the lesson. All of you will be grateful that it did.

However, if the puppy was innocent but traumatized by something and you hear the Puppy Scream, pick it up and calm it until the screaming stops. This will reduce the chance that they will imprint on whatever frightened it. This is particularly important if it was a child, adult person or dog.

Feeding Multiple Dogs. Mealtime can be one of the times of highest anxiety in a multi-dog household. Start teaching appropriate meal manners right from the start. Our expectation is that dogs will not approach another dog’s bowl until that dog is done with its meal and moved away from its bowl. In addition, they will not stand near or stare at an eating dog. We teach this by physically restraining pups with leashes, crates or x-pens initially. Teach your puppy to sit while you put the bowl down, no matter how it is confined.

We have also found that providing each dog with a regular location for their meal helps maintain civility during mealtimes. Although we expect our dogs to eat anytime we request them to, they are usually fed in the same place and in the same order when we are home. You can begin these routines as soon as you get your puppy home.

Cats

Your puppy will need clear instruction from you about what is appropriate behavior around cats. Young puppies (younger than 3 months) are unlikely to harm an adult cat but won't inherently know how to read cat language. Cats deserve more respect than your puppy will naturally show. So, if you have cats at home, DO NOT just bring your new puppy inside and turn it loose to chase your cats. Instead, keep your puppy confined so that your cats can get accustomed to the new addition without having to interact. After time goes by, let them interact with your puppy on leash. If the cat runs from the puppy, the pup may try to chase the cat and in doing so, may get hurt. Correct the puppy with a pop on the leash and a "leave it" or whatever command you use. If the cat becomes frightened, start over and try again later.

Once your pup is old enough to have some freedom in the house, always ensure your cat can get away from the pup, either by jumping over a baby gate or getting onto a piece of furniture.

A word to the wise, there are few things more attractive to dogs than cat food and poop. Move the cat food up on a table or counter or put it in a room the puppy cannot access. Litter boxes will need to be well protected to keep inquisitive and hungry puppies out.

Other Pets

We recommend highly controlled interactions between puppies and other pets, from horses to gerbils. Many dogs are bred to have very high prey drive, which is triggered by the movements of prey animals, such as rabbits, ducks, hamsters, gerbils and pet birds. Some dogs will NEVER be trustworthy around such pets, although they can learn to tolerate their presence with human supervision. However, it is better to be safe than sorry; let them live happily apart.

Horse, goats and cows, can injure curious puppies. Although we encourage you to let your puppy see these animals, we do not recommend any free interaction between them until your puppy is older and has a good amount of obedience. It only takes one kick to damage a puppy for a lifetime.

Chapter 14: Kenneling

We recommend you schedule at least one overnight for your puppy at a high-quality boarding kennel or a friend's house between 6 and 9 months of age. Many pups will benefit from multiple visits of this sort. Although you may generally prefer to use other alternatives, such as pet sitters, when you go away, kenneling is often necessary during times of family crisis or natural disaster. Dogs that have never been introduced to a kennel or a night away from home without their owners are often traumatized during these difficult times. To avoid this, plan ahead and get your pup used to the idea that going to the kennel is fun.

To find a good boarding kennel, check the [International Boarding and Pet Services Association](#), get personal references and check with your vet. Pay the extra fees to have your pup played with separately and it should have a fine time.

SECTION 3: TRAINING AND SOCIALIZATION

Chapter 15: Using Adventure Walks and Life Experiences to Develop You Pup

You have a new puppy!! This is such an exciting time and you are no doubt ready to get started with your new family member. You already know that you need to start housetraining and socializing your puppy. But do you know about two other important developmental activities to do with your pup in his first four months of life?

Whether you want a competition dog, a hunting companion or a pleasant pet, what you do between now and your pup's 16-week birthday can make or break who he is for the rest of his life. Socialization, teaching manners and basic, work and sports training are probably all on your to-do list. But you have even more to do! We are going to recommend you add two more developmental categories to your list because they can actually increase the size and complexity of your dog's brain, making your pup smarter, more confident, more coordinated and safer (Coppinger, 2001). And these changes will last it for a lifetime!

These developmental activities take advantage of your puppy's sensitive period, the time in his life when his brain is most open to the world around him. The sensitive period runs from three to sixteen weeks. During this time, certain instincts turn on (and off) that we can use to fully develop our pups. In addition, puppy brains are keyed to developing an understanding of the world through experiences. Yes, we can train them but they learn best and the most from their own interactions with the world.

So, let's get started raising fabulous dogs through two fun activities:

- [Adventure Walks](#)

Adventure Walks

Adventure walks are off-leash rambles in the great outdoors. You can vary the length based on your pup's size and the weather. You can choose the place based on what you have available. Most of all you can have fun! But in doing so, you will do eight important things for your pup's body and brain.

- Develop proprioception, coordination and athleticism
- Reduce risk of orthopedic disease
- Stimulate all senses
- Improve problem-solving abilities
- Build self confidence
- Teach your pup to stay with you
- Teach your pup to take responsibility for knowing where you are
- Reduce his lifetime risk of getting lost

We have been using Adventure Walks for nearly 40 years to develop our puppies and those of our students. The results have been overwhelmingly favorable. Let us tell you more!

Proprioception, Coordination and Athleticism. First off, Adventure Walks will challenge his body in important ways as he traverses uneven terrain, clambers over logs and rocks, navigates ditches, wades through streams, and so on. As a result, his proprioception, coordination and athleticism will be improved.

This early physical development will result in your puppy inherently knowing where all parts of his body are. That may sound strange but many six-month old puppies do not know where their hind end is because they have never needed to. Walking on flat surfaces, like lawns and pavement, and being raised on kitchen floors, enable pups to go through life aware only of their front end. The back part just follows along like a caboose. But, if they must negotiate terrain that requires an awareness of all body parts, they will develop a high degree of proprioception, the brain's ability to sense the position, location, orientation and movement of the body and its parts.

Through these experiences, he will learn about physics and geometry. What goes up, comes back down. Walking along a hill is harder than walking up or down it. He will get stronger, as he learns to climb up and down, over and under. He will figure out that the fastest way to get to you isn't always a straight line if there is an impassable object between you.

Reduce Risk of Orthopedic Disease. In addition to these physical benefits, research has shown that off-leash exercise before 12 weeks of age significantly reduces the risk of canine hip dysplasia in adulthood (Krontveit, R, Nødtvedt A, et al., 2012). This isn't important for all breeds but for those prone to hip dysplasia, this is an important benefit.

Early physical challenges enable a pup's developing body to connect more normally. As you can see, a puppy isn't born with developed hip sockets. Instead, that important joint forms with use. And challenging use, not too hard but not too easy, helps ensure correct formation.



Sensory Stimulation. Experiences in the outdoors also stimulates all of a pup's senses with the richness of scents, sights, sounds, touches and even tastes. Your pup will smell all kinds of new odors, hear birds and planes, see all kinds of new sights, touch sticks, rocks and grass, and put many things in his mouth. These sensory experiences will develop his brain. learn about wildlife and receive a good education about the world around him.

Improved problem-solving skills and self-confidence. In addition to physical benefits, Adventure Walks can also strengthen a puppy's temperament and thinking skills. While on these walks, pups learn to solve their own problems in order to keep up with you. "How do I get

over that rock?” “How do I get through that stream?” Your job is to first make sure the problems are solvable by your pup and then give it time to figure it out. Sometimes that will be stressful but, in the end, if you allow the pup to work things through on its own, you will see it filled with pride. Self-confidence will grow, just by being given the chance to solve problems.

Staying with you and taking responsibility for knowing where you are. Although all of the above are important benefits of Adventure Walks, they are not the **most** important. Your primary goal in taking Adventure Walks with your puppy is to take advantage of, fine tune and then permanently embed your pup’s innate desire to stay with you. This desire is actually an **instinct** that appears once puppies begin to stray from their den, usually around five weeks, and shuts off by 16 weeks of age. Beginning by four months, your pup will begin to test his independence and will begin wandering away IF YOU HAVE NOT MADE YOUR PUP RESPONSIBLE FOR KNOWING WHERE YOU ARE. However, if you have instilled this responsibility in him, then for the rest of his life he will watch you rather than you watch him.

When most people walk their dogs, they worry constantly because they believe their dogs are unpredictable. If they don’t watch them, their dogs will be gone. By doing Adventure Walks with your puppy, you can turn the tables on him. He’ll now go through life thinking you are unpredictable so he must keep an eye on you or you will be gone. The perfect solution for making a dog want to stay with you!

Benefits of Adventure Walks

- Develop proprioception, coordination and athleticism
- Reduce risk of orthopedic issues
- Improve problem solving
- Build self confidence
- Stimulate sense
- Teach your pup to stay with you
- Teach your pup to take responsibility for knowing where you are
- Reduce lifetime risk of getting lost

Getting Started on Adventure Walks

Your first task is to find a number of safe outdoor areas where you can walk your puppy off leash. Ideally, you will find more than one place so you can provide new paths and environments for your pup. Novelty is critical to puppy development. If you take your pup to the same place every day, he will get far less out of it than if the two of you explore several different environments. If you simply cannot find more than one safe area, try traversing it in a different pattern each time.

Finding safe walking places. Safe places are those that are not near a busy road and in which there are no loose dogs or dangerous animals, such as alligators or wolves. Your own property or that of friends is ideal but many of our students have used nature preserves, national, state or provincial forests, farmer's fields, and beaches. Be creative. Ask your friends or co-workers for ideas. Always ask permission of private landowners and follow appropriate regulations.

If you can't find nearby land, then plan to do Adventure Walks once a week, likely on weekends when you can travel further. Yes, it will be a commitment but you only have to do them until your pup is 16 weeks of age so it doesn't go on for that long.

Pick a cool day or time of day, grab a few treats and your pup. Carry him to the start of a path. You can leave a collar on your pup but do not use a leash. Just put him down and head slowly off down a path or, even better, cross country. It is important that you walk away with your back to the pup since it is the combination of your back and movement that triggers his following. Your first walks will not be long, perhaps 10 or 15 minutes. As your pup builds stamina and strength, you can work your way up to 30- to 45-minute excursions.

Typically, a nine-week old pup will stay very close to you. He may actually get underfoot. Try not to step on him but shuffle into him if he gets in front of your feet. Polite dogs do not walk in front of each other and, I promise, if he got in front of his mother, she would run over him.

If he walks along beside you, you can praise him warmly initially but eventually, walk in companionable silence. Your goal is not that the pup remains in heel position, follow behind



you or even make eye contact with you; you simply want him to be aware of and responsive to your location. Don't confuse heeling with Adventure Walks. On these excursions, we want your pup to enjoy the outdoors and explore, while still keeping an eye on you.



If your pup whines, slow down so he can keep up more easily. Look for challenges and obstacles appropriate to his size and let him tackle logs, rocks, ditches, hills and streams without your assistance. If he is struggling with an obstacle that you are confident, he can do, keep walking slowly away, while always keeping an eye on him. Your movement will motivate him to solve his problem.

What to do when your pup gets distracted. Watch your pup closely. If he finds an interesting smell, keep walking. He should leave the smell and follow you. If he does not, you have your first teaching opportunity. Step into a hiding place, behind a tree or a rock. Peer out to watch your pup but do not say anything unless he panics and starts to bolt away from you. You want him to realize you are gone and to get concerned, even frightened.

When he starts to look for you, let him search. Watch whether he uses his eyes or nose. Does he panic immediately or does he try to solve this problem? If he gets panic-stricken or heads the wrong way, make a noise to attract his attention. Cough, snort, chirp, cluck. Be loud enough that he can hear you. When he finds you, step out of your hiding place, hug him close and tell him how worried you were that he was missing. Remember, dogs buy into drama so be dramatic! Act as if you are really frightened because he was "lost." This is his first lesson--unless you keep an eye on these humans, they disappear on you.

Most importantly, **DO NOT FEED HIM!** When your pup gets "lost," he gets a little stressed. When he finds you, we want YOU to be the relief to his stress. If instead you feed him, the food will relieve his stress. This powerful bonding emotion will no longer be linked to you, it will be linked to food and you will have lost an important opportunity.

After this first experience, head on down the path without comment and gauge what he learned from this first experience. If he keeps very close to you and watches you constantly, this first lesson was a success. If he does not, then make him sweat a little longer next time he gets distracted.

Vary Your Adventures. Over the next days and weeks, you are going to look for new places to walk. This will ensure your pup gets a wide array of experiences but it will also ensure that your pup does not become overconfident that he knows the path so does not need to watch you. Look for increasingly challenging terrain, logs to climb over, rocks to scale, streams to ford. If you are going to hunt your pup or compete in hunt tests, teach your pup to tackle the cover rather than going around it by walking through cover of all types.

