

Your dog's health

Preventive care

Good preventive care begins with careful attention to the basics:

Nutrition

A healthy, nutritious diet builds a foundation for well-being and disease prevention throughout your Pet's life. As a dog ages, their nutritional needs change; for example, a puppy needs a diet high in calories and protein to maintain its active lifestyle and to grow healthy bones and muscles. An older dog may need a diet restricted in calories and supplemented with fiber for optimum weight and gastrointestinal health.

Nutritional counseling is a vital component of your Pet's healthcare—and a part of a discussion with your veterinarian. We can help you decide which food is best for your Pet during each life stage.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations protect dogs from many viral and bacterial predators, including parvovirus, corona virus, leptospirosis, adenovirus, parainfluenza virus, and distemper. These organisms cause a wide range of disease symptoms, from sneezing to bloody diarrhea and death.

Just like a child, your puppy needs to be protected at an early age and given boosters as an adult. Vaccinations are one of mankind's greatest medical achievements and can help your Pet live a longer, healthier life—so why take the chance?

Parasite control

Many types of worms can affect your Pet, and some can be contagious to you and your family. Worms attach to the intestinal lining, causing painful diarrhea or life-threatening conditions. They also compete for your Pet's nutrients, stunting growth and depriving your Pet of energy. Worms live inside your Pet, so it may not be obvious that your dog is suffering an infestation.

A veterinary visit needs to include routine fecal exams during which they check for microscopic worm eggs in your Pet's stool sample. Most puppies are born with worms, so our doctors will begin right away to tailor a deworming schedule to meet your Pet's needs. Our goal is to recommend the safest and best deworming medication at the appropriate time for your Pet.

Giardia is one of these microscopic parasites that can invade your Pet's digestive system. Left untreated, the infection may cause your Pet to become increasingly debilitated and susceptible to other infections. There is a risk it is transmitted between Pets and humans, making you subject to the same health threats as your Pets.

Along with vaccinations, routine deworming, and fecal checks, providing your puppy with a heartworm preventive will decrease the likelihood that your Pet will be infected with a blood worm that can cause

fatal heartworm disease. To ensure that no infection has occurred, we recommend testing your Pet's blood for heartworm every year. We'll also help you with parasites that attack your Pet from the outside, like fleas, ticks, lice, and mites.

Surgery

During your dog's life, you'll make many important healthcare decisions. One of the best choices you can make is to spay or neuter your dog. Scheduling this important surgery early in your Pet's life helps prevent many future problems, among them cancer of their reproductive organs; such behavior problems as fighting, roaming, and marking; and Pet overpopulation.

Spays (which are technically known as ovariohysterectomies) and neuters are routine and generally safe, but they are major surgeries that require general anesthesia and an all-day stay. Spays and neuters are usually performed when the Pet is 4 to 6 months old. Your veterinarian will discuss all surgical options with you and help you pick the right time for your Pet.

Routine checkups

Think about the regular care you receive throughout your lifetime from pediatricians, dentists, physicians, allergists, ophthalmologists, and so on. Why settle for anything less for your Pet? Now think about the fact that Pets age an average of seven years for everyone of ours—and it's clear why regular care is so critical.

Make an appointment so your Pet receives a physical exam every six months. A regular check-up lets you know if your Pet needs deworming, grooming, training, dental care, a change in diet, or special testing or care. Give your Pet the regular care it needs—and the best chance to live a long, happy life with you!

Healthy and happy for life: the importance of grooming and veterinary care for your dog

Beauty is more than fur deep

Grooming goes far beyond a great hairdo, it's essential for your dog's health. Clipping his nails, brushing his teeth and keeping his coat clean and mat-free help prevent health issues and detect problems, like gum disease or parasites, that might otherwise go unnoticed.

If you're a hands-on Pet Parent when it comes to grooming, make sure you have the right tools to do the job. A PetSmart PetStylist can help you select the right brushes for your dog's fur, show you how to clip his nails and maintain that toothy smile. The proper shampoo is important, too. Since your dog's skin has a different pH balance than yours, your shampoo won't do. You'll find that a regular grooming routine is a good way to practice preventive care and makes for a clean, attractive pet.

