

## YOUR NEW GOLDEN RETRIEVER PUPPY

Congratulations on your new family member! Please take a minute to read a few tips I have put together for you.

**Feeding:** Your puppy has been eating Purina Puppy Chow. If you decide to switch foods, please do so slowly. Mix a small portion of the new food with the old food for 2 days, and then gradually add more new food and less old food. By the end of 7 days you should be totally on the new food. At this age your puppy should be eating 3 times a day. The amount should be around  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup per feeding. Put the food in front of the puppy and pick up any leftover food after about 10 minutes. If the puppy eats all the food quickly (within about 2-3 minutes) then you may need to increase the amount you are giving him/her. Around 12 weeks old you can go to feeding puppy 2 times per day. Be sure to make plenty of water available for the puppy. Goldens drink a lot! Goldens also like to play in their water (they are water dogs after all), so watch out for that. In large breed dogs it is important to avoid over feeding. For this reason, I do **not** recommend free feeding (leaving food out at all times). An obese golden is at higher risk for many health problems, including hip dysplasia.

**Exercise:** Please do not let your puppy over-do it. Strenuous exercise such as going for a run (as in a 3 mile run with you, running around the yard is OK), or doing agility, is not recommended until your dog is fully grown, which is age 2 years. Too much exercise before age 2 can contribute to hip dysplasia. Too much stair climbing is also not recommended.

**Crate Training:** I strongly recommend crate training. It is the easiest way to housebreak your puppy. It also keeps them safe when you are not watching them. At this age you cannot expect your puppy to "hold it" for more than 2-3 hours, so please take them outside often. Even at night!

**Toys:** Goldens love to chew! Please buy toys for strong chewers. Don't buy cheap rubber toys that they may end up eating pieces of. I recommend the Puppy Kong, or similar heavy duty toys. Stuffed toys are also a favorite; just make sure to take them away if the stuffing starts coming out. Make sure your puppy has access to their toys at all times. If your puppy starts chewing on anything other than his/her toys, immediately take the object away, say "NO" in a firm voice, and hand him/her one of their toys. I have done this with all my dogs, and they very quickly learn what is Ok and not Ok to chew on.

**Vaccines/worming:** Your puppy needs three to four sets of shots. I have given the first shot. Please make an appointment with your veterinarian for the next shot. Puppies are NOT fully protected until a couple weeks after the last shot (at 16 weeks). Please do not take your puppy to public dog parks or walk them in a public area until they are fully vaccinated. Try not to let them around any dogs who have not been vaccinated. If you take them somewhere like Petsmart or other stores, try not to let them walk around on the ground. Carry the puppy or put him in the cart (just make sure he/she does not jump out). Treat them like a newborn baby that you would not want around a lot of germs. Your puppy has been wormed 3 times. Follow up worming may be necessary. Talk to your veterinarian.

Enjoy your new puppy, and please do not hesitate to call or email me with any questions or concerns!