You will need to look for better hiding places as your pup's independence and self-confidence increases. Do not tell him when you are changing direction or taking a side path; it is his responsibility to pay attention to and follow you. Work harder and harder to hide from him and praise him warmly when he stays with you. This should become a game both of you love.

Incorporate recalls. During your Adventure Walks, you can and should call your pup occasionally. Do this when you are quite sure he will come. Be sure you have treats! Say his name and your recall word—come or here—and cheer him on as he flies to you. Take his collar, give him a treat, tell him how fabulous he is and then turn him loose to go play again.

If you do Adventure Walks regularly for at least four weeks, you will have a dog who knows he is responsible for keeping track of you rather than you keeping track of him. This will enable you to trust him off leash in safe places throughout his life. In addition, you will have developed his brain and body in many special ways.

Life Experiences

The second part of your pup's Extreme Development plan is going to be showing your pup what his life is going to entail. I am sure you have read or heard about socializing puppies, which most owners interpret as taking them to town a time or two. Your plan will go much further because your intent will be to introduce your pup to all of the activities that he will experience regularly in his life. And rather than just doing baby versions of these activities, you are going to immerse him in them so that your pup realizes that this is what he is going to do forever.

However, your challenge is to immerse your pup while still recognizing that he is a baby. A saying that we use is "We socialize them to anything while protecting them from everything." This balance is not difficult to achieve but you must constantly be aware of it.



Make a plan. Introducing your pup to Life Experiences takes some organization. To begin your plan, make a list of the activities you want your dog to be comfortable with during his lifetime and the venues that these activities will take him to.

Your plan starts with people. Even if you are introvert, your goal should be to introduce puppy to 100 *different* people before he is weeks old. Young people and old people, tall people and short people. Different races, religions and yes, even political persuasions. People in uniform, too!



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Then fill your plan in with things as basic as long car rides, eating in his crate and in different environments, complete groomings appropriate for his coat, and overnight trips to friends' homes or hotels. Your pup should ride in elevators, see and hear traffic, visit the city and the country. He should see, if not meet, cows and horses, cats, rabbits and birds.

You may find the local businesses welcome your puppy but be sure to take clean up material and keep your puppy under control. If he is overtired or worried and starts barking or bothering people, it's time to go home. In our hometowns, banks, home improvement stores, and garden centers allow puppies to come inside. We also ask senior centers, day cares and childcare facilities if they would like some puppy time.

If you compete with your dogs, it should include weekends at shows, trials and/or hunt tests where he will see large crowds, spend long periods in his crate or exercise pen, and experience the sights and sounds of a dog competitions. If you hunt your dogs, your plan should include early wakeups and periods in a car and blind. If you do therapy work, your plan should include trips to facilities where your pup will see the sights and meet the people that he eventually will be serving.

In addition, you should include in your plan the many specific activities that your dog will do as an adult. If you compete in obedience, it will be puppy versions of all of the exercises through Utility. If you compete in agility, it will include doing all of the agility equipment, even if the heights are quite low. If you hunt or run hunt tests, you should ensure your pup experiences quartering fields, tons of swimming, regular time with a variety of game birds, a lot of experience with gun shots, boats and bird calls, and time with other dogs and hunters. If you compete in tracking, your puppy should be regularly running tracks, both field and urban. If you plan to show in breed, your puppy should be stacked on the grooming table regularly. He should also be introduced to the blow dryer, clippers and other grooming tools.



As you develop your plan, provide opportunities for repeated experiences in these events but don't worry about doing them over and over. During the Sensitive Period, small experiences have long-term, even lifelong, impacts. This is particularly true if the pup has positive (or negative) emotions associated with that experience. However, your pup should do things enough that at four months he knows he is a _____ Dog; your plan will enable him to fill in the blank with Hunting, Obedience, Tracking, Agility, Therapy, Conformation and/or Companion Dog.

Socializing with dogs. While doing all of this, you will also seek out healthy, friendly, stable dogs with which your pup can socialize. You do need to balance the risk of disease with socialization but the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists' position paper states that it is more important for puppies to be socialized prior to 16 weeks than to be protected from the slight risk of disease. For more information on vaccination protocols and titers, download our free eBook, Canine Nomographs at <http://www.avidog.com/canine-nomographs-ebook/>.

Use your good sense to select healthy, friendly, vaccinated playmates but get your pup out as much as you can. He should meet a variety of breeds so that he understands that dogs come in different colors and sizes, with prick ears and floppy ears, with tails and without tails. He must meet dogs that are not members of his pack so he learns how to politely greet and interact with strangers. Most Puppy Kindergarten classes are an excellent place for pups to meet other puppies but look for adult dogs as well for your pup to play with. Research has shown a very low risk of disease from these classes so give them a try.

Finally, look for every possible place to take your puppy — towns, cities, beaches, schools, training buildings, sidewalk cafés, show sites, farms, stables, stores, and so on. You want your pup to see the world and all of its exciting components. We will have given your pup a good foundation in rural places but you will be responsible for introducing him to cars, busses, city streets, elevators, and anything else you can think of.

Places to avoid. A few places to avoid or be cautious of:

- Take your pup to your veterinarians frequently, if only to weigh him and have the office staff give him lots of treats, but carry him in the clinic and never put him down outside

until you have checked his titer and know that his puppy vaccines have developed his immunity.

- Avoid dog parks completely until your pup is a mature dog with the size to handle a pack of other dogs and full immunity, including rabies.
- Avoid pet stores until you have checked his titers and know he is protected against distemper and parvo.

Now that you have figured out where you want to take your puppy and what activities he needs to do over the next few months, get out your calendar and make a schedule. You have a lot to do and a small amount of time to do it in so it will take organization to fit it all in. Include in the plan gradual increases in the difficulty of what you are asking your pup to do. You might start with short retrieves in the hallway or living room at nine weeks but want to work up to 30-40 yard singles in the field by 4 months. In agility, you might start sequencing a few obstacles. In tracking, you work up to aged tracks with turns.

The “Puppy Scream”

Since you are going to allow your puppy to interact with other dogs, you must know about the “**puppy scream.**” Once you have heard this noise, you will never forget it. This sound indicates that your puppy has been traumatized in some way, often after being rolled, corrected or even attacked by an older dog. But it can also happen when a pup is frightened by something else. It is a protective sound since most adult dogs will move away from a puppy emitting this noise. (Interestingly enough, most puppies will run toward a puppy that is screaming.) Pups will whine or cry when they are anxious or even slightly frightened but when they are traumatized, they will give a repeating cry that can go on for minutes — “Owrgh, owrgh, owrgh!” If your pup whines with anxiety, you should not pick him up but if you hear your pup go into a loud, repeating cry pick him up and cuddle him like the baby that he is. This will help avoid fear imprinting on whatever it was that frightened him.

When your pup hits sixteen weeks, you may collapse with exhaustion but you will know that you have given him the best possible foundation to become everything that you had hoped for in your dog.

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Chapter 16: Housebreaking Your Puppy

Housebreaking Essentials

There is **ONE and ONLY one way to housebreak a dog—confinement**. If you insist on letting your puppy or dog have more space than it is ready for, you are likely to live with accidents for months to come. It's your choice! If you want a housebroken dog and clean house, commit now to confining your dog for the short term in order to enjoy it for the long term!

Housebreaking typically takes several months but young puppies take more time and effort than older dogs. Our puppies often sleep through the night within the first few nights and keep their crates clean from the start but are not fully housebroken until five to six months of age. Fully housebroken means they know not to urinate or defecate anywhere indoors, in your house, other people's houses, training buildings, stores and more. They also know how to ask you to go outside and you know how to read them.

Housebreaking takes advantage of dogs' natural desire to keep their immediate space or living area clean. **It requires confinement to a small enough space to trigger this desire**. Thus, a puppy's "room" might be any or all of these:

- a crate (for no more than 4 hours during the day and 8 hours at night),
- an exercise pen, and/or a
- very small room gated off with baby gates.

Want help housebreaking? We recommend Avidog's *Puppy Potty Training Solution*, which will help you crate train and housebreak your puppy. For more info, go to <http://www.avidog.com/pottytraining/>.

Five Biggest Housebreaking Mistakes

- **Scolding or punishing** a dog for peeing or pooping in the house. No matter what you think, dogs do NOT understand those corrections.
- **Rubbing a dog's nose** or forcing their head towards pee or poop. This only makes dogs believe they live with crazy people. This makes them insecure and unsure.
- Taking a puppy or dog out at **regular intervals**—say, every hour. This develops a one-hour bladder and does not teach your dog to hold its urine and feces longer.
- **Not cleaning accidents up** so thoroughly that the dog cannot smell it.
- Giving **too much freedom** too soon.

Housebreaking Details

Your **goals** in housebreaking your dog are to teach your dog:

- where to pee and poop
- when to pee and poop
- how to ask to go outside

- that if it asks to go outside, someone will respond appropriately

The housebreaking process requires that your dog:

- understands what you want,
- is physically able to do it, and
- is motivated to make the effort to pee and poop when and where you want it to.

Dogs need to **pee more during the day than they do at night** so they will be able to sleep through the night MUCH sooner than they can go through the day

Dogs **vary in how many times they need to poop** during the day but twice, morning and evening, is typical. If your dog goes a lot more than that, consider changing to a better quality or different food.

Puppies less than 4 months will usually need to go outside:

- 15 to 30 minutes after eating or drinking
- upon waking from a nap or long sleep period
- after vigorous play or excitement
- more frequently when active than when confined
- approximately every few hours. When quiet and confined, puppies can typically hold their urine the number of hours that equals their age in months plus one. So, a 3-month old puppy can go 4 hours, a 4-month old puppy can go 5 hours, etc.

The Five C's of Housebreaking

Confinement

Confine your dog to its “room,” a crate, exercise pen, powder room, etc., at all times when you are not directly supervising it.

That “room” is a place that is small enough that you are absolutely confident that your pup will make every effort to let you know it needs to go outside before soiling the area.

The “room” is also a place that someone can hear and respond to the pup when it asks to go outside.

Communicate

Respond to your pup’s “requests” to go outside—say, whining or barking—by taking it outside.

Take your pup outside when it whines but before it gets into a barking jag--bark, bark, bark—so you are not inadvertently teaching it to be noisy and obnoxious.

Distinguish “I need to go potty” from “I want to go play” requests by keeping your dog on leash until it has gone potty. If it does not pee or poop after 10 minutes, confine it back inside. Do not let your pup play until it potties.

Control

ALWAYS put your pup on leash to take it outside!

Use the leash to ensure it goes where you want it to go and that it focuses on its job—peeing and pooping.

Encourage it to begin to move ahead of you as you approach the potty area so that eventually, it will go to the area and potty on its own.

Command

Say only one thing to your pup when you take it out, your potty command. “Hurry up,” “Get busy,” “Go pee,” etc.

If the pup pees or poops, reward it with a treat and warm praise. If you want to play, now is the time.

If your pup does not pee or poop when you take it outside, you **MUST** put it back in its “room” when back inside, ideally for 15 minutes for young puppies (under 4 months) or 30 minutes for older puppies and dogs. If you do not, you will not be able to discern when your pup is telling you it has to pee versus it just wants out of confinement.

Once the pup has peed or pooped outside, it can have supervised freedom in the house.

Confinement Again

Once it has had free time with you in the house but at least 15 minutes before you think it is going to have to potty again, put your pup back in its “room.” This is essential to develop a stronger bladder AND teach your pup to ask to go outside!!!

- Wait for it to ask to go outside again before taking it out.
- Keep track of how long your dog is going between pottying.
- If the pup is going every hour during the day, then put it back in its “room” after 50 minutes. If it falls asleep for half an hour, you have now extended that bladder to an hour and 20 minutes.
- Once it is comfortable at an hour and 20 minutes, put it back in its “room” after an hour and 10 minutes and see if it can go two hours without pottying.
- Keep doing this till your pup is going 4-5 hours or more between pottying.

If your schedule requires that your dog be confined longer than it is capable of holding it:

- Get someone in to let it out in the interim.
- Put it in a pen with a potty pan so it has a place to go while you are away. [Puppy Go Here dog litter pans](#) are our favorites for Avidog puppies. Use either dog litter or wood pellets for litter.

A Few More Key Points

- **Every** time you take your pup out of its “room,” take it outside to potty before letting it play in the house.
- Increase the amount of space it lives in **ONLY** when it has not soiled its “room” in a week (seven full days). Then increase it only by a tiny amount. If your pup has an accident, it is telling you that you have given it too much space.
- **Never** allow it access to valuable carpets until it is fully housebroken.

Learn Your Dog’s Individual Signs

Dogs are different but **all give some indication** that they need to pee or poop most of the time:

- circling
- sniffing
- acting anxious
- disappearing into another room
- going to the door
- whining

When you see one or more of the signs, ask your pup “Do you need to go outside?” then put it leash on and carry or take it outside immediately.