Professional helping hands

Clipping and primping a restless dog is not for everyone. Even if you're comfortable grooming your pet, you should still let a professional lend an expert hand every 6-8 weeks. PetSmart Petstylists make sure your dog is healthy and handsome, head to tail. Before grooming, we check his skin, coat, nails, ears, teeth and eyes for overall condition, alerting you to any possible health issues. In addition to haircuts, brushing, bathing and nail trimming, we provide essential oral health care and ear cleaning.

You'll love PetSmart Pet Grooming

- All PetStylists pass our Salon Certification Program
- Our safety standards are unparalleled in the industry
- We have convenient, extended hours seven days a week
- our PetStylists are passionate Pet Parents like you

Because grooming is so important for your pet, all PetSmart stores have Grooming Salons. Visit grooming.petsmart.com for more information.

Vital veterinary care

Along with proper feeding, exercise and grooming, preventive veterinary care plays a crucial role in assuring your pet lives a healthy, happy life. To get in the health habit right from the start, choose a vet early on for your puppy or dog. They'll help you set up and follow a preventive health schedule.

Banfield, The Pet Hospital

To make it easy for you to prioritize your new pet's health, we chose Banfield, The Pet Hospital to be our trusted veterinary partner. As Pet Parents ourselves, we appreciate that the exceptionally knowledgeable and caring vets at Banfield have been delivering human-quality care to pet families since 1955. You'll find a Banfield veterinarian on site in over 675 PetSmart stores. Visit banfield.net or call 1-800-768-8858 for the location nearest you.

Banfield Optimum Wellness Plans

Think about regular care we receive throughout our lifetime from pediatricians, dentists, physicians, and so on. Now consider that dogs age an average of seven years for every one of ours, and it's clear why regular care is so important. We recommend that your pet receive a comprehensive physical exam every six months to let you know if your dog needs deworming, grooming, dental care, a change in diet, and special testing or care.

Banfield also offers preventive care services through its wellness plans. Banfield Optimum Wellness Plans are discounted packages of quality veterinary services and include the preventive care recommended each year. Enroll your dog in an Optimum Wellness Plan and you can bring him in free of charge any time you have a health concern, or just for his twice-yearly exam.

Vaccinations mean protection

Vaccinations protect your dog from a host of viral and bacterial predators, including parvovirus, coronavirus, leptospirosis, enovirus, parainfluenza virus, and distemper. Just like a child, your puppy needs to be protected at an early age and given boosters as an adult. More information about recommended vaccinations can be found in Banfield's "Congratulations on Adopting Your New Pet!" brochure, or ask a caring Banfield medical team member.

Three reasons to spay or neuter

Spaying or neutering helps your dog live a longer, healthier life by reducing the chances for cancer or infections. And it means a better-behaved pet for you. Plus, it's the surest way to reduce pet overpopulation.

Your cat's health

Preventive Care

Good preventive care begins with careful attention to the basics:

Nutrition

A healthy diet that provides proper levels of energy and nutrients is the foundation for well-being and disease prevention. Your cat needs a protein-rich food with the highest quality amino acids, such as those found in most premium Pet foods.

Your Pet also needs "life cycle feeding," which means a different diet depending on your cat's age. For example, a kitten needs a diet rich in calories and minerals for a more active lifestyle and for healthy, growing bones and muscles. An older cat on the same diet could quickly get fat. The best food for older cats is restricted in fat and supplemented with fiber.

Work with your veterinarian to make a lifetime of good decisions about nutrition for your Pets.

Vaccination

Vaccination protects your cat from many viral diseases, including feline infectious peritonitis (FIP); feline leukemia virus (FeLV) infection; and herpes virus infection. These organisms cause a wide range of disease symptoms, from sneezing to death.

