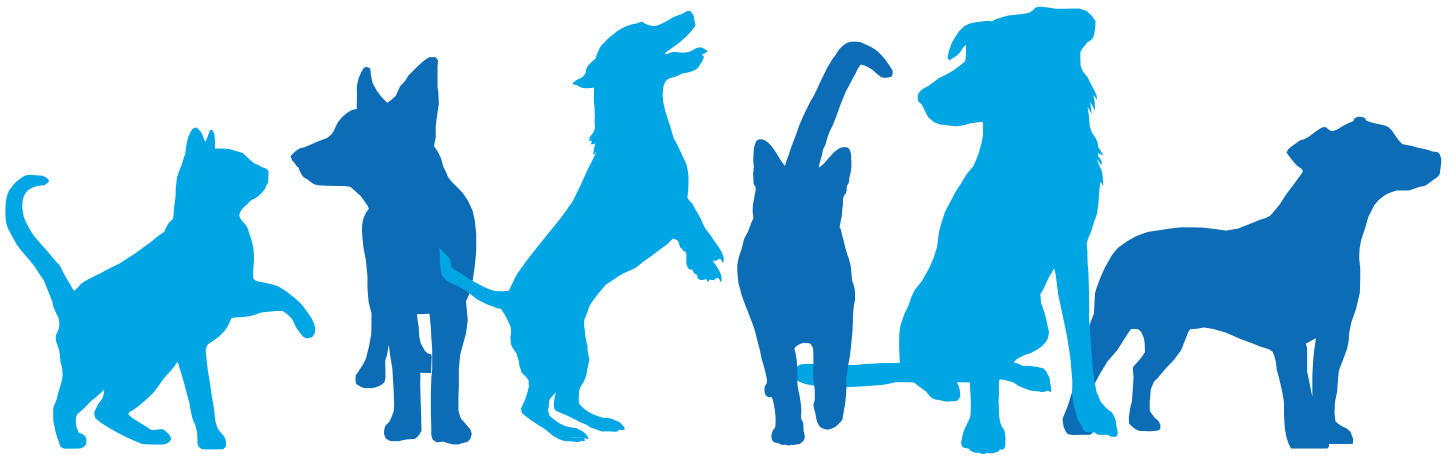


North Shore Animal League America's



# HEALTHY PET PACKAGE



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## Being a Responsible Pet Guardian

Make a twice yearly trip to the veterinarian for a health check and vaccination shots. Pets should receive booster shots every year.

Pets should be groomed each week. Brush dogs and cats at least twice a week and check to make sure their nails are trimmed. Baths should be given when needed.

Keep dogs inside, especially when they cannot be supervised outside. Accidents tend to happen when no one's looking! It's especially important to keep dogs indoors on very cold and very hot days. Cats should never be allowed outside.

Fresh, clean, cold water must be available to pets at all times. Remember to feed pets each day and clean their dishes.

Spend time playing with and petting dogs and cats. All animals love company and need to feel loved. What better way to show them love than by spending quality time with them!

Take the time to train pets. Yes, even cats can be trained! Visit local libraries and check out books or videotapes about caring for and training animals. Remember, there are answers to every problem.

Pets should be socialized. Don't keep them confined or locked up away from people. Begin the socializing process as soon as a pet joins a new household. The results will be a well-adjusted and calmer dog or cat.

Always make sure pets are wearing an I.D. tag on their collar. The tag should be complete with the owner's name, address, and phone number, along with the pet's name. Even indoor pets should wear a collar and tag – it could save a life if ever the pet gets out!

Dogs should be walked on a leash, and please, pick up any mess made while walking them. Neighbors will be glad you did.

All pets should be spayed or neutered. Spaying and neutering is not only healthier for pets, it will also cut down on the pet overpopulation problem.