Teach Your Dog to Ask to Go Outside

Encourage your dog to tell you when it needs to go out by:

- coming to you
- going to the door (if you will be able to see it be standing there from the TV or computer or kitchen)
- ringing a bell
- barking (though you may regret this one)

Reward your pup by taking it outside when it does one of the above.

Many dogs will naturally go to the door to “ask” to go outside but in today’s world of TVs, computers and devices, family members often don’t see them there. So, we teach our dogs to come to us to let us know they need to go outside. Start teaching your dog to come to you once your pup does not need to be carried outside.

- When you think your pup needs to go potty, ask “Do you need to go outside?” or just “Outside?”
- Go to the door but just before going out it, say your pup’s name and take one step away from the door. Your pup should look at you and take a step away from the door. Say “yes” and run outside to the potty area.
- Repeat this each time you take your pup out over the next few days.
- Gradually increase the number of steps you back away from the door so your pup is going to the door and then coming to you, first two steps, then three, then more. When the pup comes to you, say “yes” and quickly take it outside.

- Now when you are taking your pup out, ask “Outside,” go toward the door but let the pup precede you. If your pup turns away when it gets to the door to come to you, praise a lot and take it outside. If it doesn’t turn back to you on its own, simply call it to you and proceed as above.
- Keep working on this. Initially, it will feel chaotic. You will think your pup will never get it but I promise, it will!

When Accidents Happen (Which They Will)

During housebreaking, accidents are not a crisis, especially if you have ensured your dog does not have access to valuable items such as carpets.

However, the more mistakes you allow your dog to make, the harder it will be for it to understand what you want so your goal is to keep accidents to a minimum. When an accident happens, think back over the situation to determine what you did wrong -- missing a subtle cue, leaving the dog alone too long, giving too much freedom.

If you do not catch the dog in the act of elimination, do NOT reprimand. Just clean the mess up and vow to keep a better eye on your puppy.

Caught in the Act

If you do catch the dog in the act,

- Say its “name” loudly and sharply to stop it midstream.
- Say “Outside, outside, outside” while taking it outside (carry if it is under 12 weeks).
- Once outside in the right area, give your pup the potty cue (“Hurry up,” etc.).
- Wait and reward if it goes again.
- If it does not pee or poop after 10 minutes, which is likely, take it back inside and confine it in its “room.”

NEVER reprimand the dog for having an accident. This can cause the dog to hide from you when it needs to go to the bathroom inside and possibly even outside. Correcting a dog for this very natural act leads it to learn not to go in front of you rather than to go where you want it to.

Clean up

- Dogs tend to urinate and defecate in **areas that smell like urine or feces.**
- **Just because you cannot smell** where an accident occurred does not mean your dog cannot.
- Clean up thoroughly and carefully
- Remove any solid material.
- Then, remove all moisture from the area. If it is carpet, stand on many layers of paper towels to soak up urine.

- Soak the area with Nature's Miracle[®], Simple Solution[®] or other enzymatic cleaner to clean it well. Let it air dry.
- Never use cleaners with ammonia in them as they smell like urine.

What is Normal?

Dogs vary widely in **how long it takes** them to understand housebreaking.

- Puppies are typically not completely housebroken until they are 6-8 months old.
- Eventually, example the average golden can go 8-10 hours without going outside.
- Extraordinary dogs can go 12 or more hours without going out.

Still Not Working?

If you have been diligent in housebreaking your dog for a month and have seen no improvement join Avidog's *Puppy Potty Training Solution*. Your enrollment is free.

A Humorous View of Housebreaking

A rolled-up newspaper can be an effective training tool when used properly. For instance, use the rolled-up newspaper if your dog chews up something inappropriate or has a housebreaking accident. Bring the dog over to the mess, then take the rolled-up newspaper... and hit yourself over the head as you repeat the phrase, "I FORGOT TO WATCH MY DOG, I FORGOT TO WATCH MY DOG!"

Chapter 17: Controlling Your Puppy's Chewing

To set the record straight, normal, healthy goldens of all ages chew. In fact, normal dogs, especially retrievers, chew a lot!

- Dogs explore the world using their mouths.
- Chewing eases tooth pain during teething and at other times in a dog's life.
- Adolescents chew a lot because they are teenagers.
- Dogs find chewing fun and stimulating.
- Bored dogs may occupy themselves with chewing and thus develop a serious chewing habit.

As an owner, it is your job to develop good chewing habits in your dog. "Good" chewing habits means your dog knows what to chew and will make an effort to go and get an appropriate chew toy, rather than grabbing the closest piece of furniture. This education effort should start when they are very young (6-8 weeks) and continue through teething (3-7 months) and into adulthood. Habits take a while to develop so your diligence and consistency is essential during the learning process.

Safe Chew Items

Think of your dog as a **chewing machine**. How are you going to feed the machine? With lots and lots of safe, good quality chew toys. All chew toys should be monitored and regularly checked for loose pieces that could be choked on or changed shapes that might cause them to cut or otherwise injure your dog. The safe chew toys listed below are those that either do not break into small pieces easily or are made to break into pieces that are easily swallowed and passed. They are also rugged enough to withstand a dog's jaws for quite some time without becoming hazardous. And, finally, they are ones that dogs find interesting enough to keep chewing.

Here are some **safe chew toys** that can be given to most dogs in **unlimited** amounts, after a gradual introduction:

- [Kongs](#)
- [Nylabones](#)
- Raw beef/buffalo/venison bones (rib for puppies or marrow/knuckle bones for adults)
- Lightly smoked beef/buffalo/venison bones (with no "smoked flavor" added)
- Rawhide rolls and chips from [Farmhounds](#).

Safe chew toys best offered in **moderation** include the following items. For many dogs, these are treats rather than chew toys but they can be effective in attracting a dog that is determined to chew on your couch.

- Ears (pig, beef, lamb)
- bully sticks
- trachea
- scapulas
- tendons

Unsafe chew toys that should not be offered are:

- foreign rawhide,
- hooves, and
- pressed rawhide.

Rules for Developing Good Chewing Habits

- Exercise your dog! Bored dogs tend to become compulsive chewers because they have nothing else to do to occupy themselves.
- Manage your dog's environment. Until well beyond the teething months (3-7 months), your dog should be confined with a number of interesting chew toys if you can't directly watch it. If your older dog has already developed bad chewing habits, confine it until you can teach better ones.
- Have chew toys in every room that your dog spends time in. Your dog needs lots and lots of good things to chew.
- Teach your dog "Find your toy" so that it will go looking for a chew toy when it feels the urge to chew. Do this initially by playing with your dog with the toys. Start with "fetch" with the toys, saying "find your toy" when you toss it a few feet. If your dog doesn't fetch, then tie a string on the toy and drag it enticingly across the floor. Then, rather than tossing the toy, help it look for one that is nearby and make a big deal when finds it. Gradually make this into a game of hide and seek where your dog will search out hidden chew toys.
- Make safe chew toys attractive. Dogs need new toys regularly and needs the toys made attractive though interesting smells or tastes.
- Positive reinforcement for good chewing. Look for times when your dog grabs a safe chew toy and lies down for a gnaw. Lavish quiet praise when it does this. [Kongs](#) should be stuffed with interesting goodies (treats, vegetables, cheese, peanut butter or frozen with broth in the summer). You can use [Kongs](#) to feed your dog breakfast if you are going out. [Nylabones](#) and rawhide can be dipped in broth or peanut butter to make them more enticing.
- Teach your dog to "leave it." One you've taught this, take your dog around the house telling it "leave it" on some of the most obvious things it might want to chew: table legs, chair rungs, corners, etc. Then, encourage your dog to take a chew toy and praise, praise, praise.
- Use bitter-tasting sprays on areas where your dog shouldn't chew. [Bitter Apple](#) is widely available.

Correcting Inappropriate Chewing

- If you see your dog chewing on something it shouldn't, startle it by calling its name sharply and telling it "LEAVE IT!"
- Follow that immediately with "Find your toy! Find your toy!"
- Help your dog find a chew toy and praise enthusiastically when it does.
- If you do not catch your dog in the act, do not punish it in any way for inappropriate chewing. It won't understand your actions and will think you are insane. Instead, resolve to be more diligent in confining your dog and ensuring it has attractive, safe toys to chew.

Chapter 18: Teaching Appropriate Greetings with Your Pup's Toy Box

Because goldens are often overly enthusiastic greeters, teaching a pup to greet with a toy in its mouth reduces the chance of behaviors like mouthing, barking and jumping. Start teaching this by having a specific toy box for the puppy's toys and bones that will be kept near the door. The toy box should be low enough so the puppy can easily get its head in there to pick a toy.

Your first goal is to get the puppy to get a toy from the box when you ask it to. Begin by taking your puppy over to the toy box and encourage the pup to pick a toy at the start of every play or training session. If, at first, the pup does not understand, you can pick a toy for the pup.

Engage in play with the toy and the puppy. Encourage the puppy to play with the toy on its own. Let the puppy know how much you enjoy the pup engaging in this activity. Your approval and joy are very important to your puppy, so showing this is extremely important.

Anytime the pup begins to play with or mouth anything other than a toy, you need to stop what you are doing and escort the pup to the toy box to once again pick an appropriate toy or bone to play with.

Again, you must do this with encouragement and joy, not annoyance or anger. If you display anger or annoyance while doing this, it is most likely that your pup will assume that you do not like it taking toys from the toy box; not that you are annoyed that the pup just chewed your shoe, pillow or table leg.

If you see the pup beginning to chew or play with something you do not want them to have, go over to the pup and say, "Leave it! (this can be said firmly but not with any anger) Come on, let's go get one of your toys."

Again, saying this with a calm, informative but gentle voice will allow you to teach your pup behaviors that you find desirable. You want your puppy to get the information and begin to understand your words, versus focusing on displays of intense emotion.

NEVER, NEVER leave your pup unattended until it understands what is his or hers to play with and what is not. If the pup gets something you did not want it to have, it is on YOU!

Once your puppy will get a toy from the toy box on its own, encourage it to do so when visitors come to the house. Before opening the door, tell the puppy to "Get your toy!" and move toward the toy box. Praise the pup when it has a toy. As you open the door, tug on the toy so the pup will continue to hold it. If the visitor is a dog person, have them tug on the toy next so the pup stays engaged with the toy as the visitor comes into the house. Continue this game until the pup goes to the toy box when someone knocks on the door or rings the bell.

Chapter 19: Marking a Desired Behavior

Marking desired behaviors is extremely important in helping you communicate to your puppy, and dog when it is grown, that the behavior it just engaged in or performed was very desirable to you.

The most valuable thing you have to give to your dog is your heartfelt joy, approval and enthusiasm. This is truly what your puppies seeks. The treats and toys that we use are actually the icing on the cake, but the cake is what the dog wants most.

In our training, as we use treats and toys, we are the ones that teach the dog those things have value. This is good as it helps us develop behaviors that we want. However, the mistake most commonly made while doing this is to put too much value on the toy or treat and not enough value on our joy in the pup's response.

If you teach the pup that the toy or treat has more value than you, you will miss out on the most rewarding part of training a dog; the deep bond and understanding that is built between you through communication and learning. This is the most valuable of all for both you and the dog.

In order to avoid placing too much value on the treat, I make sure to take the time to joyfully and enthusiastically verbally praise my dog, telling him he is the best, smartest dog ever, before I give the treat or toy. I do not give the treat until the dog and I have made eye contact as I speak and have held that long enough for it to be meaningful and take on value.

Many people use a clicker, I prefer to mark with the word "YES." I always have that word with me, as well as having complete control over the timing of its use. Recent research shows that clickers, verbal markers, and visual markers work equally well in teaching dogs.

When I use "YES", I use it with joyful emphasis, so the communication to my dog is clear. It is also important that the joy truly come from your heart. Our dogs are very aware of, and confused by, empty praise.

I never work with my dogs unless I can give 100% of myself, as that is what I ask for back. It is better to postpone a training session if you can't give to your dog 100% of your heartfelt joy.

Chapter 20: Teaching Your Puppy to Come

Starting Young

We have already started conditioning your puppy to have only positive associations with coming to people. We have classically conditioned them to the come-in whistle (three blasts) and the words “Puppy, puppy, puppy” so they know those sounds are wonderful things. We have also started teaching them their names. At this point, they fly to us when we call. The program outlined below will enable you to continue this reaction so that your puppy has a very strong recall.

The most important thing a dog can learn is to come when called—it truly is a life-saving command. Unfortunately, most dogs have learned a poor association with the word “Come” because this command is overused and under-rewarded. Sometimes bad things happen to that come, for example they are punished for urinating on the carpet or getting in the trash. More frequently, they just lose out on fun things when they come when called, for example, they have to stop playing with their friends or they have to go in their crate.

