

My Puppy's First Month

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

Susan Bertram

Day 24

Mischief's been gagging a little today. Do dogs get furballs? It's like he's trying to cough something up that's stuck in his throat. He can eat and drink just fine, so I don't know what it could be.

Day 25

Mischief kept us up last night, coughing and gagging. I called the vet and they said it could be kennel cough. But he hasn't been to a boarding kennel! Turns out that kennel cough germs can pass airborne from dog to dog. Dr. T. confirmed the diagnosis.

Mischief was at the groomers two weeks ago that's probably where he picked it up. He's running a little fever, so the vet prescribed an antibiotic and a cough-suppressant, so we can all get rest! When he's better, we'll give him a bordetella vaccine to help prevent kennel cough in the future.

I have to call our neighbors. Mischief plays with their dog, Bess, and kennel cough is so contagious, Bess may catch it, too. Bummer! Day 29

Poor Mischief! I accidentally stepped on him when I was carrying groceries inside. He got underfoot, and I couldn't see him. He screamed for five minutes! I couldn't feel anything wrong when I checked his paw, but I knew he was really hurt because he wouldn't use his leg at all.

Sure enough, an X-ray showed a crack in one of the bones. Luckily, just a crack. He has to wear a splint for a few weeks. I ordered flowers to be sent to Dr. Thoroughgoods office. They've all been so nice to us, through all of our puppy's perils! Day 30

Dr. T. called to thank me for the flowers and quipped maybe she should have sent me flowers, because I've been such a regular customer!

Well, this first month has been a learning experience, that's for sure. But whenever I look at little Mischief, I can't help but smile. He's been a lot of trouble, but he's worth it.