# Why Should You Have Your Pet Spayed Or Neutered?

## Why spay your female pet?

- No messy heats.
- No male animals hanging around your home during her heat.
- No wailing (by cats) during heat.
- No unwanted litters.
- Helps your pet be more content by diminishing her desire to mate.
- Reduces the risk of breast cancer.

## Why neuter your male pet?

- Less likely to mark his territory by urinating on furniture.
- Less likely to roam, get lost, and fight with other males.
- Less likely to mount.
- Helps your pet be more content by diminishing his desire to mate.
- Helps prevent prostate problems.

## Did you know that ...

- Spaying and neutering will not harm your pet or make him/her fat?  
Only overfeeding or lack of exercise will make your pet obese.
- Millions of unwanted pets are put to sleep each year? If you don't have your pet spayed or neutered, will you be able to find good, permanent homes for a litter?
- It takes time and money to care for a litter? Will you be able to spare both?
- Using a litter to help teach your children the facts of life may add to the problem of helpless and homeless puppies & kittens? Using a book from the library to teach your children is much better.

For additional information about the importance of spaying and neutering your companion animals, or to receive a referral certificate for a low-cost spay/neuter by your local participating veterinarian, call SPAY/USA toll-free at 800-248-SPAY.



## First Things First!

Choose an appropriate name for your new companion. You may want to spend a couple of days discovering your new pet's personality so that you pick a name that fits just right!

Please contact your town's animal shelter for information on licensing requirements in your area. Even if it is not required by law, it is always a good idea to have your pet licensed.

Your new companion animal should eat the same kind of food and the same amount of food at the same time every day. When your pet finishes his/her meal OR if he/she should walk away from it (not finishing the meal) take the remainder away. Your pet's diet must be consistent. Keep track of his/her diet and bathroom times on a note pad to better follow his/her habits. You can feed your pet dry food, canned food, or a combination of the two; whatever you & your pet prefer.

### Age

Under six months of age  
Six months to 12 months  
13 months and up

### Times to Feed

Three times per day  
Two times per day  
One to two times per day  
(depending on your pet's level of activity)

Important! Have a bowl of fresh, clean, cold water available to your pet at all times.

Do not give your pet milk; it is a common cause of diarrhea.

If your dog or puppy is not eating and seems quiet, first offer a small amount of a bland diet (baby food or boiled chicken and rice). If your pet still does not eat, or has any vomiting, diarrhea, coughing, or sneezing, have your pet seen by a veterinarian right away. A puppy that does not eat for 24 hours must be seen by a veterinarian as soon as possible.

If your cat or kitten is not eating, try feeding a good commercial brand of canned cat food or chicken baby food. If your pet still does not eat, or has any vomiting, diarrhea, coughing, or sneezing, have your pet seen by a veterinarian right away. A kitten that does not eat for 24 hours must be seen by a veterinarian as soon as possible.

One episode of vomiting or diarrhea may be caused by your pet's change in diet and environment. If, however, your pet has multiple bouts of vomiting or diarrhea over a 24-hour period, or if your pet is also lethargic or not eating, seek veterinary care right away. If you notice any blood in your pet's vomit or stool, see a veterinarian immediately. Always bring in a stool sample with your pet when possible.

Occasional coughing or sneezing without a discharge from the eyes or nose may be normal. If your pet has repeated episodes of coughing or sneezing over 24 to 48 hours, or if it is accompanied by any discharge from the eyes or nose, a loss of appetite, vomiting or diarrhea, your pet should be seen by a veterinarian right away.



## First Things First! (cont'd)

### Basic Supplies

**Food Dish & Water Bowl** – Select bowls that won't tip over, are durable, and are easily cleaned. Stainless steel or ceramic is recommended.

**Brush & Nail Clipper** – A wire slicker brush and a metal comb are best. Ask your groomer or veterinarian to recommend a good nail clipper.

**Collar & Leash** – Collars must be adjusted as your pet grows. You should be able to slip at least two fingers between the collar and your pet's neck for a comfortable and safe fit. A six-foot leather leash works best for training your dog.