Come is not a substitution for a leash or a fenced yard, but it is an exercise that could save your dog’s life someday. Since our dogs need daily off lease exercise, it is essential that they all have solid recalls. It is also an important sign of your dog’s relationship with you; does she want to come to you? Your puppy will quickly figure out that she is faster than you so you will be in no position to make her come unless she is on leash. Threats will no longer work since she knows you are not able to carry them out. For most dogs, treats also will not work because the big, broad world is so much fun. So, how do we teach dogs how to want to come to us?

Come-When-Called Rules

First, here are guidelines or rules to teaching Come:

- Come-When-Called training must take place in a safe area. All of the following exercises assume that you are indoors, in a safe area outside, or using a long line. No amount of training will make your dog 100% reliable so always be aware of dangers to your dog, particularly motor vehicles.
- While you are working on Come-When-Called, do not call your dog away from fun. Do not call her and then punish her. Do not call her and then do something to her that she doesn’t like, such as put her in her crate. This means you must manage her—don’t allow her to get into trouble. If need be, go and get the dog if you need to correct her or do something she will not like.
- Posture is important when calling dogs. Do not bend over or stretch your hands out to your dog since these behaviors prevent the dog from coming in close enough for you to take hold of her collar. Better to squat or kneel down, turning slightly away from your dog. If you have a very small dog or puppy, plop down on the ground.

- Select a casual “come” word to use when you just want the dog to stay close to you but not come all the way to you. This will enable you to keep your criteria high for the word Come. Select a different word for a casual, “come over here closer to me” or “come on, we’re going this way now.”
- Do not ask your dog to sit when it comes to you; you are teaching Come not Sit in this exercise. I’ve seen many enthusiastic Comes go away because the dog is rewarded after a Sit. Get a happy Come-When-Called. Period. Get a happy Sit and put them together later in your dog’s life. Instead of saying Sit when your dog comes to you, reward your dog once your dog allows you to touch her collar.
- Train your dog to come from every position and location. It’s not very often that a dog is called from a Sit-Stay. In real life, she is called when she is in the trash or when she’s about to jump on a child for her ice cream cone. Make it a habit of calling your dog from different situations and rewarding generously.
- Use a medium tone of voice to call your dog. People tend to raise their voices and even yell when training Down and Come. Train your dog to Come on a medium voice. If she’s paying attention, she’ll hear you. Teach her to pay attention.

The Gotcha Exercise

This game conditions your dog to anticipate good things when you grab her collar. Some dogs tend to shy away when you grab for them, knowing that something good ends (she doesn’t get the garbage she was about to scarf down, she is hauled out of the park and away from her doggie friends, etc.)

Several different times in your day, when your dog is up and about, grab her collar and give her a “Yes!”/praise/treat. No name, no word “Come.” Do it slowly, do it quickly, do it when you are walking, do it when the dog comes up to you for attention. Do it in lots of situations.

Once in a while, grab the collar, put the leash on and give the “Yes!”/praise/treat, but take the leash right back off again. This teaches the dog not to duck or play “keep away” when someone wants to put a leash on her.

Is your dog reactive to your hand? Go very slowly. Take every opportunity to make collar grabs a good thing. Don’t use the word “come.” Some ideas are” grab the dog’s collar when she is resting on your lap, when you put her food bowl down, when she is jumping into the car.

Food Bowl Comes

By now, you are probably using a great deal of your dog’s food for hand feeding to establish a bond. You may also be putting food in toys as enrichment and using food as training treats. There may not be a lot of food left over to feed in a bowl but use your remaining food for twice daily feedings. As you prepare her food bowl, your dog will probably be right there with you, having heard all the cues that mean food is coming. Even if she is right there by your feet when you’re ready to put the food bowl down, step backwards quickly a few paces and say “Come” as she reaches you and the bowl. Then, stand still, say “Yes!” and give her the bowl of food instead

of a treat. Sometimes say her name first and then “Come.” Other times just say “Come” as she gets to you.

Opportunity Comes

Watch for other times during the day when your dog is already focused on you and coming to you in a motivated way. For example, when you reach for the leash to take your dog for a walk. Say “Come” or “Flyer, come” as she rushes up to you. If your dog sees you take her favorite tug toys off the shelf, say “Come” as she runs up for the game. Stand still, say, “Yes!” and then play.

Surprise, Controlled Comes on Leash

Most dogs cannot resist investigating when you quickly move away. While on a walk, at a point when your dog seems least engaged with her environment, stop suddenly. Become dramatic, make some sort of explanation, such as “Oh! Wow!” and either back up quickly or turn around and run away a few steps. If training outdoors in an unfenced area, use your leash to keep your dog safe. Your dog will wonder what is up and will turn to see, perhaps even begin running to you. When you see that she is highly motivated and running toward you, call your dog’s name then “Come” and pull something wonderful out of your pocket, such as her dinner in a baggie or a fun tug toy for a game.

Really Reliable Recall (Emergency Recall)

Your dog has learned that it was worthwhile investigating when you move quickly away. Now we will take advantage of this to teach her an emergency recall, the recall that will always work in times of crisis.

Pick a new word for the Really Reliable Recall. This word will only be used for your emergency recall. “Here,” “Now!” “Come Here” “Pronto” “Quick” all work well. Most field trainers use “Here” and eventually condition it with the electric collar so if you are going to do field, I recommend you use “Here.” (Continue to use your normal word (“come”) for day-to-day activities.) Pick a word that:

- Is clear
- Carries a long distance
- You won’t use for anything else.

Plan the reward for this training well in advance. These rewards need to be the best thing that has happened to her all day. You will need three food items each day (or if she doesn’t like food, use what she likes best...play, cuddling, walks, retrieving, or tug-of-war). Food items should be large, relative to the size of the dog, and very high quality (in the dog’s opinion). Cut down on her other food rather than short her on these rewards. Examples for an adult golden retriever might be an entire McDonald’s hamburger (hold the pickle, hold the onions), spareribs (no bone), a whole chicken breast, a whole hardboiled egg. Have the items ready so you can do three repetitions each day this week.

Use this word 3 times a day for the 1st week. This first week is simply teaching the dog the value of your RRR word. Use the word ONLY three times a day and ONLY when you know the dog will come.... inside, away from distractions, quite close to you.

Say you're Really Reliable Recall word excitedly and when your dog comes to investigate, take her collar and start feeding her RRR treat in pieces while praising and petting her for 20 seconds.

Add Distance OR Distraction to the Really Reliable Recall

Continue to do the Really Reliable Recall three times a day but either extend the distance or add distractions. Remain inside the house but attempt to go as far from your dog as possible before calling. Or wait until your dog is distracted, playing with a toy or chewing on a bone. Call once using your RRR word but make sure it was loud enough for your dog to hear you. If your dog comes, take her collar and give her a treat and 20 seconds of praise, petting and fun. If your dog does not come, go to her and show her the treat that she missed getting. Pretend to eat the treat yourself and put it away in the fridge. Try again later.

Add Distance AND Distraction to the Really Reliable Recall

Continue to do the Really Reliable Recall three times a day but now add both distance and distractions INSIDE YOUR HOUSE. Get as far from your dog and use heavy distractions to see if she can make it past them to get to you. Call only once using your RRR word but make sure it was loud enough for your dog to hear you. When your dog comes, take her collar and give her the treat and 20 seconds of praise, petting and fun.

When NOT to Call Your Dog

For the FIRST YEAR of your dog's life, reward EVERY recall command that your dog responds to. Remember, obeying "come" is a habit—the more your dog comes when called, the more she will but the more she does NOT come when you call, the less she will obey you.

When you know you are not in a position or state of mind to back up your come command, simply go and get your dog when you need her. Have your dog drag a long line if you have trouble catching her. Use "come" or "here" when you are willing to properly handle the situation if she disobeys you. If you are late for an appointment or in your pajamas, do not call your dog unless you are willing to forgo the appointment or go after your dog in your PJs.

Walking Your Dog Down or What to Do When Your Dog Doesn't Come

Now for the most important part of teaching your dog to come; what do you do when your trained dog does not come when you call? This usually happens right around five months of age. Suddenly, your wonderful pup that always comes when you call looks you in the eye and heads for the hills. What do you do?

First, DO NOT CALL HER AGAIN! Every time you repeat the command, you teach your dog that you will just repeat yourself and she does not have to come the first time to you call. Second, relax your body and take a deep breath. Fold your arms over your chest and look at the space above your dog's ears.

Now, start walking toward your dog at a steady pace, exuding firmness and commitment. Walk until you can slowly reach out and take your dog's collar. Silently take her back to where you called her, give her a token "good dog," and turn her loose again. This time call her before she has taken two steps. When she comes to you now, tell her how fabulous she is, give her a reward and pet her.

This is known as walking your dog down. It tells your dog that she is going to come when called, whether she does it herself or you do it for her. It is important that you do this the very first time your TRAINED dog does not come when called. Typically, you will have to do this very few times if you respond appropriately the first time. However, the more times your dog has gotten away with not coming, the harder you will have to work to fix the problem.

Chapter 21: The Juvenile Period From 16 Weeks to Adolescence

Congratulations! You have survived the past seven weeks. You and your puppy have made it to the oh-so-important 16-week point! Hopefully, you have been busy socializing your pup and introducing it to the life you will lead together. Now that your pup is four months old, here are more things to do.

Gear

You should be changing to wider and bigger collars if you have not already. Go to ½” or 5/8” collars in an appropriate length.

Increase the width of your leash, too. Wider leashes make control easier; thinner leashes tend to hurt your hands and require stronger corrections.

I think it is fine to use a prong collar on a pup this age that is difficult to control. We would rather you use a prong than a harness since Dr. Chris Zink’s research has shown that all harnesses, even supposedly non-restrictive ones, effect the development and movement of the dog’s shoulders and forelegs.

Teething

Teething starts this month so get ready for your pup to become a chewing machine. Teething takes place from 4-6 months as dogs replace their 28 baby teeth with 42 adult teeth. Teething starts with the front incisors, which usually fall out easily.

Retained baby teeth. Problems can occur when baby teeth are retained; this is particularly common with canine teeth. Retained baby teeth can cause problems with your dog’s bite as an adult. Canine teeth do not usually get replaced until 5 to 6 months of age so you need to be vigilant for several months. If you see two teeth in the same socket, try the following actions:

- wiggle the baby tooth as often as you can to loosen it
- give your pup lots of things to chew on, especially marrow or knuckle bones
- set up play dates with another puppy. Puppy play is one of the best means of baby teeth removal.
- play gentle games of tug of war with your pup

If the retained tooth isn’t gone in a week or two, get your puppy to the vet to pull the baby tooth. This rarely requires a canine dentist, who are very expensive, so see if your GP will do it for you.

Other teething issues. During teething, you may find that strange things happen to your pup’s body. It may go “down on its pasterns,” when suddenly it looks like it is walking on the back of its “wrists.” Your pup’s ears may start folding in weird ways. Pastern problems usually resolve once teething is over but ears can remain strangely configured if you don’t do something early on. **Let me know if you have this problem and I’ll give you some guidance on fixing it.**

Self-control

Continue to teach your puppy to control himself.

- Pups can learn now not to get out of the crate or go through a door without permission, even if it is open.
- You should have already nipped demand barking in the bud but if you didn't tackle it early, best to do it now.
- Absolutely do not allow your pup to pull on the leash. This is a huge respect issue so start now while they are small. This will keep you from dealing with a lunging teenager that now weighs 50 or more pounds.

Learning self-control at this age will pay off big dividends when they start feeling their independence in a week.

Physical Challenges

Keep challenging your pup physically, although you should ensure the challenges are appropriate for its age. Its body is changing a lot at the moment and he needs to learn how to control long legs and gawky bodies. This is called proprioception and the best way to learn it is through use. Continuing Adventure Walks is a great option but agility and field training are good options. However, pups this age should NOT be taught weave poles or full height contact equipment, nor should they be jumping regularly over the height of their elbows until their growth plates are closed or they are 15 months old. You can confirm growth plate closure through x-rays, if you are eager to get started in agility.)

Dog-Dog Interactions

Pups this age have a need for play and social interactions with dogs BUT it's better to have no dog interactions than to have bad ones. A single bad experience can affect a puppy for life, resulting in fear or aggression as an adult. The effect of these negative experiences continues through at least 12 months of age.

This means you should not allow your dog to interact with dogs you meet on the street, no matter how much their owners say they are friendly. Your pup's future temperament is not worth it. However, you can use dogs you come upon to teach your puppy to sit nicely and pay attention to you when another dog is present. That is a far more valuable lesson than letting your pup say "Hi!" to a dog you don't know for sure is friendly.

Absolutely, do not introduce your pup to aggressive dogs—there is time enough in the future to learn there are mean dogs in the world. Pups do not need to learn it now! Just as you would not introduce young children to thugs, don't let your pup meet dogs that don't like pups or are generally aggressive.