Just like a child, your cat needs to be protected at an early age and given boosters as an adult. Vaccinations are one of mankind's greatest medical achievements and can extend and enhance lives—so why take the chance?

Parasite Control

Many kittens are born with worms, which attach to the intestinal lining and can cause painful diarrhea or life-threatening conditions. Intestinal worms stunt your cat's growth and energy level by competing with your Pet for nutrients, and some types of worms can be transmitted to humans.

A veterinary hospital, uses a microscope to check for worm eggs in your cat's stool sample. The veterinarian recommends deworming medication at the appropriate time for your Pet. In fact, all kittens are routinely dewormed to treat intestinal worm infections.

Giardia is a microscopic parasite that can cause serious intestinal inflammation. If infected, Pets may exhibit diarrhea, weight loss, depression, decreased appetite or vomiting. Left untreated, the infection may cause your Pet to become increasingly debilitated and susceptible to other infections. There may also a risk that giardia is transmittable between Pets and humans, making you subject to the same health threats as your Pets.

A veterinarian also helps you with the pests that assault your Pet from the outside, like fleas, ticks, lice, and mites.

Spaying and Neutering

As your Pet's voice and keeper, you will make many important preventive care decisions, one of which is whether to spay or neuter your cat. Scheduling this important surgery early in your Pet's life helps prevent many future problems, among them uterine infections, cat fights, roaming, spraying, and over population.

Spays (which are technically known as ovariohysterectomies) and neuters are routine and generally safe, but they are major surgeries that require general anesthesia and an all-day stay.

Spays and neuters are usually performed when the Pet is 4 to 6 months old.

To help you make the right decisions for your Pet, ask your pet's veterinarian to discuss all surgical options with you.

Routine Check-Ups

Think about the regular care we receive throughout our life-time from pediatricians, dentists, physicians, allergists, ophthalmologists, and so on. Why settle for anything less for your Pet? Now think about the fact that Pets age an average of seven years for every one of ours—and it's clear why regular care is so critical.

Make appointments for health check-ups twice a year for your cat. These professional evaluations will help you make sure you're on track with your cat's healthcare. Keeping your Pet up-to-date on all aspects of healthcare gives your cat the best chance for a long, happy life.

Cat grooming: how to select a cat brush

Ever wonder how to make sense of all the various kinds of cat brushes and combs out there?

Here are some tips:

If your kitty's fur is regularly brushed and free of any tangles or mats, a fine/medium combination comb will work nicely.

A rubber brush can be used on a shorthaired cat, which, as a bonus, will polish his coat at the same time. Natural bristle brushes are easy on the skin and will minimize static, which can keep cuddling with kitty from becoming a shocking experience.

A small slicker brush can be used on long-haired cats, but be careful not to scrape his skin while brushing - this could give him a brush burn and may lead to dermatitis. Keep in mind that slicker brushes should not be used on older cats because, as a cat ages, his skin becomes more delicate, his coat thins and he may lose weight causing loose, saggy skin. All of these things can add up to a sensitivity to grooming.

So if your baby is actually a little older, you should use a comb or natural bristle brush instead. If you need help selecting the right brush, come in and one of our caring associates will lead you in the right direction. As you're brushing, check for signs of fleas. Though outdoor kitties are most susceptible, even indoor pets can harbor these unwanted little guests. If you notice any signs of fleas or other parasites, you will need to treat your new friend immediately.

Purrfectly healthy and happy: the importance of grooming and veterinary care for your cat

Beauty is more than fur deep

Grooming goes far beyond a great hairdo, it's essential for your cat's health. Bathing, brushing her teeth and keeping her coat clean and mat-free help prevent health issues and detect problems, like gum disease or parasites, that might otherwise go unnoticed. Cats are naturally designed to conceal signs of sickness in the wild. In the comfort of your home, this means you'll need to be watchful for any changes in behavior that may indicate a potential illness.

