



28966 Information Lane
Easton, Maryland 21601
(410) 822-8505 (410) 758-3404

Canine Non- Core Vaccines

- **Leptospirosis**- Infection from this bacterium may lead to liver and kidney disease. The disease can be transmitted to people. If your pet is exposed to stagnant water, rats, mice, or wildlife, the leptospirosis vaccine should be given. Puppies can be given the vaccine at 12- 14 weeks of age, followed in 3 weeks by a booster vaccine. This vaccine may be associated with side effects, so certain breeds sensitive to vaccine reactions may elect to not vaccinate or wait until puppies are older, after 17 weeks of age. An annual booster vaccine is recommended.
- **Lyme**- This disease is from an infection from the spirochete bacteria *Borrelia burgdorferi*. The deer tick transmits this organism to the dog via a bite; other mammals and people can also be infected. Infection results in symptoms of fever and joint pain, though the nervous system and kidneys can also be affected. The eastern shore is heavily populated with ticks; if your pet spends a lot of time outside or is in an area highly populated with wildlife, this vaccine is highly recommended. The vaccine is a safe recombinant vaccine, which is started at 12-14 weeks of age and boosted in 3-4 weeks. Thereafter it is given annually.
- **Bordetella** - This vaccine protects against the causative agents of kennel cough, a highly contagious upper respiratory infection caused by the bacteria *bordetella bronchiseptica* and the virus canine parainfluenza. We use an intranasal vaccine which is boosted every 6 months. It is recommended for all dogs which have extensive interaction with other dogs (groomers, boarding kennels, obedience class, shows).



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Puppy Training

Prevent Bad Habits

Provide appropriate objects for chewing (Nylabone, gumabone) and praise the puppy for chewing on these objects. It is best to rotate the toys every week so the pup doesn't get bored. Be sure to correct inappropriate chewing by removing and presenting suitable chews. Put your pup in his or her crate when you're not able to supervise.

Do not allow aggressive behavior, i.e. mouthing hands, jumping up, growling, guarding food, and nipping. Competition between dog and owner should never be developed, even when it is playful. "Rough housing" with a puppy is encouraging this kind of behavior and should not be viewed as "play." Appropriate play activities should involve toys not your hands!

Do not allow jumping up. Never pet or talk sweetly to a dog that has only two feet on the ground. This is positively reinforcing this behavior. The best way to discourage jumping up is to *encourage* sitting down. Only reward your puppy with attention or treats once they are sitting down. Putting your knee up or hitting the dog under the chin may actually lead to increased jumping. Overall, to prevent bad habits make definite decisions about manners. Will the new dog be allowed on the furniture? Are any rooms off-limits? Be sure all family members are on the same page in communicating expectations.

Nothing Is Free

The "nothing is free" technique helps you establish leadership and clear communication. The concept is to teach your dog that "nothing in life is free". Your pup must obey a command before he or she earns anything. This is not limited to only food rewards. The reward is what the dog wants in the particular situation, be it love, praise, going out, food, water, etc. Don't allow your puppy to be demanding in obnoxious ways or give in to their behavior. The only way your dog should get what he or she wants is by behaving properly.

Additional Tips and Training

The preceding ideas will help you lay a good foundation. Having a well-rounded repertoire of commands will reinforce your puppy to have good manners. A basic foundation includes commands such as sit, stay, to come when called, and walking on a leash. Commands should be short, sweet and clear. Hand signals are a great method of communication or in conjunction with short spoken cues. Don't forget to reward good behavior on a daily basis. During puppyhood it is easy to focus on the bad or frustrating things and forget to acknowledge the good.

You can begin training with your puppy as early as 8 weeks of age. When beginning training keep these few tips in mind:

- **Be consistent-** Commands, voice inflection, signals, corrections, and rewards should be consistent from all family members.
- **All in the timing-** Dogs associate rewards and corrections with the current actions taking place. Therefore, it is ineffective to reprimand a puppy for something, such as having an accident inside, long after the incident occurred.
- **Do not use force-** A dog learns from the anticipation of the reward, not from the fear of the correction.
- **Be patient-** Don't expect every training session to be perfect. Remember clear and consistent repetition is the best way for a dog to learn.
- **Less is more-** Use less verbal language and more body language. Actions such as hand signals speak far louder than our words.
- **Have fun-** Training and interacting with your dog may be frustrating at times but should also be fun and something to look forward to. Training is one of the best ways to form trust between you and your dog, as well as, a forever bond.



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Is Pet Insurance Right for me?