You can allow your pup to interact with puppy-friendly dogs of varied ages, colors and body types (prick ears, curled or no tails, short coats, etc.) as you can find. Off leash runs are the best

way for pups and adults to interact. Just make sure the older dog isn't going to run your pup over, since injuries are possible.

Ideally, the adults you choose will help you teach dog manners to your puppy by correcting him if he is rude. Rudeness on the part of a juvenile puppy includes improper greetings, like rushing up to or jumping on the adult. If your pup does either of these and the older dog barks or puts your puppy on its back, thank the dog for the lesson.

Then next time keep your pup on leash so you can keep its feet on the ground and not let it climb on the heads or backs of adult dogs.

Some four- or five-month-old pups become bullies to other pups their age or younger. If you notice your pup bullying other pups, respond quickly by giving a time out. You are trying to teach that bullies don't get to play. Don't be shocked or angry; this is a very normal dog behavior but one that you want to stop quickly so it doesn't become a habit.

Feeding

We get lots of questions about increasing food amounts for pups this age. Some dogs eat about the same amount from 9 weeks until 6 months while other pups need vastly different amounts, depending upon whether they are going through a growth spurt or not. Be prepared to change the amount you are feeding your pup every week or so. To do so, check your pup's ribs every day or two and adjust the amount you feed based on that.

Memories

Take lots of pictures and enjoy this stage as much as you can. Juvenile pups may be funny looking and challenging but this is a precious stage. Remember, they will be over twice this size by 6 months.

Chapter 22: Understanding Adolescent Pups

Golden retriever males enter puberty nine months of age and females when they go into season for the first time. Your young dog should enter puberty around ___ months of age and females should go into season approximately ___ months of age. This starts adolescence, which lasts till about eighteen months of age. Your adolescent pup has a mature brain and a maturing body but less self-discipline than an adult and hormones raging through its body. Adolescence in both sexes often results in distractibility, boundary and limit pushing, defensive behaviors, intense chewing, and less tolerance from and sometimes toward other dogs.

Teenage dogs often have trouble focusing on training or work, particularly when other dogs are around. They may forget commands and behaviors that they were previously fluent with. "Come" commands are now met with a clear "Not now!" from your previously obedient dog. Although our first reaction is often surprise, you need to quickly recognize that your pup is growing up and to firmly but calmly enforce the cues your pup knows. Limit pushing is not belligerence; it is simply a normal part of growing up. However, how you handle it may make or break your dog's responsiveness for years to come.

Issues for Both Males and Females

Gear

Now is the time to upgrade to a 5/8" or 1" collar to give you the control you need over your dog. You may find you need to use a prong collar briefly if your dog's self-control on leash breaks down. Since we breed working goldens, they often have such high pain tolerances that they can't feel you on the end of the leash, especially if they are distracted by other dogs or activities.

Roaming

Dogs that previously never left you while on walks or in the yard now start venturing off on their own. During this period, you should not trust your pup to stay in an unfenced area without your supervision and sometimes even with your supervision. Check your fences for evidence of escape attempts. Work a lot on recalls and firmly enforce the Come cue by walking them down (don't chase, don't run, don't snatch). Use the power of your presence to get them to realize that you will walk them down as long as it takes to get them. At the same time, use plenty of very valuable reinforcers (treats, games, balls) when they are good. Go back to the Really Reliable Recall with the best treats you can possibly think of.

Defensive Behavior

You may notice that your pup now starts barking at strange people and other dogs. At this age, pups are starting to feel the need to take responsibility for defending you, their home, and

themselves. Be sure to put limits on their behavior if it becomes obnoxious. Remember, when your dog lunges at another dog while on leash, it is being disrespectful **to you**. In addition, this behavior rapidly becomes a habit. Correct your dog immediately for lunging at another dog.

You also may find your dog protecting the crate or the car. Crate and car possession aggression is another intolerable behavior and needs to be dealt with as soon as it begins. The problem with crate aggression is that your dog always wins since the other dog (or person) goes away. Don't make excuses and allow crate or car aggression to go on.

This is the time to establish your standard for appropriate adult defensive behavior. Crate aggression is easily learned from other adult dogs and can become a habit quickly; be very intolerant of it. Remember, it's your car! You make the car payments so you get to decide who can walk by, not your dog. That said, neither people nor other dogs should put their face up to your dog's crate so ensure people keep their distance so your dog knows it is safe in its crate or car.

To correct crate or car aggression, do not yell from across the parking lot because it will sound to the dog like you are joining in on the protection. Instead, set your dog up by being hidden but very close. When your dog makes a sound, quickly open the crate and verbally tell them this behavior is unacceptable.

Energy and Focus

Adolescents have a very high need for mental and physical exercise. Often, we see intense chewing and destructive behavior start again. Exercise and training, daily on both counts, will help with this. Do not just fall into the habit of throwing the ball to tire your pup out. This gives physical but not mental exercise. Instead, do some sort of training, too. Fitness training, obedience (both competition and household), tricks, tracking, field (the best), agility, nosework and anything else you can think of is needed at this stage of their lives.

Humping

Male and female dogs, intact and neutered, hump so do not be aghast if your dog starts. However, it's best not to tolerate humping on people, most dogs, or things. Humping is embarrassing but it is also bad for dogs' backs if done incessantly.

If your humping dog is not going to be bred, use a relatively forceful verbal correction and remove the dog from the item it is humping. If your dog is a male that may be bred, say nothing but remove him from the situation. Crate or kennel him if needed and put "Exercise Dog more" on your to-do list. Heavy exercise will reduce but not eliminate humping. If your dog is humping other dogs, find an older bitch that will make a correction and let them run together. That won't cure the problem completely but will let your young boy know that humping is not always welcomed, which may come as a shock to him.

Some owners don't mind their dogs humping a dog bed, pillow or canine housemate. If you are among them, be sure everyone in the household knows what is acceptable and what is not so the rules are clear to your dog.

Dog-Dog Trouble

Once they hit adolescence, pups often lose their puppy "get out of jail free" card from adult dogs. Behavioral standards are now higher for them and their behavior may be corrected by previously tolerant adults.

Young males get the worst of this; I always say that they have a "Kick me!" sign on them. Many adult dogs will feel obligated to correct young dogs, particularly males, even when to our eyes, the pups have done nothing wrong. As long as the correction is short and sweet, with no grabbing or biting, we don't interfere although we may put the adults away if the corrections are coming fast and furious. If they are, it is usually a sign that the young dog needs some discipline or the adult has simply grown tired of it.

Adolescent Male Issues

In male dogs, adolescence is the time that their testosterone levels rise rapidly to their lifetime peak around 10 months. Signs of peaking testosterone include humping, aggression from adult dogs towards the pup, interest in female dogs, roaming, sniffing incessantly, and urine marking. Some adolescent males will also become uncomfortable greeting and playing with other male dogs, since they don't know how to deal with their hormone-induced emotions. They may be corrected by females just for coming close. You may not see any reason why the bitch corrected your pup but, keep in mind; she knows why she did it.

Getting appropriately corrected will not damage their psyche and will teach them their place in the dog world. Do not rush in to save your pup. At the same time, don't put him in a position where he is corrected over and over and over. Just take him away if he appears to be triggering a negative response from dogs he normally plays well with.

Socialize, Socialize, Socialize

Keep your male pup interacting with dogs with good temperaments. This means **stable, dog-friendly dogs that your pup does not live with** and of as many breeds, sexes, sizes and colors as you can find, preferably adults rather than other adolescents.

Tiffs

If your dog gets into a tiff (not an actual fight), lower your voice and start firmly telling the dogs to "Knock it off!" You know it is a tiff if they break up. If they do, give them *both* a talking to (regardless of who you think started it, in the dog world, it takes two to tango in tiffs) to inform them that this is inappropriate behavior. If your male puppy was being corrected by a bitch and fought back, make a note of it. This is not a good sign and indicates that he is not appropriately

respectful of bitches. Find a more mentally and physically powerful bitch who is known to correct well and let her correct him. He needs to learn now that bitches are not to be molested, harassed or fought.

NOTE: we are talking tiffs here not fights. Tiffs are verbal interchanges with some mouth actions but no biting, blood or damage. They are the equivalent of human shouting and pushing matches. Think of how many of those you saw in high school. Do not overreact to these -- they are not knife fights, only shouting matches. But still clarify for your pup what is appropriate behavior.

Sniffing Other Dogs

Young males may sniff other dogs in what appears to be overly intimate ways. Watch the other dog for a negative reaction, such as stiffening, raising its head, putting its ears back. If your dog is bullying others in this way, go find that invaluable bitch from above and let him try it with her. If you don't have a strong bitch around, then you decide how long sniffing appropriate and simply say your dog's name to get his attention off the bitch. If he responds, go do something really fun and give him lots of treats. If he does not respond, simply go take his collar. Do not say "No" since greeting other dogs is something, we want him to do and we do not want him worrying that he is doing the wrong thing.

Sniffing the Ground

If your male starts burying his nose in the ground sniffing where other dogs have been, use attention work to teach him to focus back on you. He needs to be able to sniff when he is "off duty" and not training. But, when you are training, sniffing is simply not acceptable and will be met with a time out, a butt pinch or even a verbal correction. Raise your standard for focus while gently and firmly enforcing it.

Urine Marking

Some teenage males, especially those living with other intact males, may start marking (urinating, often on vertical objects or areas of high scent, such as the beds of other dogs) in the house during adolescence. Do not let this become a habit. The instant you find your boy has marked, do two things.

First, put a [belly band](#) on him so that he cannot mark any longer in the house. These wraps will often stop the dog from marking but go on to the next step so you don't need him to wear it forever.

Step 2 is to set your dog up so he urinates when you can catch him. To do this, put on rubber gloves and get a paper towel. Soak the towel in another dog's urine—intact females usually work best. Let the paper towel dry completely.

Then take a piece of Saran wrap or other plastic wrap and put it on one side of the dried paper towel. Use a straight pin and pin the towel to the vertical surface, plastic side in, of a couch, chair or other object in the room where they marked.

Arm yourself with whatever you are going to use for corrections. We use armfuls of empty soda cans with a few pennies in them (Ian Dunbar's idea). Turn your dog loose in the room and hide yourself or just stay out of sight.

It's highly likely that your young dog will mark the bitch urine. You want to catch him just BEFORE or AS HE MARKS and go verbally nuts. Make him think he lives with a crazy person. Drop cans, yell, jump up and down, flail your arms. Make a real impression on him. However, do NOT hit, strike or even get in his face. You want him to think the roof fell in rather than you got angry. You may need to do this a few times in your house before he gets it.

Working Around Bitches in Season

Your boy should be taught to work around bitches in season but you must realize that this takes some time and effort on your part. As soon as he smells an estrus bitch or her urine, his mind will be elsewhere. He will need to be taught to concentrate in the face of this most distracting of all distractions.

To teach this, ask him to do less complex exercises, such as sit, but keep your standards high. He may only be able to sit but he can do so quickly and correctly.

Another way to help your dog deal with bitches in season is by putting him in drive. Field work is usually easiest way to introduce males to estrus bitches. Agility is often next since it usually includes tug of war. Obedience, tracking and nose work are the most difficult.

Unwanted Breedings

By seven to nine months of age, your boy is able to breed a bitch and sire a litter so do not give him free access to bitches in season. If by some bad sequence of events, your boy ties a bitch, do not try to separate them. Dogs and bitches are physically and irrevocably "tied" when they breed and attempts to separate will seriously harm the dog. The "damage" is already done so separating them will not reduce the chance of pregnancy. The tie will dissipate eventually, over a period of 5-45 minutes. Just let nature take its course. While you wait, you can kick yourself but not the dogs. Call your vet and then me to discuss the options available for terminating pregnancies in dogs or if the bitch should be allowed to have the pups.

Wanted Breedings

If your male is intended for breeding, then you want to teach him early on that breeding behaviors are appropriate. These behaviors include sniffing and licking females, humping and flirting. However, put these behaviors on cue rather than just letting him exhibit them

whenever he comes across a girl. Many stud owners use the cue “Get your girl” when they want their male to breed.

They also use a specific place in which those behaviors are encouraged, such as a specific place in your house or on a specific mat. Elsewhere they are not acceptable but correct gently or better yet, simply remove him from the situation.

If you are interested in breeding your boy or collecting and freezing his semen, Avidog has an excellent course on stud dogs called [The Stud Dog Course](#).

Semen Collection

If your male is going to be bred, it is best to get at least one or two semen collections during his second year. At this point, he will have his health clearances and his semen amount and quality will be very high. Contact me if you want more information on this.

Adolescent Female Issues

The biggest concern for bitch owners is their girl’s estrus season or heat. However, before I get to that, you should know that bitches usually have a subtler approach to adolescence than males. They often become adept at the canine equivalent of rolling their eyes, becoming deaf and sweetly resisting your commands and desires. Do not lower your standards. Keep training, focusing and expecting great things of your pup.

