



Basic Pet Care Information

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Basic care information for most pets...

We compiled this information for your convenience from various sites around the web - and offer it here for your review. We do not claim any authority on the subject, always consult with your veterinarian for specific advice regarding your pet.

Feeding

Your veterinarian may recommend a feeding program for you pet. A complete and balanced diet program covering protein, carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals is necessary for proper growth and good health of your pet.

There are some basic guidelines:

- Puppies or kittens should be fed small amounts 3-4 times per day. At 6 months, reduce to twice per day and once per day for mature pets.
- Name-brand commercial pet food is carefully balanced to meet your pet's nutritional requirements. However, your veterinarian may recommend vitamin/mineral supplements.
- Table scraps disrupt your pet's balanced diet and should be avoided. Bones should never be fed.
- During pregnancy and nursing, your pet has special dietary needs. Check with your veterinarian for feeding instructions.
- Fresh water should be available at all times.

Vaccination

A routine vaccination program significantly increases your pet's likelihood of living a normal, healthy life. Some important diseases that should be considered for prevention appear in the "Vaccination" section. For maximum protection. follow your veterinarian's advice and make sure your pet receives vaccinations and boosters as scheduled.

Spay-Neuter

There are many myths about spaying or neutering that should be dispelled.

First, an animal does not have to produce "at least one litter of offspring" to lead a nonnal life.

Second, animals will not always gain weight after spay or neuter. Although the tendency may be there, proper nutrition and exercise will help avoid that outcome.

Third, it is not inhumane to sterilize an animal - as the procedure is safe and effective.

Animal shelters and pounds across the country are burdened with unwanted animals.

Responsible pet owners must take the lead in reducing the number of free-roaming animals and unwanted pets.

Parasite Control

A variety of parasites affect a pet throughout its lifetime. Treatment is usually simple but requires medications that must be used carefully and according to instructions. Proper sanitation will reduce likelihood and severity of many parasite infections, but regular medical exams and treatment are necessary for best control. Among the most important parasites that affect pets and require routine treatment are heartworms, worms of the gastrointestinal tract, fleas and ticks.

Surgery

Besides spay or neuter. it is not uncommon for your pet to require surgery at some point in its life. Accidents or other injuries as well as internal disorders may require surgical procedures.

Modern anesthetics and life-support agents similar to those found in human hospitals are available to yom veterinarian and minimize risks of surgery. Pre and post-surgical care require attention, and you should follow the instructions of your veterinarian. Withholding food or water the day the surgery is scheduled and confinement during recovery may be recommended. Medications could be prescribed after the surgery, and sutures may require removal...