**Bedding** – There are a variety of beds available to keep your pet comfy.

**Litter Box Materials** – If you adopted a cat or kitten, you'll need a litter box, litter and a scoop.

NSAL America recommends the following toys:

- Nylon bones
- Sterilized bones (in the confinement area only)
- Hard rubber balls or Kong® toys

Do not give your pet rawhide bones because they: (a) are essentially leather and will teach your pet to chew on leather items and rip them apart; (b) are not digestible and could cause diarrhea or get stuck in the throat of your pet, especially puppies.

Toys, such as balls with bells inside and well-sewn catnip toys are important for entertainment as well as exercise. Check the toys periodically for loose threads or parts that could become choking hazards. Never give your cat or kitten thread or string to play with as it could cause serious internal injuries if swallowed!

Cats love to play, so get your new kitten or cat a variety of toys that are safe. Avoid toys with strings or removable objects. Different cats like different toys, so experiment until you find out what your cat likes best!

## Preventative Care For Your Pet

### Vaccinations

Vaccinations protect your pet against common infectious diseases that can make your pet sick and may even be fatal. These vaccinations are commonly called dog or cat “booster” vaccines, and are abbreviated either DA2PPPL for dogs or FVRCP for cats. It is important to find out if your pet was vaccinated prior to adoption and which vaccines he/she received. All puppies and kittens should receive their initial vaccination at 6 weeks of age and follow-up vaccinations every 3 to 4 weeks until they are four months of age. Your pet is not fully protected until this complete series of vaccinations has been administered. One vaccination alone will not protect your pet. We will often not know the vaccination history of rescued adult pets. Therefore, if you are adopting an adult pet we recommend a series of two vaccinations three weeks apart. All pets must be revaccinated every year in order to remain protected.

The rules governing rabies vaccination vary from state to state; however, all pets should be vaccinated against rabies in order to protect both your pet and your family. Rabies vaccines can be administered at 3 months of age or older. Any pet vaccinated for the first time against rabies must be revaccinated one year later. Future rabies vaccinations may be good for up to two or three years - check with your veterinarian.

Many other vaccinations are available, and some are better than others. Discuss the use of these other vaccinations with your veterinarian. Remember, you play an important role in keeping your pets healthy!

### Heartworm disease

Heartworm disease is a parasitic disease that is transmitted by mosquitoes and can cause heart and lung failure. Medications are available that can prevent future infection and disease and are administered monthly. These medications may be administered daily, monthly or your pet may receive an injection that protects for 6 months.

All dogs 6 months of age or older should be tested for heartworm disease and then be placed on heartworm preventative medication. Puppies less than 6 months of age may be placed on the preventative medication without first being tested. These medications also protect your pet against common intestinal worms such as roundworms, hookworms and whipworms. Adult dogs may continue on monthly medication or a guardian may choose the convenience of a preventative injection that will last for 6 months. All dogs should be retested annually for heartworm disease.

Heartworm disease can also occur in cats and preventative medication is now available for cats that live in areas where feline heartworm disease is a concern. Discuss the use of this medication with your veterinarian.



## **Preventative Care for Your Pet (cont'd)**

### **Feline Leukemia Virus and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus**

Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV): This is a fatal viral disease of cats. It is transmitted through close contact between cats, for example shared food and water bowls, shared litterpans or cats grooming each other. Once diagnosed with this disease, cats usually die of severe anemia or cancer.

A vaccination to protect against Feline Leukemia Virus is available but is not 100% effective. Please discuss the use of this vaccination with your veterinarian.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV): This is a virus of cats that affects their immune system and makes them more susceptible to other illnesses. It is usually transmitted by an infected cat biting a healthy cat.

The only way to be sure your pet never gets Feline Leukemia Virus or Feline Immunodeficiency Virus is to keep your cat safely inside the house with you. This will prevent contact with other cats who may carry the virus. In order to protect your cats, be sure that you test any new cats you bring into your household for both of these potentially deadly viruses!