Socialize, Socialize, Socialize

Keep your female pup interacting with dogs with good temperament throughout adolescence. This means **good dogs that your pup does not live with** and **good** dogs of as many breeds, sexes, sizes and colors as you can find, preferably adults rather than other adolescents. Getting appropriately corrected will not damage her psyche and will teach her place in the dog world.

When Will She Come in Heat?

Our pups usually do not come in season before 10 months with 12 being average and as late as 24 months. Suffice it to say that there is a wide range of dates of first seasons so get ready by the time your girl is 6 months old and you will be confident and prepared when it happens. For her long-term health, she needs to go through at least a few heat cycles before you spay her.

Supplies to Have on Hand

I recommend you get a few things by the time your pup is six months old to ensure you are ready for when she goes into season.

- At least two pairs of pants. I love the fun ones but you can go with the old standbys, too. These are all dog pants/diapers that completely cover the dog's rear end and close with Velcro.

- [Gal Pantz](#)
- [Pants for Dogs](#)
- [Britches for Bitches](#)
- the old stand-bys, like [Seasonals](#)
- A box of thin sanitary napkins with sticky backs (e.g., Always Ultra-Thin)

How Will I Know She Is in Heat?

Now for the important part--how do you tell when a bitch is coming in season for the first time? Unfortunately, you usually cannot. There might be a few signs but they are very subtle. The most obvious sign is that the bitch herself is more interested in her genitals and licks herself increasingly as her season approaches. If you are really concerned about knowing exactly when she comes in, you can wipe your pup's vulva each day with a tissue. You need to get the tissue slightly into the vulva since most bitches keep themselves quite clean. If there is red or pink on the tissue, she is in season. This method buys you a few hours or maybe a day of notice but it means you might be wiping for up to 6 months.

In the future, it will be easier to tell when she is coming in season since mature bitches tend to show more signs as they come in heat, particularly swelling of their vulva and increased licking of their genitals.

Signs of Heat

If you decide to let yourself be surprised, at some point you will notice drops of blood on the floor. After you have checked feet and tongues, you will realize that no one is injured. Instead, your girl is in season.

Go get her pants, put a pad in and grab some cookies and the leash. Put her pants on and do some training with her. Some leash walking, a few sits and downs, even some tricks will get her accustomed to her pants. This will show her that she can walk with the pants on. It will also take her mind off the pants. Give her a marrow bone or other good chew item and turn her loose in the house.

What Do I Do When She Is in Heat?

Being in heat is not a disease! In the wild, female dogs that are in heat are still able to feed and protect themselves, as well as find a mate or two so do not think of your girl as more fragile or ill during this period. Keep up her daily routine with a few variations.

Keeping the house clean

Use the Seasonal panties with a sanitary napkin to keep your floors and carpets clean. How much you leave the panties on is up to you. Some girls keep themselves very clean without

pants on; others do not. Some girls have only a little discharge; others have a lot. Most first seasons are quite light in flow and shorter than normal.

Most girls are fine with their pants on although some insist upon trying to get out of them at night. Therefore, we usually crate girls in heat without their pants on at night so that they do not drip everywhere. Change the pad once or twice a day depending upon her flow and swap out panties when they get soiled

It is important that you leave the panties off of your bitch for 6-8 hours a day so her genitals are not damp all the time. If you are concerned about your carpet or floors, plan to do this when she is outside, kenneled or crated at night.

Swimming

We have never run into problems swimming our girls during their heat cycle although we do not allow them in scummy or really dirty water. We regularly swim them in swimming pools and clean lakes and streams. Be aware that her cervix will be open during the middle portion of her season so clean water is a must at that time.

Can I train?

I train my girls throughout their season and take precautions around males only after Day 9. Early in their cycles, the girls may be flirty but they are not willing to be bred so do not think that you need to protect them throughout. I take them to class, do field work, do tracking, etc. Check with your training school to see what their rules are for bitches in season.

During the second week, you may find your girl to be a little less focused if there are males around. I still train but accept that she may not be at her best. Do not turn her loose with intact males even if you are right there. A tie (breeding) can happen in seconds when the time is right (unless of course you are trying to get a breeding :-)). If you train with intact males, their owners can put Vicks Vaporub® under their noses to hinder their ability to smell your girl and you can give her chlorophyll tablets to reduce her odor.

Length of Heat and Fertility

The average canine season lasts 18 days though the range is 12 to 30 days. Of this approximately three-week period, bitches are fertile for only about 6 days. The problem is you are not going to know when those six days are. Ninety-five percent of bitches are fertile between Days 9 and 15 so focus on the second week but don't take any chances with her around intact dogs.

The clues that you have that she is becoming fertile is that her discharge goes from blood red to pinkish-clear. At pinkish-clear, she is most likely fertile. Other signs are her enlarged vulva goes from very firm to quite soft, the bitch will move her tail to the side when touched around her

back or rear, and she becomes quite flirty toward dogs. She might start humping her housemates, whether they are males or females.

Females and Males Together

If you have an intact male in your house or next door, he may go nuts during the middle week of your girl's season. Howling, scratching, barking, and not eating are typical responses of an intact male to a bitch ready to breed. It is often best to send one of the dogs away. (Better to send the male. If you must send the bitch away, only use someone you trust implicitly to watch her and ensure she is not bred). If that is not possible, crate them very near each other where he can see her, since the male is often then calmer. Regardless, it will likely be a long week for you all.

Males that were neutered more than four months ago are safe to have around a bitch in season but be aware that they can still tie her, they just cannot get her pregnant.

Despite the stories, rarely if ever do roaming dogs arrive at your doorstep and stay for three weeks. Your girl may attract the occasional stray for a few days but that has only happened once to me during my entire breeding career. Use chlorophyll and you will have even less of a chance of this happening.

Heat Diaries

If you are going to breed your girl, start making heat diaries now, noting when physical and behavioral changes occur. Although bitches can change season-to-season, most girls follow a somewhat regular pattern. In addition, the diary will teach you the subtle changes that occur in a cycle.

False Pregnancies

False pregnancies are the norm in bitches; every bitch hormonally experiences false pregnancies about two months after her season, whether or not you see signs. Thus, false pregnancies are not abnormal in any way because a bitches' body prepares for puppies whether or not she is pregnant. Her hormones follow the same pattern whether she was bred or not. This is an evolutionary development that supports the survival of the pack since only one bitch is bred in a pack but all of the bitches could raise the pups, if needed.

About 75 days from the first day of her season, your bitch may begin a false pregnancy. She may "think" she is going to or has whelped and has puppies. These bitches may get milk, go through a mild labor, and obsess over their toys. During this time, they could actually nurse and raise a little of puppies whelped by another bitch.

Vitamin B12 is thought to reduce the symptoms of false pregnancies but there is nothing you can do to stop them. If you get concerned about your intact girl because she is lethargic, will not leave her bed, is walking around crying, is obsessing about her toys, then most likely she is

having a false pregnancy. They usually last less than a week and she can work during it. Just let her care for her “puppies” in a peaceful place in the house. Do not let children or other people tease her by taking her toys (puppies) since she may be protective of her “babies.” Don’t pity your girl, she really thinks she has babies and is being a good mom.

Despite her rather odd behavior, your girl can train, work, exercise and obey during a false pregnancy. Keep her normally active but expect that she might spend more time in her bed when you are home. Be respectful of her “babies,” allowing her to care for them.

Pyometra (uterine infection)

Although it is very, very rare for young bitches to get pyometra, it is possible. However, if you have a bitch who is five years old and still intact, pyometra is a growing concern. After five, bitches are increasingly likely to get pyo. By 10 years of age, about 30% of intact bitches will develop pyo.

No one really knows why pyo is common in dogs but it can be a fatal condition so all owners need to be well versed in the signs and symptoms. I have had two pyos in my career and nearly lost Sparky to this disease. This is a good website about pyo <http://www.marvistavet.com/pyometra.pml> for more information.

Pyo FAQs

When does pyo occur? Pyometra is a disease of diestrus so it can happen anytime during the 2 ½ months following the start of a bitch’s season.

What are the symptoms of pyometra? Pyo can be closed or open. In closed pyos, the cervix is closed so the bitch has no discharge. In open pyos, the cervix is open so the bitch typically will have a pinkish discharge that can be odorless or foul smelling. Bitches with pyo will often drink and urinate more. They usually go off their food and become lethargic.

How is pyo diagnosed? Pyo is usually diagnosed with a blood test and abdominal ultrasound. Blood work shows an elevated white blood cell (WBC) count and the ultrasound shows pus in the uterus.

How is pyo treated? If the bitch is not going to be bred, she should be spayed immediately. We have done both traditional and ovary-sparing spays (OSS) on bitches with pyo. If you do the latter, your vet must be very sure to get all of the uterus to avoid a stump pyometra.

If the bitch was to be bred, she can be treated with prostaglandins to save her uterus. She must be bred on the following heat, however.

Unwanted breedings

If by some bad sequence of events, your bitch is bred by a dog, do not try to separate them. Dogs and bitches are physically and irrevocably "tied" when they breed and attempts to separate will seriously harm the dog. The tie will dissipate eventually, over a period of 5-45 minutes. Just let nature take its course at that point. During that time, you can kick yourself but not the dogs. Call me immediately and we'll figure out what to do.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Sample Letter to Your Veterinarian

You can customize by updating the underlined information and providing to your buyer.

Dear Doctor,

I am writing this letter as the breeder of one of your client's new puppy, to offer some information about the dogs from my kennel, and to ask for your help. As you know, Golden Retrievers are facing a wide array of health challenges these days, from chronic skin allergies to hypothyroidism to orthopedic problems to cancer. As responsible breeders, we seek to breed away from these problems while still producing good-looking, companion hunters. As you might imagine, we have our hands full with this task.

We have been breeding Golden Retrievers for forty years so we have collected a large amount of information on all of our puppies, pet and show alike. We stay in close contact with our buyers so we have detailed information on over 600 related dogs from our breeding program. As a result, we know some consistent medical problems our lines face. We have outlined them here for your information and ask that you include them in this dog's health record.

Vaccine Protocol

We ask for your help in getting this puppy safely socialized during its early months, when socialization is critical but disease risk is high. We use Dr. Ron Schultz and now Dr. Laurie Larson, University of Wisconsin Vet School, to design vaccine protocols that balance disease protection with immune system development.

a. Vaccine Nomograph. We ran a distemper-parvo vaccine nomograph on this puppy's mother just prior to the pup's birth and had it analyzed at the University of Wisconsin Vet School. We have vaccinated this puppy in accordance with the attached nomograph and have provided guidance to the owner regarding re-vaccinations and titering.

b. Distemper and Parvo Antibody Titers. Since vaccine manufacturers use serological evidence in duration of immunity studies, they are valid means to assess a dog's immune status. We ask that this puppy be titered two weeks after its last distemper-parvo vaccination to determine if the dog had an appropriate immune response. If it did, no further vaccinations are necessary.

c. Laboratory for Titers. Our preferred titering program is the CAVIDs lab at the University of Wisconsin since they have detailed information on this pup's dam and littermates and they offer very inexpensive, high quality titers. Dr. Laurie Larson runs this lab and is available to answer any questions you might have:

Companion Animal Vaccine and Immuno Diagnostic Service Laboratory (CAVIDS)
Rm 4337 School of Veterinary Medicine
2015 Linden Drive West
Madison, WI 53706
Phone: (608) 263-4648

Website: <https://www.vetmed.wisc.edu/lab/cavids/>

d. Core Vaccines. We strongly support vaccination against core diseases, particularly distemper, parvovirus, adenovirus-2/hepatitis, and rabies. However, given the immaturity of puppies' immune systems, we ask that our pups receive the minimum number of vaccinations required to establish immunity.

e. Separate modified-live viral from killed and bacterial vaccines. We also ask that you separate killed and bacterial from modified-live viral products. Thus, please give the rabies vaccine at least two weeks after the last distemper-parvo vaccination.

f. Non-core vaccines. Finally, we believe that no dog should be vaccinated for coronavirus, giardia, adenovirus-1 or other diseases on the WSAVA Not Recommended list. If other non-core vaccinations are appropriate due to this puppy's circumstances or particular risks in your area, we ask that they be given only when necessary (such as 3 weeks prior to kenneling for Bordetella), in the most ideal form possible (intranasal for Bordetella rather than subQ or oral), and separated from other vaccinations.