The quality of veterinary care and the ability of veterinary specialists to perform advanced life-saving diagnostics and treatments have increased tremendously in the past several decades. With this increased availability of advanced care, costs have also risen. Orthopedic surgery for treatment of cranial cruciate ligament injury or fractures can cost \$3000-\$6000; costs for treatment of intestinal disorders can be \$2000-\$4000, while treatment for complicated conditions and cancer can reach over \$10,000. Pet insurance is an option to assist with these costs so if something unexpected happens you will have the financial resources available.

Pet insurance is NOT a way to try to save money over the lifetime of your pet. While you can save money with extensive veterinary bills, you may lose money over the long run if your pet has no major health problems. Pet insurance helps you to cover very expensive treatment costs without causing you financial hardship.

Pet insurance may be a good idea if:

- You treat your pet like a member of the family
- Your breed of pet is known to have health problems
- You become nervous thinking about veterinary bills
- You might not be able to afford the best care if your pet is sick or hurt
- You might compromise on care for financial reasons
- You have a healthy pet now but are concerned about problems that may arise later

Pet insurance may not be a good idea if:

- Your pet has medical problems already and you want them to be covered
- You are hoping pet insurance will reduce your overall costs
- Your pet already has or you already suspect a problem
- Finances would not make a difference in choosing what to do in case of illness.
- You are mainly interested in pet insurance to cover wellness

Frequently Asked Questions

How does pet insurance work?

All pet insurance works on a reimbursement basis. You pay for service upfront and your insurer reimburses you directly. Reimbursement time varies, but expect to wait about 2 weeks.

What is covered?

All companies cover accidents and illnesses. Some also cover wellness care. Read the details of an individual plan carefully.

My pet already has a problem or I suspect a problem. Will pet insurance cover this?

Pet insurance does not cover pre-existing conditions. However, most will cover future unrelated issues.

How much does it cost?

Price depends on a variety of factors, but for a plan with good coverage expect to pay \$30-\$50 per month. Do not pick the cheapest plan you can buy, but choose based on the coverage offered.

I have a healthy puppy. Do I really need pet insurance?

If you ever see yourself buying pet insurance, it is better to do so when your pet is young rather than waiting till they get older. Additionally, certain hereditary and congenital defects can become evident while pets are still young so insuring young can prevent the pre-existing 'clause' in most cases.

Quiz: Should I get pet insurance?

1. Would a paying a monthly premium around \$30 - \$50 be a hardship for you?
A: Yes | B: No
2. If you suddenly got hit with a \$1,000 vet bill would you be able to handle it financially?
A: Yes | B: No
3. If you suddenly got hit with a \$3,000 vet bill would you be able to handle this financially?
A: Yes | B: No
4. If you suddenly got hit with a \$10,000 vet bill would you be able to handle this financially?
A: Yes | B: No
5. Would you take advantage of advanced levels of medicine to try and save your pet?
A: No | B: Yes
6. Is your pet prone to accidents and injuries?
A: No | B: Yes
7. Do you own a cat that goes outdoors unattended?
A: No | B: Yes
8. If your cat developed diabetes and needed expensive treatments for the rest of its life, would having pet insurance make the decision of what to do easier?
A: No | B: Yes
9. If your dog developed cataracts in its eyes and surgery (\$5000/eye) could restore his/her vision, would having pet insurance affect your decision of whether to get surgery?
A: No | B: Yes
10. Suppose your 2-year-old-dog fractured its leg. There are two treatment options: (a) save the leg with metal plates and screws (\$3800) or (b) amputate the leg (\$1500). Would having pet insurance make this decision easier?
A: No | B: Yes

If you chose 4 or more B's, pet insurance is something you should definitely consider.

For more information and to compare plans, visit: <http://www.pet-insurance-university.com>

Here is a comparison of plans that we feel offer the most to our clients:

	Embrace	Trupanion	Healthy Paws
Website	www.embracepetinsurance.com	trupanion.com	www.healthypawspetinsurance.com
Waiting Period	14 days. 6 months for orthopedic conditions.	5 days for accidents, 30 days for illnesses	15 days. 12 months for hip dysplasia.
Price increases w/age	Yes	No	Possibly
Accident/Injury coverage	Yes	Exam fee not covered.	Exam fee not covered.
Behavioral Coverage	Only medications	Additional fee	No
Alternative coverage	Chiropractic, acupuncture, laser, rehabilitation covered	Additional fee	Yes
Pre-existing conditions	Not covered	Not covered	Not covered
Bilateral conditions	If condition in one leg occurs prior to enrollment or during waiting period it is NOT covered in the other leg.	If condition in one leg occurs prior to enrollment or during waiting period it is NOT covered in the other leg.	Covered except for cruciate ligament injury: If cruciate tear occurs before enrollment or during waiting period in one leg it is not covered in the other leg.
Hereditary and Congenital coverage	Covered if no signs prior to enrollment or during waiting period.	Covered if no signs prior to enrollment or during waiting period.	Covered if no signs prior to enrollment or during waiting period.
Continual coverage for chronic conditions	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cancer Coverage	Yes	Yes	Yes
Hip dysplasia coverage	Yes (after waiting period)	Yes (after waiting period)	Yes (after waiting period)
Routine/Wellness	Available at additional cost	Available at additional cost	Available at additional cost
Dental Coverage	Tooth injury covered. Periodontal disease	Some treatment covered if annual dental exams	Tooth injury covered. Periodontal disease not covered.

	not covered.	performed and veterinarian recommendations followed.	
Maximum Lifetime Payout	\$50,000	Unlimited	Unlimited
Maximum Annual Payout	Variable	Unlimited	Unlimited
Deductible	\$100-\$1000 per year	\$0-\$1000 per incident	\$100, \$250, or \$500 per year
Co-pay	10%, 20% or 35%	10%	10%, 20%, or 30%
Premiums	\$10-\$80	\$11-\$90	\$13-\$90



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Feeding Your Puppy

Shopping for pet food can be overwhelming. Should you buy organic, natural, grain free, or a diet with no by-products? Many popular brands spend more money on advertising and packaging than on the quality of ingredients. Other brands use gimmicks to make the food sound more appealing: for example, terms like grain-free, all natural, holistic, and fresh. What is most important to your pet's diet is to feed a product that supplies the three essentials: **vitamins, minerals and energy supplying nutrients**. At VMC we believe pets should eat a good quality food that your pet likes and that suits your budget. A few recommended brands include Royal Canin, Science Diet, Purina ProPlan, and Nutro.

Dogs are "carnivorous" omnivores, which mean they do not have a strict meat-based diet requirement. Some of their diet can include vegetable-based protein. The exact amount of protein, fat, and other nutrients depends upon your dog's life stage (puppy, senior, large breed vs small breed), lifestyle (working vs. sedentary) and health related needs (weight management). Feed a diet appropriate for your pet's stage of life.

Be careful of foods that contain a lot of dyes or fat, which are often used to either make the product more palatable or appear more interesting to us as pet owners. Chicken meal is basically the entire chicken ground up into a meal. Chicken by-product meal uses the animal parts not consumed by people. By-products are a less expensive yet still nutritious protein source. Whole grains, fish meal, corn gluten meal, and brewers rice are other examples of inexpensive protein sources. Be sure the diet names the meat source- for example, chicken, beef, lamb. Avoid diets which list meat meal or meat by-products, as the source of this meat is unknown.

Any pet food should be AAFCO labeled. AAFCO stands for the Association of American Feed Control Officials defined as a voluntary membership association of local, state and federal agencies charged by law to regulate the sale and distribution of animal feeds and animal drug remedies. Essentially they are the only group in the industry that has established a standard at which you as the consumer will know that your pet food is delivering the nutrients that it is formulated to provide.

- For more information visit the website www.aafco.org
- AAFCO does not differentiate between the qualities of the protein source.

Most young puppies should be fed three times daily, changing to twice daily once they are 3 months old. Canned foods can add palatability and moisture to the food. Fresh meats or cooked vegetables can be added in limited quantity- be sure they are not the bulk of the diet, as the nutrient content may be deficient. Avoid all processed human foods, fatty foods, sweets, and dairy products, as their consumption can lead to serious health issues. For snacks, offer dog treats made in the USA. Foods which are toxic to dogs include chocolate, raisins, grapes, macadamia nuts, and onions.

Nutrition Websites and Resources

American Animal Hospital Association

<http://aahanet.org>

American College of Veterinary Nutrition

<http://acvn.org>

www.purina.com.

www.hillspet.com

www.royalcanin.com

Petdoor: Nutritional Requirements of Cats and Dogs: easy to read pet nutrition booklets

<http://dels.nas.edu/global/banr/petdoor>

Animal Nutrition Resources - The American Academy of Veterinary Nutrition

www.aavn.org/ Heading titled nutrition resources

An indoor pet environmental enrichment guide

<http://indoorpet.osu.edu>