Neither FeLV or FIV are transmissible to humans.



## Preventative Care for Your Pet (cont'd)

### Fleas/Ticks

Fleas are a common problem for dog and cat owners in the warmer months of the year. The problem starts in late spring, continues through summer and is often at its worst in September and October. Fleas thrive in temperatures between 65 and 80 degrees and in conditions of high humidity. Fleas live both on your animal and in your environment. Pre-adult fleas live in your house and yard and represent over 90% of the flea population. This immature form is more resistant to treatment than the adult flea.

Some animals may be heavily infested with fleas but will show no sign of them, while a flea-allergic animal may scratch continuously from the bite of a single flea. Many animals will scratch and bite themselves causing substantial reddening of the skin, open sores and hair loss. The best place to look for fleas on your cat or dog is over the back by the tail base and on the abdomen between the hindlegs where there is less hair. Frequent use of a flea comb will show any "flea dirt" present on your pet.

With more than 2,000 different species of fleas, it's no wonder they're so abundant around the globe. So it's important to be prepared, whether you're at home or traveling with your cat or dog. Due to factors such as local climate conditions, the flea season may vary from year to year and place to place. It should also be noted that fleas (in their various stages) can survive indoors during the cold weather months; therefore, a monthly flea control regimen is recommended. Consult your veterinarian about flea prevalence in your area, and how long the season lasts. (a flea index is also available online at [www.nofleas.com](http://www.nofleas.com))

Ticks, like fleas, are a concern for every pet owner during the summer. The bite of a tick is irritating and may cause an allergic reaction. Ticks can carry and transmit diseases such as Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever. Ticks are parasites that must attach to an animal or human being in order to survive and mature. They are found outside in areas of low brush and shrubs. Although susceptible to the drying effects of heat and sunlight, ticks can hibernate and survive through winter.

The best way to check for ticks is to brush your pet daily. They are commonly found in the ear canals, at the base of the ears and on the feet between the toes. Ticks can be removed from your dog or cat by grasping the head of the tick where it attaches to the skin with tweezers and gently pulling back. A tick must be attached to your pet for anywhere from five to twenty hours to transmit any of these diseases. Therefore, the best prevention is to comb through your pet's haircoat daily and remove any ticks.)

### Flea/Tick Treatment

Fleas, ticks and even mosquitoes can bring diseases into your home. The season begins when the temperature rises above freezing at night. So, the best time to apply control is before they start laying eggs and biting your pets. Your veterinarian can make a recommendation that is best for your pet.

# Getting Started with Your New Dog

## Training & Behavior Tips For Your Puppy Or Dog

A new dog is a full-time commitment and you should expect and allow for a few accidents before your new best friend no longer soils or damages anything in your home. In order to build a relationship based on mutual respect for one another, your new pet needs your time and your patience so that he/she will learn what is expected of him/her.

As a general rule, destructive behavior will usually begin at the age of five months and possibly continue until the pet is one to one-and-a-half years of age. A dog of any age can be destructive during the adjustment period to a new environment.

In order to protect against common infectious diseases which may be fatal, new puppies should not go outdoors until their final booster vaccine is given at four months of age. This can be very frustrating for both the puppy and the guardian. Listed below are some simple guidelines to follow when it comes to enjoying puppies and keeping them safe:

- Puppies should remain indoors for the first two weeks after adoption to protect them against infectious diseases. If a puppy is healthy after the first two weeks, you can let him/her go outdoors to a private front or back yard for housebreaking purposes. Your pup should be on a leash and directly supervised at all times.
- You can allow your puppy to meet other fully vaccinated dogs after the first two weeks. Please note that “fully vaccinated” means that the dog has been to the veterinarian and vaccinated within the past year.
- To eliminate the risk of becoming infected with a potentially life-threatening disease, puppies should not be permitted to go for walks on a leash to parks, beaches, or any other public place where large populations of dogs frequent until the pups receive their last booster vaccine at 16 weeks of age. Remember to keep updated medical records for all your pets.
- Devise a confinement area for the puppy about the size of a baby’s playpen (3’ x 3’) using baby gates, boards, or training crate, etc. Paper 90% of the area, leaving 10% for the puppy’s bed (towel, blanket or pet bed). If the puppy sets a pattern and picks a certain spot to use, gradually remove the paper around that spot and the puppy is paper trained.

