

Lake Harriet Veterinary

Integrative Pet Care

Cathy Sinning, DVM, CVA • Jim Sinning, DVM, CVA • Nicole Palmieri, DVM
Megan Schommer, DVM, Jessy Stenross, DVM, Jen Gallus, DVM, Sarah Wineke, DVM



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www.LakeHarrietVet.com

4249 Bryant Ave South • Minneapolis, MN 55409 • (612) 822-1545



Frequently Asked Questions About Puppies

What is the best way to housetrain my puppy?

There are many contributing factors to how long it may take you to housetrain your puppy, including breed, age, and overall health. Housetraining your puppy takes patience and vigilance. Please see our recommended reading and training links for help with housetraining. However, there are a few key ingredients to help you with your success.

Routine: Puppies do best with a schedule. You should feed your puppy at the same time each day. Depending on their age puppies need to be fed about 3–4 times a day. If your puppy is eating at the same times each day it will make it more likely that he'll eliminate at consistent times as well.

Frequency: Take your puppy out frequently at least every 4 hours. Look for signs that he may need to eliminate, like circling, whining or sniffing. When you see these signs take your puppy outside immediately.

Confinement: We strongly encourage owners to employ crate training to facilitate housetraining. Like a cave or a den, a crate or kennel provides an area where the puppy can take a time out and feel secure and safe. The first few times in the crate should be a positive experience. Never scold your puppy by putting him the crate or he will associate being scolded with his crate. Puppies like to keep their den clean so they will try to avoid “messing” in the crate if at all possible.

Accidents: Expect them. Occasional accidents are to be expected. If you catch your puppy in the middle of an accident immediately take them outside.

Praise: This is the most vital step to successful potty training. Praise your puppy verbally and give them a treat immediately after he's finished eliminating outdoors. Make sure the food treat you give him has a high value. If it is a food that your puppy goes crazy for your puppy has more motivation to please you with positive behavior.

What type of dog food should I feed, and how often?

In terms of feeding schedule, we recommend feeding puppies at specific times of the day. A measured amount of food should be offered 3–4 times a day to a puppy 6–20 weeks of age. What is not eaten after 15–20 minutes should be taken away. After 6 months of age 2 meals will be sufficient for most dogs. Many of the bagged and canned dog foods available do provide a balanced diet, however, there are certain foods we will recommend as better choices. Please see our list of recommended foods which we have listed on our resources page.

Is chewing normal?



Puppies love to chew. Chewing is an instinctive behavior for puppies and is an expected behavior until they about at least 6–8 months in age. Chew toys such as Kong toys work well to help pacify this instinct. Make sure that toys are large enough that your puppy will not choke or swallow them. For some puppies rawhide bones are too tough and they can cause teeth to fracture, resulting in painful dental problems. Puppies' baby teeth begin to be replaced by adult teeth at 4–6 months of age and it is normal for a small amount of blood to be seen as they loosen.

What are appropriate toys for my dog?


Many dog trainers and veterinarians now recommend a variety of very firm rubber toys (virtually indestructible) that have a hollow center into which food and treats can be stuffed. As the eager pet chews the toy small morsels of treat fall out and are eaten, only to prompt further chewing. The most common of these toys are called Kongs®. Please ask us about your specific toys or let us know what has worked for you. Avoid toys which can be chewed into pieces that can become lodged in the stomach and cause an obstruction in the digestive system. This has been the cause for many emergency surgeries. In addition, many dogs are sensitive to the preservatives used to condition animal bones and will have stomach upset (diarrhea and vomiting) from chewing them. We cannot recommend Nylabones, antlers, or compressed yak milk for chewing.



How do I trim my puppy's nails?

It is a good idea to touch your puppies' feet and toes often as soon as you bring them home. It is a good idea to start trimming puppy's claws when they are first brought into the house. Purchase a good quality nail trimmer and a product called quick stop. Begin by trimming off the last 1-2 millimeters of the claw a couple of times over the course of a week. Avoid trimming the "quick" or pink part of the nail that provides its blood supply. If bleeding occurs you can push the quick stop into the nail to stop the bleeding. If you do not have quick stop on hand you can use corn meal, flour. Always give your puppy a reward of verbal praise or a treat immediately after finishing. You can tell the nails need to be trimmed when your puppy's paws "click" on the ground when he/she is walking. We would be happy to give you a demonstration on how to trim the nails.

