

Care of Newly Acquired Puppies

Contributed by Administrator
 Wednesday, 07 July 2004
 Last Updated Wednesday, 12 July 2006

When first choosing a puppy it is important to choose one that appears healthy. If it is from a pet shop, it should have a proper vet's vaccination certificate.

It should have no signs of coughing or sneezing, no eye or nose discharge and there should be no signs of hair loss or redness of the skin. It should be bright alert and playful. You may be able to ask Green Cross to check the puppy for before you purchase.

Once the puppy has been purchased and introduced to its new environment, such as your home, it will be under a great deal of stress. It will require time to adjust and will require a lot of your time and attention. Do not wash the puppy at this time as this will cause further stress and increase its chances of contracting one of the many transmissible diseases.

It is important to realize that if the puppy has already contracted a transmissible disease the disease may not appear at the time of your purchase of the pet. Sometimes the disease may be in a transient state and may only surface a few weeks later. It is important the puppy is kept well fed and kept in a comfortable environment to allow the puppy's own immune system to develop well. The puppy's immune system is a key factor in avoiding and fighting potentially fatal diseases.

The puppy will be exposed to diseases that are spread in the air, by contact with other dogs and also by contaminants such as saliva and faeces. The puppy should be confined in your house and kept away from other dogs and away from other areas where other dogs have been. It should only be released from this confinement once the necessary vaccinations have been given. This must be done by a qualified veterinarian registered with the Hong Kong Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Parvovirus Distemper Infectious Canine Hepatitis Kennel Cough Leptospirosis Rabies Heartworm

Parvovirus

Often fatal. Signs to look for include severe diarrhoea with blood and vomiting. Especially serious in breeds such as Rottweilers and Dobermanns. Death can result within 48-72 hours if not treated immediately. It is transmitted by faeces, indirect faecally contaminated shoes and kennels as well as direct contact. Puppies from unvaccinated mothers have a higher chance of contracting the disease.

*

Distemper

A frequently fatal disease spread by inhalation, usually in dogs less than one year old. Watery/mucoid discharge from the nose and eyes, vomiting and diarrhoea (sometimes blood). Later nervous signs can appear such as twitching of muscles and convulsions.

*

Infectious Canine Hepatitis

Excreted in saliva, faeces and urine. Ingestion is the most likely source; may only be general malaise or loss of appetite, fever or sudden collapse, pale gums, corneal oedema "blue eye"

*

Kennel Cough (CAV2/Parainfluenza)

Usually pup is still bright and alert and eating well. Transmission from other dogs by inhalation; soft dry cough which can worsen with some watery mucous discharge. If not treated can develop severe pneumonia with fever which may lead to

death.

*

Leptospirosis

Infection often from contaminated urine. Sudden onset of fever, jaundice and extreme depression; may show vomiting, thirst and blood stained diarrhoea. Mucous membranes may have small hemorrhages.

*

Rabies

It is a legal requirement for all dogs to be inoculated against rabies as it is a zoonosis, which means it is transmissible to humans. It is fatal once signs appear.

*

Heartworm

A parasite that lives inside the dogs blood vessels and heart. Preventative treatment is available. For more information go [here](#).