Remember! Puppies under 12 weeks of age have little or no muscle control, so avoid accidents by keeping your pup confined to his/her area at all times when he/she is not 100% supervised.

When you have the pup out of his/her confinement area, be sure to have paper nearby. Bring the puppy to his/her area periodically, especially: after each meal; after waking from a nap/sleep; after running around, playing, or becoming excited; or, any time your pup starts walking around in circles or sniffing the floor like he is looking for something.

## Getting Started with Your New Dog (cont'd)

### Crate Training Your Dog

#### Why Crate?

In the wild, most canines rely on snug enclosed areas (dens) to bear and raise pups. The den contributes to pack survival and offers protection. It seems that the instinct for denning persists in domestic dogs, and den-like settings have a calming effect.

For a puppy, a warm, snug crate works as a house-training aid (dogs typically won't soil their "personal space"), a temporary playpen when you can't directly supervise the pup, and a cozy bedroom that can comfort the pup during those first few stressful nights away from littermates. Crates are, hands down, the safest way for dogs to travel in cars. A crate offers quiet refuge when a dog is recuperating from an illness or injury and can be a sanctuary when things get hectic around the house.

"Every dog should have a place to call his/her own."

As long as you don't use them for punishment, crates can also help you correct some undesirable canine behaviors such as destructive chewing. More important, crates can help prevent behavior problems before they start by helping owners establish routines for their dogs.

Always remove the animal's collar before placing in crate!

#### What Kind?

Most crates are made of either thick-gauge metal wire or molded plastic. Whichever material you choose, your dog's crate should be ruggedly constructed and fitted with secure door latches. For portability, look for crates that disassemble or fold up easily.

Above all, make sure your dog's crate is the appropriate size -- at least large enough for your dog to stand up, turn around, and lie down in. But, a crate shouldn't be too big -- especially for a pup. "Young dogs often find spacious quarters more disturbing than comforting." Also, a crate that's too large can sabotage house-training because the pup can eliminate at one end and then move to "higher ground." If you're raising a pup, purchase a crate that will be big enough to accommodate it when its full grown, then insert partitions or cardboard boxes inside the crate to reduce the interior space for the time being.

Your job is to teach your dog that the crate is a great place to be. No matter what your dog's age, make sure every interaction he/she has with the crate is pleasant. In fact, if you set up a crate several days before you get your dog, the crate will take on your home's scent, and your pet will see it as just another interesting piece of furniture.

Stay nearby while your dog is getting acclimated to his/her crate. Once your dog is comfortable enough in the crate to tolerate a closed door, leave the room -- and eventually your home for increasingly longer periods of time. By using "canine

## Getting Started with Your New Dog (cont'd)

surveillance" systems (such as audio or video tape), you can find out whether your dog shows signs of severe agitation when left alone in the crate.

Even though your dog loves his/her crate, he/she may whine a bit when left alone in it for the first time. Always wait until your dog is calm and quiet before opening the door. If you uncrate a dog because he/she is whining, you teach him/her that whining is acceptable.

Acclimate your dog to his/her crate while you are home so your pet doesn't associate the crate with being alone. When your dog is crate-comfy enough to be left alone for several hours, crate him/her 5 or 10 minutes before leaving and wait 5 or 10 minutes after returning before you let him/her out. Avoid emotional departures, which incite nervousness in dogs. And when you let your pet out, behave nonchalantly at first. Take the dog out to "do his/her business," and then celebrate your reunion by doing something fun together!

