

My Puppy's First Month

From a first car trip to visits with the veterinarian, Mischief's owner records their progress.

Susan Bertram

Day 15

I'm so mad! Mischief and I went to the park to play today, and some jerk left a broken bottle-it was hidden in the grass, and I didn't see it until it was too late. Puppy cut a footpad on it. You can't believe how much blood there was! Luckily, I keep a first-aid kit in my car, so I did a quick pressure wrap and used my cell phone (what do you know, I have the number memorized!) to call ahead to the vets office. Poor Mischief had to be anesthetized to have his pad stitched up. One good thing: he was able to get his ID tattoo while he was asleep, so now, even if he gets lost and loses his collar, people can find out where he belongs.

I mailed in the application and premium for his health insurance when we got home. At the rate were going, I'm sure it'll pay for itself. Day 18

Every morning I wake up and think, what next? I gave Mischief a little roundbone from a roast to chew. Somehow he managed to get it stuck on his lower jaw. Good grief! I tried to pull it off myself, but no luck.

Then, as we hopped in the car to go to the vets (again), I accidentally closed the car door on his tail. Oh, how he ki-yi-yi-ed! I felt terrible! The vet cut the roundbone off, and checked Mischief's tail for broken bones or nerve damage. She gave Mischief an injection to prevent swelling and reduce the pain in his tail. Dr. T. said not to give him any aspirin. She explained that dogs can get stomach ulcers from aspirin much more easily than people.

Day 19

I think I need a vacation. Or a full-time nanny to keep an eye on Mischief. Today he chewed up and swallowed a rubber toy frog. The vet said to watch him closely, and if he loses his appetite or starts vomiting, to bring him in right away, because it could get lodged in his intestines and cause a blockage. I'm also supposed to check his poop to see if the toy passes on through. (Oh, joy!)

Day 20

Hurray! Found a poop with frog legs sticking out of it. All the pieces came through. What a relief; he won't have to have surgery to remove something stuck inside him. And now I know to watch more carefully and choose more durable toys.

Day 22

Oh dear! Our little problem child is at it again. Mischief snuck into a cupboard and helped himself to half a bag of chocolate chips. I know chocolate is toxic to dogs, so I called Animal Poison Control Center right away. They had me read the wrapper, and because he's so small, he didn't have to eat much to get a toxic dose. Poison Control told me to induce vomiting with hydrogen peroxide. What a mess! Mischief's tucked safely in his travel crate, and I'm heading to the store for safety latches for our cupboards. He's worse than a curious toddler.