How do I get my puppy used to his/her leash and collar?

Most leashes and collars on the market are acceptable for dogs. Obedience trainers seem to favor leather leashes 6 feet long and have a width sufficient enough to withstand prolonged pulling. In general rope leashes should be avoided because a strong pull from your companion can cause rope burn. We discourage choke and prong collars because we feel that they are inappropriate for all but the most aggressive dogs, and in those cases behavioral training is a necessity. Small and toy breeds often respond best to a harness that places pressure on their chest rather than on their small necks. 

The first step in acclimating your puppy to a collar is to put one on in a quiet, non-threatening manner. Have your puppy wear it around the house and make sure it is not so loose that he can chew on it. Once your puppy is used to the collar you can attach the leash to the collar in the house. Allow your puppy to walk around with the leash on but do not pick the leash up or apply any pressure to it. Only after she is used to seeing it on her can you then pick the leash up and apply gentle tension. Gradually increase the amount of tension while praising your puppy and giving her positive reinforcement. You will gradually be able to move to the outside and enjoy walking with your puppy. Another great trick when you are beginning to leash walk outdoors is to carry your puppy a block away from your home, set him/her down, and then walk back toward your home. Walking toward your home is more familiar to your puppy and will increase the chances of him feeling comfortable with the leash.

Do I need to give my puppy medication for worms?

Eighty-five percent of all puppies have intestinal parasites or worms, and some of these present serious health concerns to children who can be infected with them. Therefore it is imperative that everyone washes his or her hands after playing with your puppy. At your initial visit we will evaluate a stool sample for parasites and start your puppy on an intestinal parasite control program as recommended by the Center for Disease Control. Additional fecal exams may be recommended at a later date if your puppy develops diarrhea or vomiting.

Should I get a microchip for my puppy?

When considering a microchip for your pet you should know the following facts: More than 10 million pets are lost each year; 50% of dogs and 75% of cats arrive at shelters without collars; over 20,000 pets have been returned to their owners through the HomeAgain® system. A microchip is a pet retrieval system that involves injecting a small microchip, about the size of a grain of rice, under the skin between the shoulder blades of a dog or cat in much the same way a vaccine is administered. Each chip has a unique digit code that must be registered with the AKC's program. When a lost pet arrives at a shelter or veterinary clinic a special handheld scanner is passed over the shoulder blades. The scanner can read the identification number and the shelter can then notify the AKC and the pet's owner or a veterinarian.



Commercial Food Recommendations

Commercial dogs and cat foods come in a dizzying array of shapes, colors, textures, and qualities. We have attempted to compile a list of recommended foods in terms of their wholesomeness, lack of additives, high digestibility, and availability. While this list cannot be all-inclusive it is meant as a starting point for selecting a quality food. For animals with specific health issues, this selection should be discussed with your veterinarian.

Our opinion is that the ideal diet for your pet is a fresh, well-balanced, home-prepared diet. While this is not a feasible option for everyone and is not without a few contraindications, if you are interested in a home-prepared diet, you should discuss the options with a veterinarian who is both open to, and has experience with, these diets.

There are a variety of commercially available preparations of raw meat, bone, fruits, and vegetables, ground into convenient patties or cubes and frozen; some are even freeze-dried. These approximate the quality of a home made food and are well balanced. Examples:

- BARF patties – www.barfworld.com (Raw frozen)
- Nature's Variety – www.naturesvariety.com (Raw frozen)
- Primal Pet Foods – www.primalpetfoods.com (Raw frozen)
- Woody's Pet Food Deli – www.woodyspetdeli.com (Freshly prepared pet food. Local.)

