

DOGS TRUST HOPE PROJECT



Preventative Health Care

The Dogs Trust Hope Project provides free preventative treatments for your dog to keep him happy and healthy. Under the scheme, your dog is entitled to free neutering, flea and worming treatments, vaccinations and microchipping. This fact sheet explains why these are so important for your dog.

Microchipping

This is a way of permanently identifying your dog. A microchip is a small electronic device, approximately the size of a grain of rice. This is coded with a unique number that can be read by a scanner.

The 'chip' is implanted under the skin, between the shoulder blades, using a special device. Microchipping shouldn't hurt any more than a minor injection and once implanted the dog will not feel the chip.

Dogs microchipped under the Hope Project will automatically be registered on the Petlog Identification Database so that they can be easily identified if they stray or get lost. If you have a permanent address or telephone number, these can be added to your dog's microchip record but you must ALWAYS keep these details up to date.

All dogs must be microchipped in order to remain on our veterinary entitlement card scheme. By the 1st April 2016 ALL dogs must be microchipped by UK law.

Collar and Tag

All dogs are required by law to wear a collar and tag with their owner's name and address on it. If you do not have a tag for your dog, the Dogs Trust Hope Project can provide one.

Worming

All dogs will have worms at some point. Untreated infestations can affect adult dogs and cause quite serious illness in puppies.

There are a few different types of worms that can affect your dog and one type that lives in the lungs and major blood vessels can be fatal to adult dogs.

Worms can also be a risk to your health and as a responsible owner you should be treating your dog regularly. Generally puppies should be wormed every 2-4 weeks until 6 months old and adult dogs 4 times a year. Your vet will be able to advise you on the best protocol.

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Flea Treatment

Even the cleanest dogs will get fleas at some point and they can also bite humans and cause irritation.

To prevent fleas, your dog should be treated every 2 months. The best treatments will be available from your local vet. Pet shop and supermarket products, such as flea collars and combs etc. are normally ineffective. Fleas can also transmit other parasites such as worms to your dog.

As well as a cure these treatments are usually preventative if used regularly.

Vaccinations

Some dogs die from diseases which can be easily prevented by vaccinations. The main diseases we vaccinate against are:

- Parvovirus – This is a highly contagious virus that attacks the intestines. Puppies and younger dogs are most susceptible and most will die, even with appropriate veterinary treatment.
- Canine distemper virus – This virus affects the lungs, intestines, stomach, eyes, nose and skin. In approximately half of cases it will also affect the spine and brain and can cause fits.
- Leptospirosis – This can be transmitted from other dogs, and also rats and foxes can spread the disease. This is a bacterial infection causing high temperatures, dehydration, joint pain and can damage the liver, kidneys and blood vessels. It can be fatal or cause long term damage. Dogs that have recovered from leptospirosis can still shed the virus in urine for up to a year after. It can also be transmitted to people and can cause serious or fatal disease.
- Infectious canine hepatitis – This virus spreads through the blood to the liver, causing inflammation, vomiting and abdominal pain. It can also affect the kidneys and eyes. Symptoms can range from mild to severe and can also be fatal.

REMEMBER: ALL of these diseases can be fatal.

Puppies need to have to have a course of 2 injections, the first is given at 8 weeks of age and the second is normally done at 10-12 weeks. Both injections **MUST** be given to provide adequate immunity.

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Annual boosters are then needed to continue to protect the dog throughout their life. Ideally dogs should have regular check-ups and the booster appointments also provide a good opportunity to have a general health check for your pet.

Neutering

This is the term used for the removal of the reproductive organs, often referred to as castration or spaying.

Castration is the surgical removal of the testicles, and spaying is the surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus.

We recommend that every dog is neutered for their own health and wellbeing. Neutering is the **ONLY** way to guarantee preventing unwanted pregnancies.

We would strongly advise against breeding. Puppies can be expensive and our veterinary scheme does not cover any treatment related to pregnancy or puppies including emergency caesarean sections and post birthing complications.

The Facts:

- Neutering will not change your dog's personality
- It stops female from having messy seasons twice a year and from having false pregnancies.
- Will reduce the risk of them straying to look for a mate.
- Neutering females can greatly reduce the risk of mammary cancers and pyometra – serious and life threatening womb infection.
- In male dogs, neutering will reduce the risk of testicular cancers and some diseases of the prostate.
- Castrating males can also make them calmer and reduce the risk of aggression, or your dog being a target of aggression by other uncastrated males.

If your dog is not already neutered, you must get this done in the first four months to continue receiving help from the Hope Project.