

## Puppy Health Basics

**Give your puppy a healthy start by covering these dog basics.**

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Posted: Mon Nov 25 00:00:00 PST 2002

### First Veterinarian Visit

The first check up is crucial to a lifetime of good health habits and maintenance.

**Why:** Veterinarians spot many health problems right away. If you purchase your puppy from a breeder, you should be able to return her if a serious health problem exists. If you're already attached to the pup, you can address problems immediately. This first visit also is your opportunity to learn everything you can about proper puppy care.

**When:** Take your new puppy to the veterinarian within the first 48 hours of acquiring her, preferably before you take her home for the first time.

**Remember:** Don't hesitate to ask specific questions about anything from nutrition to grooming to training to the idiosyncrasies of your dog's breed.

**The Veterinarian View:** "It's important to allot enough time for the veterinarian to go over all the issues of having a new puppy," says Kate Schulze, DVM, "In addition to the basics of puppy care, your veterinarian should discuss behavior training. The No. 1 reason for euthanization is behavior problems, so you need to get off on the right foot in the first eight to 12 weeks so that you can have a long and happy 14 to 16 years with your pet."

### Nutrition

Proper nutrition is essential for your fast-growing pup's healthy development.

**Why:** Different breeds have slightly different nutritional requirements, but puppies generally need three times the calories of an adult dog of equal weight. Pups also have higher calcium, energy and protein requirements. Inadequate portions and diets compromise growth and development.