European-style pet foods consist of grains, herbs and nuts. Water, fresh meat, and vegetables must be added to balance these diets. Example:

Sojourner Farms – www.sojos.com (Local)

Here are some good options for commercially prepared dry and canned foods:

- California Natural – www.naturapet.com
- Canidae or Felidae – www.canidae.com
- Honest Kitchen – www.thehonestkitchen.com (Dehydrated food. Add water.)
- Innova – www.naturapet.com
- Merrick – www.merrickpetfood.com
- Nature's Variety – www.naturesvariety.com
- Solid Gold – www.solidgoldhealth.com
- Wellness – www.wellnesspetfood.com

Retail Stores:

Bone Adventure – Multiple metro locations

Calhoun Pet Supply – 612-824-1094 – corner of 36th & Bryant Ave. S. – Mpls

Chuck & Don's Pet Food Outlet – Many metro locations

It's A Pet's Life – 763-476-7372 – 1115 Vicksburg Lane N – Plymouth

Lulu and Luigi – 952-929-5858 – 3844 Grand Way – St. Louis Park

Pet Stuff – 952-930-9383 – 14665 Excelsior Blvd. – Minnetonka

Surbarban Feed and Supply – 952-935-2700 – 1404 Main St. – Hopkins

Urban Tails – 612-879-0709 – 2106 Lyndale Ave. S. – Mpls

Twin Cities Natural Food Co-ops – Multiple metro locations

Woody's Pet Food Deli – 612-208-0335 – 3008 W 50th St. – Mpls



Recommended Canine Vaccination Guidelines

A widespread canine vaccination program has played a crucial role in the prevention of infectious diseases in veterinary medicine. As pets have assumed a different role in the modern family and risk factors have changed the vaccination schedule has changed accordingly. We seek a compromise between maximizing immunity to diseases and minimizing possible short and long-term side effects from vaccines. The risks versus benefits of using certain vaccines or of administering multiple vaccines at the same visit need to be strongly reconsidered. It is now known that some vaccines may be unnecessary and that their use may increase the risk of adverse reactions. In addition, there are studies that now show the duration of immunity from many vaccines is much longer than one year. When we consider if and when a dog needs to be vaccinated its health, age, risk of exposure, lifestyle, and past medical and vaccination history are important variables to assess.

The following vaccine protocol is our recommendation to meet the requirements determined by the city of Minneapolis, but it may be modified. It includes the “core” vaccines and should not be interpreted to mean that other protocols recommended are not valid. It is a matter of professional judgment and choice.

8 weeks of age	Distemper, Parvo, Parainfluenza, Adeno (DAPP)
12 wks	DAPP
16 wks (if needed)	DAPP
16 wks or older	Rabies
1 year	DAPP (3 yr duration)
1 year	Rabies (3 yr duration)

Adult dogs:

There are two options for adult dogs that need the DAPP vaccine. We recommend performing antibody titers for DAPP on an annual basis to assess a dog’s immune memory status to determine when the next DAPP vaccine should be given. This test helps us to know how susceptible a dog may be to diseases to which it may be exposed. Alternatively, your dog should receive the DAPP vaccine every 3 years to stay “current.” Rabies should be given only once every 3 years as required by law. Other non-core vaccines such as those to protect against Lyme disease, kennel cough, Coronavirus, Giardia and Leptospirosis are not recommended unless your dog is determined to be at risk. This may include dogs that board at kenneling facilities, hunting or field dogs, or those that travel to areas where some diseases are more prevalent. Always tell us about your dog’s vaccine, travel and medical history so that we can make an informed decision about future vaccines.



Guide To Brushing Your Animal Companion's Teeth

Our animal companions are an important part of our lives for many years and dental care is crucial to maintaining their good health. Dental disease is the most common problem seen in our pet population today. More than 85% of all dogs and cats over 3 years of age presented to veterinarians are affected by dental problems. Periodontal disease is the cause of your pet's bad breath and painful mouth, and may cause infections of the kidneys, liver, and heart.

We recommend daily dental care at home for your companion animals just like the rest of the family. It is best to begin home care at an early age (8–12 weeks), but visible tartar should be removed during a thorough dental cleaning. This makes your home care easier and more effective.