A good many people mistakenly equate dog crates with being in jail. But, if you introduce your dog to a crate in a positive way, you can avoid some common crating mistakes.

### Do...

- Leave the crate door open until your dog willingly enters and exits on his/her own. "Dens don't have doors."
- Inside the crate, hide food treats in a t-shirt with your smell on it. The dog will associate the crate with stimulating hide-and-seek activities and the security of your "alpha dog" scent.
- Feed your dog in his/her crate so he/she identifies the "den" with the ultimate canine joy – eating!
- Equip the crate with a warm, soft pad/blanket.
- Praise, play with, and pet your dog when he/she's inside the crate.
- Encourage your dog to nap in his/her crate so he/she associates the crate with "R & R".

### Don't ...

- Never use a crate as punishment -- either deliberately or unintentionally. If you crate your dog only when you leave, the dog connects the crate with a negative consequence -- your departure – and begins to view the crate as punishment.
- Don't put the crate in a high-traffic or noisy area.
- Don't overdo crating. While it's advisable to crate your dog for short periods when you're home, don't use the crate as a substitute for interacting with your dog.
- To avoid accidental injury, never leave your dog's collar on when you crate him or her!
- Don't force a crate on your dog if he/she becomes upset at the mere sight of one. Due to unfortunate past experiences, some dogs simply won't tolerate crating -- but they should still have a place to call their own.

## Getting Started with Your New Dog (cont'd)

### The Importance Of Exercise

Animals, like humans, have energy that needs to be burned. The food that your pet eats provides him/her with that energy. If he/she is not able to exercise regularly, that food will build up in his/her system and cause your pet to gain unnecessary weight. This is not good for your pet because excess weight causes strain on your pet's heart, joints, and muscles. If you allow your companion animal to become obese, you will be faced with numerous medical conditions that could be avoided with proper diet and exercise.

### Schedule regular sessions for playtime and exercise:

- Take walks on a leash (in good weather).
- Play fetch in a fenced-in area.
- Take your dog to the local dog run (only if your dog is over six months old and fully vaccinated).

An even better method for burning energy is to teach your pet different commands. This will force your pet to figure things out mentally, and that could be even more exhausting than physical exercise. Also, it will prepare your pet for additional behavioral training in the future.

Do not deprive your pet of needed exercise. In many cases, an under-exercised pet will develop inappropriate behaviors like destructiveness, hyperactivity, etc. Pets need to burn energy, and they are counting on you to provide them with an outlet to do so.

# Getting Started with Your New Cat

## Training & Behavior Tips For Your Kitten or Cat

Cats are curious by nature, so prepare your home to avoid any unnecessary accidents. Kittens love warm places, so don't let your kitty go behind the refrigerator, stove, or radiators, and keep the dryer door closed.

Cats are natural climbers so cover any garbage-disposal switches, and keep the toilet bowl covered until your kitten grows up.

Kittens love to play, so keep drapery and electrical cords out of reach. Cats can strangle themselves by catching their necks in the loops.

Certain plants can be toxic to animals, so place your houseplants in rooms that your cat cannot access. Diffenbachia, Poinsettia, Mistletoe, Lilies, Azaleas, Daffodils, Foxglove, Hydrangea, Philodendrons are just a partial list of plants that are poisonous to pets.

Training your cat to use the litterbox should not be difficult because most kittens have been trained to use the box by their mother. You may want to keep your cat confined to a room with his/her litterbox until he/she is conditioned. Let your cat out of the confinement area only if your cat is 100% supervised. Use a neutral beige litter, nothing with a scent.

When your cat moves his/her bowels, scoop the litter out but leave a trace of something there so the cat will be attracted back to the litter pan. If your cat does have an accident outside of his/her litter pan, be sure to disinfect with a cleaner, but be sure to finish cleaning the area by wiping or spraying it with white vinegar and water (50/50 solution). This will neutralize the odor.