Your cat will spend a lot of time licking and bathing herself, but you'll still need to assist her with grooming. The earlier she gets used to having her coat and teeth brushed, as well as her claws trimmed, the more comfortable she'll be with the process. In fact, it's a great bonding time for the two of you. Brushing is good for her muscle tone and circulation, plus it removes dirt and extra fur, reducing hairballs. It also alerts you to the presence of any parasites, such as fleas or ear mites. And regular brushing can reduce the need for baths. Brushing her teeth and trimming her claws are two other areas that need your attention.

If you're a hands-on Pet Parent, make sure you have the right tools to do the job. A PetSmart® PetStylist can help you select the right brushes for your cat's fur, show you how to clip her nails and maintain that purrfect smile. Proper shampoo is important, too. Since your cat's skin has a different pH balance than yours, your shampoo won't do. You'll find that a regular grooming routine is a good way to practice preventive care and makes for a clean, attractive pet.

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Make a Healthy Treat for Your Pet

Everyone loves a special treat, even your pets. If you have some extra time or are looking for a fun project to do with the kids, make a healthy, low-calorie treat for your furry family member. And when feeding your pet treats, remember to keep them in moderation and count them as part of their daily dietary intake.

Look'n lean liver treats

Ingredients:

3 1/2 oz. jar of liver or beef baby food

1/3 cup wheat germ

2/3 cup nonfat dry milk

Directions:

Mix baby food, wheat germ and dry milk. Add a little water if too thick. Drop by the tablespoonful onto a greased cookie sheet. Bake in a preheated 350° oven for 12 to 15 minutes. Let cool before giving to your pet. Refrigerate in a closed container.

NOTE: If your pet has a preexisting medical condition, please consult your Banfield veterinarian or family veterinarian before introducing a new food to your pet's diet.

Could your cat be a therapy cat? Find out what it takes

If you're a cat owner, you can attest to the physical, social and psychological benefits of interacting with your cat. When you gently stroke her at the end of the day, you feel soothed by the vibration and contentment of her purrs. Suddenly, your stress disappears, your blood pressure reduces and your heart rate slows. In fact, a recent study conducted by researchers at the University of Minnesota's Stroke Institute in Minneapolis suggests that owning a cat could reduce your risk of a heart attack or stroke by nearly one-third.

Therapy cats provide this same relaxation and companionship for sick, lonely or troubled patients in care facilities. Those of us who are lucky enough to share our lives with pets understand the importance of the unconditional acceptance and love they offer. The opportunity to share this with those who need it the most is a gift in and of itself. Is your cat a therapy cat?

The Delta Society and the Love on a Leash (formerly the Foundation for Pet Provided Therapy) are non-profit organizations that certify cats for therapy. Though each has different requirements, it is important for a therapy cat to be people-oriented with a laid back, gentle personality. Your cat could be a therapy cat if she:

- Enjoys being petted, touched and hugged
- Has behavior that is predictable, reliable, and easily controlled
- Seeks attention and interactions with new people in unfamiliar settings
- Is able to remain calm in disruptive or crowded settings
- Is outgoing, friendly and confident in new settings

If you think your cat has what it takes and you'd like to learn more about cats as therapy pets, contact the Delta Society at their site, www.deltasociety.org or the Foundation for Pet Provided Therapy at www.loveonaleash.org for more information on how to certify your cat for therapy.

How to Throw Your Dog or Cat a Birthday Party

Birthday parties are really going to the dogs, and cats, these days.

More of us Pet Parents are taking time out to celebrate our pets' special occasions in style. If you're prepping for your pup's birthday party or throwing a bash to celebrate the day your cat joined your family, here are some tips to help make the day a special one:

Safety First

Remember, party time is not the best time to introduce unfamiliar pets to your own. Try to make your pet guest list consist of those with whom your pet is familiar. Also, consider your party location and remember to invite only as many pets and people that can realistically and comfortably co-exist. Inviting small children can be an additional concern—if you're going to do it, make sure they know how to handle pets gently and won't be frightened by a group of them.

If you are inviting pet guests who aren't spayed and neutered, let other Pet Parents know.