Supplies needed:

- Soft-bristled toothbrush or inexpensive automatic toothbrush
- Pet toothpaste (**never** human toothpaste)

Week 1: Slowly acquainting your pet with mouth care

Using your hand, gently open your animal companion's mouth and run your finger around the lips. Rub the outside of the mouth and massage the cheeks. This gets her used to having her mouth touched. Begin for thirty seconds on day one and progress to a couple of minutes by the end of the week. Reward your pet with a small treat at the end of each session.

Week 2: Introducing toothbrush or washcloth (without toothpaste)

This week, use either a wet washcloth wrapped around your index finger or wet toothbrush on the teeth. Lift the lips and massage the outer surfaces of the upper and lower teeth using a back and forth motion. Do this for thirty seconds on day one and progress to three minutes by the end of the week.

Week 3: Add toothpaste and extend brushing time

This week, use your dental cleaning instrument and now add $\frac{3}{4}$ inch of toothpaste to brush the outer surfaces of the upper and lower teeth using a back and forth motion. If possible, try to brush the inner surfaces of the teeth. The inner surfaces are harder to get at but the tartar builds up more quickly on the outer surfaces. Always give a small treat at the end of each session...make it rewarding.

If you find brushing impossible, there are other products you can use to maintain good oral health—but eventually, we will recommend a professional dental cleaning. Below are some examples of products:

- CET chews, Oravet chews, Purina DentaLife, and other dental treats are available for dogs and cats. These are enzymatically treated to help remove bacteria before it builds up and turns to tartar that cannot be removed with simple brushing.
- Specially formulated dental diets are available for dogs and cats. These foods can be used as a regular complete diet or as a treat for patients especially prone to dental disease.
- Some adult dogs may benefit from chewing on pig ears, raw hides, and various treated animal parts. However, this will increase their risk of tooth fractures and excessive wearing of the teeth.



Dog Resources

The following is a list of resources we have collected over time, through recommendations from our clients and friends. Please let us know if you'd like to nominate any additions to this list.

Pet Stores & Boutiques

Bone Adventure – Multiple metro locations
Calhoun Pet Supply – Bryant & 36th – 612-824-1094
It's A Pet's Life – 1115 Vicksburg Lane N Plymouth – 763-476-7372
Lulu and Luigi's – 3699 Joppa Ave, St. Louis Park – 952-929-1200
Pet Stuff – 14655 Excelsior Blvd, Minnetonka – 952-930-9383
Urban Tails Pet Supply – 2106 Lyndale Ave S. – 612-879-0709
Twin Cities Natural Food Co-ops – Multiple metro locations

Overnight Boarding & Spa Services

Bed and Bone – bedandbonetoo.com – 612-333-7387 – Buffalo
Dog Day Getaway – dogdaygetaway.com – Apple Valley
Dog Days – dogdaysinc.com – 651-642-9663 – St. Paul
Downtown Dogs – dtdogs.com – 612-374-3647 – Minneapolis
Hound Dog Pet Hotel – hounddogpethotel.com – 952-949-0077 – Eden Prairie
Top Dog Country Club – topdogcountryclub.com – 952-353-2600 – New Germany

Puppy Playgroups & Dog Training

Animal Humane Society – animalhumanesociety.org – 763-489-2217 – Multiple locations
Cloud Nine – cloudninedogtraining.com – 952-939-9174 – New Hope/Minnetonka
Pint Size Play/Fresh Air Training (Wendy van Kerkhove, CTC) – freshairtraining.com – 952-405-9152 – Multiple locations
Twin Cities Obedience Training Club – tcotc.com – 612-379-1332 – Minneapolis

Grooming Services

Bubbles and Bows – 6001 Lyndale Ave S. – 612-920-3868
Bubbly Paws – 3730 Grandway, St. Louis Park – 952-657-5300
Dreadlocks and Dingoes – 54th & Penn – 612-920-3992
Wendy's Dog House – 4207 E 54th St. – 612-726-1740