Cats can make their way to just about every area of your home. To discourage your feline friend from walking along your kitchen counters, a gentle squirt of water from a plant mister or clapping your hands loudly may be enough to stop your cat from repeating this unwanted behavior.

Keep your pet's nails trimmed. You should have a scratching post or board available to help avoid any scratching of furniture.

Why do cats have to scratch and "claw-up" everything? Clawing allows cats to stretch their spines and muscles, to shed old claw tissue, to sharpen their nails, and to alleviate boredom. The stretching and scratching motion is also a form of exercise. Even cats without claws will "go through the motions."

Can I train my cat not to claw on curtains and scratch the furniture? Yes, there is hope! You can purchase a good, sturdy scratching post for your cat. Make sure the surface is covered with either sisal rope or carpet. You can even make your own from wood covered with the reverse side of carpet remnants. Also, be sure to keep your cat's nails manicured by trimming them with a cat nail clipper every two weeks. If your cat continues to claw your belongings, a gentle squirt of water from a plant mister or clapping your hands loudly may be enough to stop your cat. If you see your cat clawing on things, bring the cat over to the scratching post. Try to imitate the stretching and scratching action by putting your cat's feet and claws on the post. Be persistent until your cat seems to understand that it is not okay to scratch your belongings, but it is okay to scratch the post.

## Getting Started with Your New Cat (cont'd)

### What is declawing really?

Declawing is actually the surgical removal of the entire last bone of each toe. It is not just the removal of the cat's nails. Think of it as removing the nail and first knuckle on each of your hands. Imagine trying to use your hands then!

Is the procedure painful for the cat? The cat is put under a general anesthesia during the operation. Once the anesthesia wears off, the cat can feel pressure and pain under the wrapped bandages on his/her feet.

Are there any dangers or side effects to declawing? As with any surgery, the possibility of danger exists. Aside from painful throbbing, infection can occur where toes were cut. Nails can easily grow back if the procedure was not performed properly. In general, declawed cats can also become nervous around their guardians and veterinarian and make these cats difficult to hold and examine. They are more likely to bite when confronted or if they feel threatened.

We do not recommend having your cat declawed. Claws are a cat's only defense. Even though your cat is safest inside your home, accidents can happen and cats do get outside. A declawed cat has no chance of survival without his/her claws.

## Special Considerations

### Hot Weather Tips

Heatstroke is a major concern in the hot weather. Normal body temperature for dogs and cats is between 100 and 102.5 degrees. When overheating occurs, an animal's temperature may rise to 106 or higher. Temperatures in this range will cause disorientation, seizures, coma and even death. A common cause of heatstroke is leaving a pet unattended in the car. Even parked in the shade with the windows open, the temperature inside your car can soar. Do not leave your pet tied up in the yard or in a yard with no available shade where he/she can't get out of the hot sun. If your house is not air-conditioned, be sure to leave screened windows open and a fan on for good air circulation. It is important to continue to exercise your dog, but do so in the early morning or early evening. Avoid any long walks in the midday sun. Always have plenty of fresh water available for your pet! If your pet does become overheated it is a medical emergency. If possible, hose down your pet with cold water for a couple of minutes, and then go to your veterinarian immediately.

Many dogs love to go swimming or even just wading in the water to cool off. Know your dog's swimming ability and do not leave your pet unsupervised. After swimming you may want to bathe your dog to remove any mud or chlorine. If he is a long-eared breed flip up his ears to let them dry. Chronically wet ears can lead to bad ear infections. Do not have your dog ride in an open truck or convertible car. Even if they don't jump, many dogs are hurt each year when the car takes a sharp curve and they are thrown to the ground. Keep your dog on a leash when you are anywhere near traffic!

