

Choosing A Veterinarian

Here are some useful questions to ask potential vets:

1. What are the hospital's business hours? Do they fit your schedule?
2. How many veterinarians are at the hospital?
3. Can you see the same vet on each visit?
4. What advanced equipment and procedures does the hospital offer? Examples are dental x-rays, orthopedic surgery and ultrasound.
5. Will a vet speak to you on the phone for simple questions?
6. What methods of payment are accepted?
7. What recent seminars have the veterinarians attended?
8. What is the visiting policy for hospitalized patients?
9. Do the vets offer alternative therapies (acupuncture, chiropractic, etc.)?
10. What are the hospital's policies on vaccinations (which ones and how often) and other preventative health programs?

When you bring your puppy home, there are a few things you need to take care of right away. The first is to visit the veterinarian you researched for a 'post-purchase' examination. This is usually done within the first 48 hours of bringing your puppy home.

At this first visit, be prepared to discuss:

- vaccination schedule (traditional vs. minimal)
- deworming schedule, if required
- nutrition options
- parasite control (fleas and heartworm)
- common behaviour issues
- house training and house rules
- pet insurance, if desired
- grooming including nail trims
- how to socialize your puppy effectively every day

After the first visit with the veterinarian there will be two more appointments for booster vaccinations. These are important to ensure your puppy has good immunity to diseases.

Be sure to discuss any concerns you may have with your breeder. Sometimes a quick phone call can clear up confusion when there are different opinions. Your breeder knows your puppy best and will be happy to guide you.