Dog Walkers & Pet Sitters

Digger's Dog Walking – dspeleske@msn.com – 612-247-4798
Harvey's Dog Walking Service (Harvey Goldstein) – 952-926-8177
Tails of 2 Cities (Carol Martin) – tailsof2cities.com – 612-822-7389
These Paws Were Made for Walking (Betsy Hoyt) – thesepaws.com – 612-926-3600
See petsittersmn.org – 651-610-0444

Pet Loss Support & Grief Counselors

Humane Society Pet Loss Support Group – 763-489-2220
Marilyn Erickson – 612-827-7467
University of Minnesota – 612-625-6761 (Main line will direct you)

Professional Carpet Cleaners

Keljik's (next door to our clinic) – 612-823-6338

Yard Cleaning Services

Dr. Poolittle – drpoolittle.com – 651-587-1986
Pet Yard Pick-up – petyardpickup.com – 612-788-8390
Scoopy Poo – scoopypoo.net – 612-374-3000





Toxic Plants for Your Pet

- Aloe
Amaryllis
Andromeda Japonica
Asian Lily (Liliaceae)
Asparagus Fern
Australian Nut
Autumn Crocus
Avocado
Azalea
- Bird of Paradise
American Bittersweet
European Bittersweet
Branching Ivy Buckeye
Buddist Pine
- Caladium
Calla Lily
Castor Bean
Ceriman (aka Cutleaf Philodendron)
Charming Dieffenbachia
Chinaberry Tree
Chinese Evergreen
Christmas Rose
Clematis
Cordatum
Corn
Plant (aka Cornstalk Plant)
Cornstalk Plant (aka Corn Plant)
Cutleaf Philodendron (aka Ceriman)
Cycads
Cyclamen
- Daffodil
Day Lily
Devil's Ivy
Dumb Cane
Deadly Nightshade (See Nightshade)
- Easter Lily
Elephant Ears
Emerald Feather (aka Emerald Fern)
Emerald Fern (aka Emerald Feather)
English Ivy
- Fiddle-Leaf Philodendron
Flamingo Plant
Florida Beauty
Foxglove
Fruit Salad Plant
- Glacier Ivy
Gladiolas
- Glory Lily
Gold Dieffenbachia
Gold Dust Dracaena
Golden Pothos Green
Gold Nephthysis
- Hahn's self branching English Ivy
Heartleaf Philodendron
Heavenly Bamboo
Holly
Horsehead Philodendron
Hurricane Plant
Hyacinth
Hydrangea
- Iris
- Japanese Show Lily
Japanese Yew (aka Yew)
Jerusalem Cherry
- Kalanchoe
- Lace Fern
Lacy Tree
Lily of the Valley
- Macadamia Nut
Madagascar Dragon Tree
Marble Queen
Marijuana
Mauna Loa Peace Lily (aka Peace Lily)
Mexican Breadfruit Mistletoe "American"
Morning Glory
Mother-in-Law
- Narcissus
Needlepoint Ivy
Nephthytis
Nightshade
- Oleander
Onion
Orange Day Lily
- Panda
Peace Lily (aka Maana Loa Peace Lily)
Philodendron Pertusum
Plumosa Fern
Precatory Bean
- Queensland Nut
- Red Emerald
Red Lily
Red-Margined Dracaena (aka Straight-Margined Dracaena)
Red Princess
Rhododendron Ribbon Plant (Dracaena sanderiana)
Rubrum Lily
Saddle Leaf Philodendron
Sago Palm
Satin Pothos
Schefflera
Spotted Dumb Cane
Stargazer Lily
Striped Dracaena
Sweetheart Ivy
Swiss Cheese Plant
- Taro Vine
Tiger Lily
Tomato Plant
Tree Philodendron
Tropic Snow Dumbcane
Tulip
- Variable Dieffenbachia
Variegated Philodendron
- Warneckeii Dracaena
Wood Lily
- Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow
Yew (aka Japanese Yew)
Yucca

*This list is provided by the ASPCA and is a compilation of most commonly encountered plants. **If you believe your animal has ingested a poisonous substance, contact us at 612.822.1545, or call the 24-hour ASPCA hotline at 1-888-426-4435.***

Please refer to this link for a more comprehensive list and additional information. <http://www.aspc.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/>