

Prepare Your Puppy for His First Vet Visit

California Veterinary Medical Association offers tips to make your puppy's visit pleasant.

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Your new puppy will need to visit his veterinarian within a few days of arriving in your home. Unfortunately, many dogs dislike visiting the vet clinic and might start to think this experience is an unpleasant one. That's why the California Veterinary Medical Association has come up with a few suggestions for how you can make your dog's first vet visit as painless as possible.

The CVMA advises that you start handling your puppy as soon as you take him home so that he gets used to being touched. Look inside his ears, rub his paws and touch his hair and teeth, just as his veterinarian will.

Your dog will need to be on a leash anytime he visits the vet, so accustom him to wearing a leash before his first appointment. If you will be driving your dog to the clinic, take him on a few practice drives beforehand, as riding in a car may be frightening for some dogs and can cause carsickness.

According to William Grant, II, DVM, president of the CVMA, "Animals will pick up on their owner's emotions. If the owner is relaxed and prepared for the visit, the pet will often follow suit."

In order to keep calm when visiting the vet with your dog, it may be helpful to write down a list of questions so you don't forget anything. Possible questions include: What should I feed my dog? When does my dog need to be vaccinated, and which vaccinations do you recommend? Does my dog need any special care?

If your dog's first visit to the veterinarian is an unpleasant encounter, you can still teach him that a trip to the vet is a fun adventure. Follow the CVMA's suggestions and don't forget to take treats along so your dog's experience with his veterinarian isn't a bad one.