If you're hosting an outdoor party for dogs, bring waste bags and remind guests to leave the location in the same condition that it was in prior to the party. Wherever you choose to have the party, make sure that it is safely enclosed and that four-legged guests can't slip through any cracks! And, have a contingency plan in the event of bad weather.

Lastly, make sure you always have first aid items on hand as well as easy access to veterinarian phone numbers and locations, complete with driving directions. Be prepared!

The Guest List

A birthday or adopt-a-versary is no fun unless it's shared by friends. Invite all your kitties for a day of early play, a belly full of treats and then, what else? A cat nap of course! You can create a special space in your house just for napping, but remember, it's kitty's special day, so let her sleep wherever she may.

If your dog is familiar with and favors certain dogs from your neighborhood or from the dog park, consider getting them all together for a day of fun. A park where Pet Parents can mingle and dogs can explore on leash is the perfect environment for such activities. Don't forget to bring along your Good Puppy Cookies (recipe below) and share them with the bunch!

The size of your pet's party is completely up to you, but consider your pet's demeanor when compiling a guest list. Is your pet very social? Or does she prefer quiet time to herself? Answering these questions will help you choose whether to invite only immediate family or every pooch from the dog park!

Invitations

Now it's time to let the world—or, your party guests at least—know about your pet's birthday party! Simple hand-written notes on pet-themed invitations will do the trick. Or, take advantage of electronic

invites to alert your guests about the festivities.

What to Serve

1. Water: Clean, fresh water should always be available for all of your pet guests! And make multiple bowls available so that everyone can access it when they need it. Also consider customizing affordable dog bowls as a take home gift for your pet's guests!

2. Treats: Consider cooking a special meal just for your dog or even baking up some natural, good eat treats for him. Try this recipe for Good Puppy Cookies—your pooch will love you for these:

What you will need:

- 1/2 c powdered milk
- 1 egg - well beaten
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. garlic salt
- 1.5 tsp. brown sugar
- 6 Tbs. gravy
- 1 large jar baby food meat

The rest is easy:

Mix all ingredients. Roll out about 1/2" thick. Cut with cookie cutter or shape by hand. Bake at 350 degrees for 25 to 30 minutes.

Not much of a cook? There are plenty of all-natural treats on the market that are good for your dog and good for good times. You can also consider purchasing Kong toys to fill with cheese or peanut butter and providing one for each guest. Training treats will come in handy as rewards for Best Dressed Pet or Best Trick contests. Remember the pet birthday themed birthday party paper goods for your human guests.

For cats:

Cats crave catnip. One whiff of the stuff can turn them into frolicking, silly clowns—the perfect mood for partying or celebrating their special day. To make the special day even more special—consider growing your own catnip. You can buy and cultivate seeds in your own home or purchase a kit just in time for the happy adopt-a-versary or birthday!

What to Wear

Is your cat or dog fashion-conscious? Think about letting him express himself on his special day in a t-shirt that really matches the mood of such a happy day. You're sure to find something to suit your furry little friend with apparel sizes ranging from extra large to small enough to fit even tiny dogs and cats. From tank tops to sweatshirts with variety of sayings and patterns there's sure to be one that fits the occasion!

A Wonderful Way to Honor Your Pet

If you or your guests are looking for the ultimate gift for your pet—consider asking for donations in your pet's name. What better way to honor the special love you and your pet share than by making a donation to the shelter or rescue group who helped bring you together! You can even make the donation in your pet's name to honor his special day. Also consider donating to breed-specific rescue groups on your purebred's special day.

What if I don't know my pet's birth date?

Even if you adopted your pet from a shelter and don't know her birthday, you can celebrate her adopt-a-versary—the day she became part of your family. This can mean making a donation in kitty's name to a worthy feline-focused charity or hosting a full-blown party with Fido's friends in attendance.

Now It's Time to Throw A Party!

Now you're ready to throw your birthday or adopt-a-versary! If you've never done it, make this the first year that you do—after all, the day your pet came into the world or into your life is truly a