Genetic Disease Testing

We have an active and thorough genetic disease testing program and we ask for your support in this effort.

a. Two-Year Health Clearances. All of our buyers, regardless of breeding status of their dog (pet or breeding), have agreed to do hip, elbow, heart and eye examinations on their dog at the age of two years. The hip and elbow x-rays, eye and heart exams must be submitted to the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA). This information enables us to better understand our breeding stock's genetics and to produce healthier dogs in the future.

b. Monitoring Annually for Pigmentary Uveitis. We encourage our owners to have a Board-certified ophthalmologist exam their dog annually after the age of two to screen for pigmentary uveitis, an eye disease that is becoming widespread throughout the golden retriever breed. If you can assist your client in finding lower-priced clinics or experienced ophthalmologists in the area, we would appreciate it.

c. Research Participation. Finally, please include our dogs in as many valid research programs as possible to investigate the genetics underlying the diseases facing golden retrievers. We look forward to additional DNA testing, if and when it becomes available to goldens. We ask for your support in helping this client collect DNA or other tissue samples for the various research projects appropriate for their dog at a reasonable cost. We firmly believe these data collection efforts are particularly important for goldens diagnosed with cancer. We recognize situations like this are difficult times to talk to clients about taking samples, but we appreciate your efforts in helping us find solutions to our breed's health challenges.

Medicine Sensitivities

a. Acepromazine. Over the years, we have had a couple of dogs go into seizures when given acepromazine. Since two of these dogs died from status epilepticus after being given ace, we ask that none of the dogs from our breeding program be given ace at any time.

b. Primor. Two of our puppies have gone into kidney failure when given Primor prior to six months of age. We prefer that our dogs never receive this drug but if necessary that it be given only after six months. Albon appears to be no problem for my dogs so treatment with it is fine.

c. Lyme Vaccine. We have lost two adult dogs of our breeding to Lyme nephritis after they had been vaccinated with the original Lyme vaccine annually throughout their lives. Both of these dogs were family pets and neither was hunted nor at high risk for getting Lyme disease. We recognize that Lyme disease puts us between a rock and a hard place but our experience has made us cautious of vaccination with the Lyme vaccine without prior SNAP 4DX testing to ensure the dog is clear of the disease. Please test prior to vaccinating.

Thank you for your attention to these issues and, in advance, for the care you will provide to this dog. If you have any questions or comments on the contents of this letter, please feel free to contact us at:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number/ Email: _____

Sincerely,

Breeder Name/ Signature

Sample letter from National Club



Dear Doctor,

As you know, Golden Retrievers have a high incidence of cancer, with a 1998 Health Survey (results available on the Health Section of the GRCA website www.grca.org) indicating that 57% of females and 66% of males will be affected. While many types of cancer are elevated in the breed, approximately one-half of the total is comprised of lymphoma (1 in 8 Golden) and hemangiosarcoma (1 in 5 Golden).

The Golden Retriever Club of America and the Golden Retriever Foundation have dedicated significant resources to improving Golden health, and are actively supporting numerous research studies investigating cancer in the breed. We are pleased to see results of these studies regularly published in premier medical journals, and translated into improved care opportunities.

In addition to financial support, we also aid researchers in obtaining vital tissue and/or blood samples from affected dogs. Along with this letter we have supplied a page with contact information for several of the programs investigating various cancers in Golden Retrievers. Owners do not need to be members of GRCA to participate, and we find that many owners are comforted to know that samples from their affected dog may benefit other dogs in the future. We hope that you will consider discussing sample donation to support research with your clients when their Golden Retriever is diagnosed with (or suspected of having) cancer.

Thank you for your consideration of this request, and please feel free to contact us or refer your clients to us for further information.

Sincerely,

Golden Retriever Club of America
Golden Retriever Foundation (<http://www.goldenretrieverfoundation.org/>)

Correspondence to: Rhonda Hovan, GRCA Research Facilitator
rhondahovan@aol.com
330-668-0044 home
330-338-4236 cell

Sample letter from National Club



Important Message from the Golden Retriever Club of America

Congratulations on your new Golden Retriever! Whether you have purchased a puppy or adopted an adult, we're sure you look forward to a wonderful future with your new family member. The Golden Retriever Club of America (GRCA) shares your hopes for a long, healthy life with your new companion, and as part of our commitment to the breed, we are providing this information to help guide his or her care.

An eye disease called pigmentary uveitis (also sometimes called "Golden Retriever uveitis" or "pigmentary and cystic glaucoma") is of emerging concern in the breed, and while it is believed to have a genetic basis, at this time there are no satisfactory tools that breeders can use to be certain to avoid producing affected puppies. Therefore, even the most carefully bred Golden may be at risk for developing this disease.

Pigmentary uveitis typically develops in middle-aged or senior Golden Retrievers, although dogs are sometimes diagnosed as young adults. Early stages of the disease are usually very mild, and owners and their general veterinarians may not notice outward signs. As pigmentary uveitis progresses, symptoms such as redness and tearing may appear, and over time the disease may progress to glaucoma. This can be a serious quality of life issue because pain from glaucoma may necessitate surgery to remove the affected eye(s). However, many ophthalmologists believe that early diagnosis and treatment may control or delay progression of the disease so that many or most affected dogs can live normal lives in comfort and without visual impairment.

Because early diagnosis *prior to the appearance of outward signs* provides the best opportunity for treatment, many ophthalmologists recommend that all Golden Retrievers have annual screening eye examinations by a veterinary ophthalmologist beginning at approximately three to four years of age. GRCA suggests that you share and discuss this information with your veterinarian, and if you obtained your dog from a GRCA member, he or she will be able to help you find modest cost eye screening clinics in your area. Since most eye clinics are held around the same time each year, many owners find it convenient to attend the same clinic each year. Alternatively, you can find a list of veterinary ophthalmologists at www.acvo.com or you can also locate eye clinics at www.offa.org or at www.vmdb.org or at http://cavalierhealth.org/health_clinics.htm

Please know that while this can be a serious disease for affected dogs (and thus the reason for this letter), by far the vast majority of Golden Retrievers will never be affected by pigmentary uveitis. We don't want you to worry or be alarmed, but rather just to be aware so that you can plan to include appropriate screening as part of your dog's routine well-care. However, if your dog is ever diagnosed, there are two important steps that we request you take beyond initiating therapy as recommended by the ophthalmologist. First, please notify your dog's breeder of the diagnosis so that he/she can make informed breeding decisions. And second, please ask the ophthalmologist to report the diagnosis on a CERF or OFA form so that GRCA and researchers have accurate data to guide our efforts to reduce the incidence of pigmentary uveitis in the breed.

Once again, congratulations on your new Golden Retriever! If you would like to learn more about GRCA or pigmentary uveitis, please visit the Club website at www.grca.org and go to the Health section for the most current updates and information. We hope that you will cherish your dog and love the breed as much as we do, and we wish your dog a long, happy, healthy lifetime as a member of your family.

Appendix B: Sample Vaccine Titer Nomograph



Companion Animal Vaccines and
Immuno-Diagnostic Service Laboratory
CAVIDS - Titer Testing Lab
University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine
2015 Linden Drive West
Madison, WI 53706
(608) 263-4638

4 November 2019

Owner name: xxxxxxxxxxxx Dam name: "XXXXXX"

Animal ID	CPV HI assay titer	CDV SN assay titer
XXXXX	320	32

Nomograph for XXXXX's puppies:

- A dose of DAP vaccine should be given at 8 and 12 weeks of age
- Titer test pups by HI and SN tests at 14 weeks of age

This nomograph is **unique** to this dam and is an estimate of the age at which the maternal antibody that this mother may pass to her pups will be dissipated and no longer capable of interfering with pup vaccination. This estimate is based on her antibody titers against each virus, CDV and CPV-2, which decrease in roughly 2 week half-lives in her pups. **Due to potential failure of passive transfer, the nomograph is not to be used as an indication of protection from wild-type virus for the litter.**

It is strongly recommended to end point titer test pups at least two weeks after vaccination is completed to determine that they have responded. Please include dam information when submitting pup sera for titers. We recommend that, unless an adverse reaction has been observed, all dogs be given DAPPi combo vaccine at one year of age, and then no more frequently than every three years.

(D = Distemper, P = Parvo, A = Adeno, Pi = Parainfluenza)

Dam Name: XXXXXX		Golden Retriever, expected whelp not given													
Sample drawn: 29 Oct-19															
CDV Titer: 32															
CPV-2 Titer: 320															
Maternal Antibody Degradation, with standard variation															
Distemper	16	8	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	32	16	8	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	64	32	16	8	4	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Parvo	160	80	40	20	10	5	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
	320	160	80	40	20	10	5	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
	640	320	160	80	40	20	10	5	3	1	1	0	0	0	0
Suggested Vaccination		8 wks 12 wks test													
0 days	12	24	36	48	60	72	84	96	108	120	132	144			
0 weeks	2	3	5	7	9	10	12	14	15	17	19	21			
Birth															

Laurie Larson, DVM – Director, CAVIDS laboratory

www.vetmed.wisc.edu/lab/CAVIDS



Appendix C: Sample Emergency Information Sheet

See next page

EMERGENCY INFORMATION SHEET FOR DOGS TRAVELING WITH ME

ATTENTION – IN CASE OF EMERGENCY!!!!!!

Owner's Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Pet's Name: _____ Breed / Color: _____

Sex: _____ Date of Birth: _____

This animal's leash is located: _____

Medical Information: _____

- 1) This animal is current on all shots - it is of no threat to anyone he/she might come into contact with.
- 2) This pet has the following **medical conditions** that must be treated: _____

This pet's regular veterinarian is:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

What you should know about this animal: _____

SHOULD I BE UNABLE TO ATTEND TO MY DOG DUE TO INJURY OR DEATH, PLEASE CONTACT:

Name: _____ Name: _____

Address: _____ Address: _____

Phone (primary): _____ **Phone** (primary): _____

Phone (alternate): _____ **Phone** (alternate): _____

This Dog should be boarded in the nearest animal boarding facility or veterinarian. **PLEASE** do not take my pet to an Animal Shelter or SPCA. The above persons have agreed to pay all fees to retrieve this dog and they have my permission to remove the dog from the boarding facility. Said persons also agree to pay any medical bills for said dog.

Should one of my dogs be on the loose following a car/van accident - please contact the above individuals who will assist in the search should I be unable to participate.

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated. This dog is a member of my family and it is my wish that it receives the best care possible.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D: First Aid Kit Equipment and Over-the-Counter Medications to Have on Hand

- Rectal or calibrated ear thermometer (digital is easiest)—normal canine temperature is 100°- 102.6°F
- Scissors, preferable blunt nosed
- Nail trimmers and/or nail file
- Assorted bandage material
- Gauze pads (3" and larger)
- Gauze rolls
- Bandage tape
- Vet wrap
- Syringes (for giving liquid medication)
- Tweezers
- Q-tips

First Aid Over-the-counter Items and Medications

Consult your veterinarian for dosage and frequency before using.

- Ascriptin** (coated aspirin) for minor aches and pains. Discontinue if vomiting or diarrhea occurs. Do not give for more than a few days. (Do not give regular aspirin or non-steroidal anti-inflammatories except under vet supervision.) Give by dog's weight, twice daily:
 - < 10 pounds – ½ baby aspirin tablet
 - 10-25 pounds – 1 baby aspirin tablet
 - 25-50 pounds – ½ adult regular-strength Ascriptin tablet
 - > 50 pounds – 1 adult regular-strength Ascriptin tablet
- Alcohol** to clean thermometer and ears
- Antibiotic ointment**, such as Neosporin for cuts and ear treatment
- Benadryl** for allergic reactions (facial swelling, puffiness) to bee stings, spider bites, etc. Give by dog's weight, two to three times daily:
 - < 10 pounds – ½ 25-mg tablet
 - 10-25 pounds – 1 25-mg tablet
 - 25-50 pounds – 2 25-mg tablets
 - > 50 pounds – 3 25-mg tablets
- Hydrogen peroxide 3%**, from drug store or supermarket, to induce vomiting
 - One teaspoon (five milliliters, or cc's) for every 10 pounds of body weight.
- Immodium AD tablets** for diarrhea. Give by dog's weight, after each bout of diarrhea to a maximum of two times. Do not exceed dosage!

< 50 pounds – ½ tablet

> 50 pounds – 1 tablet

- Kwick Stop** to stop bleeding nails
- KY Jelly** to lubricate thermometer and to apply to feet in the snow or when pads crack
- Pepto-Bismol** for upset stomachs (vomiting, diarrhea, gas) Give by dog's weight, two to three times daily:

Liquid: 1 teaspoon per 10 lbs

Tablets (Crush tablets before giving them):

< 10 pounds – ½ tablet

10-25 pounds – 1 tablet

25-50 pounds – 2 tablets

> 50 pounds – 3 tablets

Appendix E: Foods That Avidog Recommends

We no longer publish a list of specific recommended foods due to today's rapidly changing dog-food market. We continue to believe that a good quality commercial raw diet is ideal for dogs but understand that is not always possible. If you feed a kibble, freeze-dried or dehydrated food, it is even more important that you follow these guidelines:

- 1) **Rotate protein sources** to provide an array of amino acids and micronutrients for your dog's body to choose from.
- 2) **Rotate manufacturers** so you aren't solely dependent upon that company's sourcing, knowledge and, frankly, ethics.
- 3) **Avoid grain-free foods** that are high in potatoes or legumes, such as peas, lentils, etc. In particular, avoid foods in which manufacturers have split ingredients, for example, peas, pea protein, and pea fiber in the same food. These foods have resulted in taurine-deficient dilated cardiomyopathy (DCM) in goldens among other breeds. For more details on taurine issues in grain-free foods, see the attached letter from the University of California at Davis.
- 4) Feed an **AAFCO All-Life Stages food** that contains at least 26% protein and 14% fat for your dog's lifetime. I personally prefer 28+% protein and 18+% fat.

Even if your dog needs to lose weight, it needs fat in its diet since dogs use fats for energy the way we use carbs. It is better to cut back on the quantity of your dog's food than to reduce the quality by going to low-fat or senior diets.

- 5) Provide **fresh food** regularly, such as meat, steamed or lightly cooked vegetables, and fruit, especially berries. These items are NOT people food, they are just food. People food, which you should avoid, includes things like French-fries, potato chips, and sugary items. Skip these but feed fresh food.
- 6) **Supplement** for your dog's lifetime with:
 - a. **Wild fish oil** that provides at least 15 mg of docosahexanoic acid (DHA) per pound body weight. This key Omega 3 Fatty acid benefits dogs in so many ways that we can't count but include reducing cancer risk, reducing inflammation, and helping joints, skin and brain. I use Grizzly salmon or pollock oil.
 - b. General vitamin-mineral supplement, like **AVN Probalance Canine Complete**.
 - c. Probiotics, like **Fortiflora** or **Geneflora**.
 - d. Joint supplements, like **Dasuquin Advanced** or **Cosequin**, daily from 6 months on.
 - e. **Ocuglo**, daily from 6 months on.

Appendix F: Your Dog's Two-Year Health Screenings

You have agreed to do four health clearances on your dog. Between the ages of 24 and 30 months, you need to schedule OFA hip and elbow x-rays (PennHIP if you are considering breeding your dog), an OFA (formerly CERF) eye exam, and an OFA heart exam. Many general practitioner (GP) vets do a good job on OFA x-rays so talk to your GP or ask your breeder/show friends. The eye and heart exams will need to be done by board-certified specialists. Links to directories of these vets are below.

For ALL of these you will need to take **your dog's AKC papers** since the vets will need information from them for each exam. You should also take your dog's **microchip number** since most vets will want to confirm the number when they scan it. Be sure to put the microchip number on the forms so that the information gets published through the AKC.

Here is what to expect for each clearance.

1. **OFA Hip and Elbow X-rays.** When you schedule your dog's appointment, be sure to tell the vet's office that you need Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) hip and elbow x-rays. Be prepared to drop your dog off early in the morning and pick it up later in the day. Take its AKC papers and microchip number when you drop it off since the AKC number must be put on the x-ray. If your dog will be sedated, do not feed or give water that morning. Before dropping your dog off, ask for an appt with the vet at the end of the day so that he/she can show you the x-rays and give you his/her assessment of them when you pick your dog up.

OFA Application http://www.ofa.org/pdf/hdedapp_bw.pdf

Before you take your dog in, go over this website <http://www.leerburg.com/hipart.htm> so you have a good idea of what correct positioning looks like. His description of good positioning under the second picture (the one with the colored arrows) is excellent. Go in knowing the few things you can look for to make sure your dog was properly positioned. Do not pay for poorly positioned x-rays and DO NOT SEND THEM TO THE OFA!

2. **PennHIP X-rays.** If you are going to do PennHIP, check the PennHIP website to find a vet that is certified to do this technique <http://www.pennhip.org/>. If you are coming to the New Jersey area, Dr. Mary Stankovitz, Pleasant Valley Veterinary Service, 32 Pleasant Valley Rd, Washington, NJ 07882 (908) 689-0773, will do PennHIP and OFA hip x-rays for \$295. Elbow x-rays add to that number slightly.

Hip/Elbow FAQs

- a. Wouldn't it be best if I find a vet that does not use anesthesia to do the x-rays?

If you are definitely not breeding your dog, it is fine to avoid anesthesia for the OFA hip/elbow x-rays. Anesthesia always bears some risk although modern anesthetics are much, much safer than the past. However, if you want to avoid all chemical risk, then go looking for one of the vets that specialize in doing x-rays without anesthesia. Even if you

can't find one though, know that dogs are usually just sedated not put completely out for the x-rays so the vet can ensure correct positioning.

However, if your dog is going to be bred, anesthesia is pretty much required. PennHIP x-rays must be done under anesthesia and the OFA is quite clear about their preference:

“Chemical restraint (anesthesia) is not required by OFA but chemical restraint to the point of muscle relaxation is recommended. With chemical restraint optimum patient positioning is easier with minimal repeat radiographs (less radiation exposure) and a truer representation of the hip status is obtained.”

Since our goal in doing clearances is to get a true view of the dog's structure, then chemical restraint is required for breeding dogs from my perspective.

b. Should I worry about x-raying around my female's heat cycle?

Yes, it is important to x-ray when your bitch is in anestrus. This usually begins 90 days after the start of her heat cycle. My suggestion is similar to the OFA's:

“Radiography of pregnant or estrus females should be avoided due to possible increased joint laxity (subluxation) from hormonal variations. OFA recommends radiographs be taken (at least) one month after weaning pups and one month before or after a heat cycle. Physical inactivity because of illness, weather, or the owner's management practices may also result in some degree of joint laxity. The OFA recommends evaluation when the dog is in good physical condition.”

c. Should I initial the box to release abnormal results publicly?

I don't have a recommendation on this. I used to fully support open registries where all information—good and bad—is public but the OFA is a partially open registry. This doesn't offer the benefits of an open registry. I've also become concerned about the OFA's accuracy over the past few years so I'm comfortable with whichever decision you make. Personally, I release the results on all of my dogs.

d. Should I send the x-rays to Gayle?

I am always happy to look at your dog's x-rays before forwarding them on to the OFA, if you would like me to. Many owners ask me to do this to check for positioning, a key reason that a perfectly normal dog can get a failing rating from the OFA. I am reasonably good at reading hip x-rays but I'm totally clueless about elbow x-rays.

Positioning can make a good hip look bad. Thus, my recommendation is to find an experienced and well-thought-of vet to take the x-rays. If you are confident in their quality and your vet sends them to the OFA for you, then by all means, send them on.

e. How long will it take to get results from the OFA? From PennHIP?

PennHIP will take a week and the OFA can take 3-6 weeks. You will get a report from PennHIP. You will either get a certificate (blue for hips and green for elbows) from the OFA if your dog receives a passing rating or a letter if they do not.

f. What are the ratings that my dog might get from OFA?

The OFA has three passing ratings (Excellent, Good and Fair) and three failing ones (Mildly Dysplastic, Moderately Dysplastic and Severely Dysplastic). Dogs can also be considered Borderline and the OFA asks for a resubmission in 6 months. Less than 4% of goldens are rated Excellent and over 20% fall into the three dysplastic categories. Presently, the _____ (Kennel name) percentages are ___% of our dogs get OFA Excellent, ___% are dysplastic and the rest are either Good (___%) or Fair (___%).

g. What does the PennHIP report say?

PennHIP provides your dog's Distraction Index (DI), a measurement of how tight your dog's hips are, a comparison of this DI against all goldens in the PennHIP system (giving you your dog's percentile) and an assessment as to whether there is degenerative joint disease (DJD) present, as well as some other specific malformations. You can read more about PennHIP at <http://www.pennhip.org/>.

3. OFA Eye Exam. Your dog will need an eye examination by a board-certified veterinary ophthalmologist at two years of age and then yearly for life, either from an ophthalmologist or from a general practitioner who has the equipment and knowledge to look for pigmentary uveitis or other eye problems. You can find a list of board-certified ophthalmologists at <http://acvo.org/new/public/locate.shtml>. The cheapest place to get an OFA exam is through a "clinic" set up by a local breed club. You can find a list of these at <http://www.offa.org/clinics.html>.

OFA ophthalmology exams require your dog's eyes to be dilated so you'll need to arrive 15-20 minutes prior to your appointment. Remember to bring your dog's AKC papers so you can complete the OFA forms. Don't plan on outdoor activities with your dog for a few hours after your appointment until its pupils are no longer dilated.

The exam will consist of the vet checking your dog's eyes in a dark room with various lenses and lights. Most dogs are not bothered by this examination at all. The examiner will note ALL issues she sees in your dog's eyes, from the trivial (distichia) to serious (pigmentary uveitis). Do not get concerned if your vet says she sees problems but be sure to ask her to explain any issues that she notes. Once done, you will receive a copy of the OFA form. You should complete the back of the form and send it in to OFA to register your dog's examination results.

4. Heart Exam. Your dog will also need an OFA or ACVIM Registry of Cardiac Health (ARCH) cardiac examination by a board-certified cardiologist. Tell the front desk that you want one of these exams so the correct forms will be used for the examination. This exam only needs to be done once in your dog's life, assuming your vet does not hear murmurs as your dog ages. Information about the OFA Cardiac exam can be found at www.ofa.org/diseases/other-diseases/cardiac-disease Information about ARCH can be found at <http://www.archcertify.org/> . You can find a cardiologist near you from the ACVIM website <http://vetspecialists.com/>. Select "cardiology" as the specialty and search for your state.

The basic cardiology exam only requires the cardiologist to listen to your dog's heart using a stethoscope. If the cardiologist hears a murmur, your dog should then be examined by color Doppler echocardiography. This exam does not require your dog to be anesthetized. Using a Doppler machine, the vet will examine your dog's heart while your dog lies on the exam table. Most dogs handle this exam with only a little anxiety.

5. Other Exams.

- a. **Thyroid.** Your dog does NOT need a thyroid test UNLESS she is symptomatic for thyroid disease. The thyroid test results are proving to be inconclusive for asymptomatic dogs so we no longer recommend the use of this test for screening.
- b. **Genetic Diversity.** Testing for genetic diversity in our dogs is in its infancy. We are supporting the [University of California at Davis's Veterinary Genetics lab](#) genetic diversity testing. We are submitting tests on your puppy so will share the results when we get them.
- c. **DNA Disease testing.** If your dog is going to be bred, you will need to run all current disease DNA tests. The easiest way to do this is through [Embark](#).

Let me know if you have any questions or problems in getting these tests done.

Appendix G: Dog Supply & Medical Resources

- **Amazon**, [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)
- **Revival Animal Health**, <http://www.revivalanimal.com/> 1-800-786-4751 Good source for Ivomec (Ivermectin), wormers and other medications
- **Walmart and Sam's Clubs** offer very low-cost pharmaceutical prices on some generic prescriptions.
- Other medical and other supply resources:
 - **1-800-Pet Meds** <http://www.1800petmeds.com>
 - **Jeffers Livestock** <http://www.jefferslivestock.com/>
 - **KV Supply** <http://www.kvsupply.com>
 - **Pet Edge** <http://www.petedge.com/>
 - **Drs Foster and Smith** <http://www.drsfostersmith.com/>

Appendix H: Your Pup's Risk for Adult Health Issues

As you know, we seek to breed the healthiest dogs we can but it is simply not possible to produce perfectly healthy dogs every time. Let me repeat that—there are no perfectly healthy dogs (or people) so you should expect some health problems over your dog's life. What we have tried to do is significantly reduce the risk of **serious** diseases that are common in goldens. That means that we tolerate the occurrence of less impactful or rare diseases. Because of the randomness and ambiguity of canine genetics, some of our dogs may experience more serious diseases despite our best efforts.

To help you watch for potential health problems in your dog, here is how we assess the risk of your dog getting any of the problems facing your breed today. For those issues where there is some risk or for which we know your puppy is affected, we have identified the symptoms that you might see.

No risk is used only for diseases for which there are DNA tests and the test results indicate neither parent carries this disease.

Very low risk indicates that no dogs in the pedigree have been affected by this disease, the dam and sire have produced no cases of it that we are aware of, and we have sought dogs from lines that are generally unaffected by this problem.

Low risk indicates that no dogs in the pedigree have been affected by this disease, but either the dam or sire may have produced a few cases of it or the lines are known to be slightly affected by this problem.

Some risk indicates that some dogs in the pedigree may have been affected by this disease or the sire or dam may have produced a few cases of it, or the disease is so widespread in the breed that it is impossible to breed away from it.

Affected indicates that we have done a reliable DNA test on either your puppy or its parents and the test indicated that your puppy has the genes that cause this disease. However, not all dogs with the genes for some diseases have symptoms of them.

Challenges of Old Frozen-Semen Breedings

One of the challenges of using frozen semen from long-dead dogs is that we don't have the ability to test them for diseases that have been discovered in more recent years. In those cases, we must make informed guesses from the dog's health and longevity over his lifetime, and issues that were reported in his offspring.