Thunderstorms and firecrackers are a summer problem for many dogs. The loud noises will cause many dogs to tremble, hide under the bed or in the closet, and often to urinate in the house. It is sometimes possible to use tapes of these noises to slowly accustom your pet. Otherwise, speak with your veterinarian about a short acting tranquilizer for the Fourth of July!

Protect your pet by making sure his vaccinations are all up to date. Being outside more also means increased contact with other animals. Be sure your dog is tested for heartworm disease and placed on preventative medication. Discuss flea and tick control with your veterinarian. Keep your pet safe and enjoy the summer months together.

### Cold Weather Tips

When winter's cold weather descends and the winds begin to blow, there are some special precautions to keep in mind for your pet.

A healthy animal with access to shelter will rarely suffer the ill effects to exposure to cold. However, very young or very old animals, and animals that have been ill can become hypothermic and experience frostbite. An animal whose body temperature has dropped dangerously below normal may shiver, will not be completely aware and alert, and will



## Special Considerations (cont'd)

have a slow heart and respiratory rate and muscle stiffness. Frostbite, although uncommon, may occur on the tips of the ears or tail of an outdoor cat and on the scrotum of male dogs that spend a lot of time lying on cold surfaces or in the snow.

To prevent these problems, limit your pet's exposure to the cold. Walks should be brief and in frigid weather limited to "taking care of outside business". Toy breeds, thin dogs, dogs that have been shaved or have very short haircoats should wear a sweater or coat outside. Salt and ice-melting chemicals stick to the fur between your dog's toes and pads. These compounds sting, and dogs will often appear very lame. Wipe off these substances with warm water when your dog returns inside. Do not keep pets in garages or unheated areas. Provide a blanket, rug or dog bed if the floors are bare. Large breed, long-haired dogs and working dogs that enjoy the cold need or wish to spend more time outside. These dogs still need to get out of the wind and rain or snow. The outside working dog requires extra food to stay warm in winter and available drinking water that is not frozen.

If, despite these precautions, your pet suffers from exposure to the cold, wrap him/her up in a blanket and go to your veterinarian as soon as possible. Do not immerse your pet in warm water and avoid heating pads that may cause thermal burns.

If you're winterizing your car, be sure to properly dispose of all radiator antifreeze. Puddles of this greenish/yellow liquid are too frequently found in street gutters, garages, and driveways. Its sweet taste attracts pets, and it can be lethal in even small quantities. Restlessness, depression, and unsteadiness appear within 60 minutes of ingestion and may be followed by coma and death within 12 to 36 hours. Prognosis is poor, and the best treatment is prevention.

If you keep these simple precautions in mind, winter can be a fun time for you and a healthy pet. Bundle up, put your dog on a leash, and enjoy the snow!

## Special Considerations (cont'd)

### Traveling with your Pet

Your dog or cat is a close member of your family, and it is often a difficult decision to either travel with your pet or place him/her in a boarding kennel.

If you take your pet in the car with you, be sure that you both travel safely. Cats and small dogs are safest if placed in a carrier. Larger dogs should travel in the back seat of a car or behind the rear seat in a station wagon. Do not allow your dog to ride in the back of an open pick-up truck or jeep or to ride hanging out of the window. To make a long trip as comfortable as possible for your pet, have a litterbox available to your cat, stop frequently to allow your dog to relieve himself and to stretch his legs, and have food and water available. Do not leave your pet unattended in the car, especially if traveling in warmer seasons or climates where there is a risk of heat stroke.

There are special considerations if you will be taking your pet on an airplane. Be sure to check with the airline for any specific requirements. You will need both a certificate of vaccination and a health certificate from your veterinarian. Do not feed your pet for a couple of hours prior to boarding the plane, and check with your veterinarian to see if a tranquilizer is recommended. All pets must be placed in a carrier. Small pets can often be placed under the seat. Larger pets are placed in the cargo hold. Check with your airline to be sure that the cargo area is heated in the winter and air-conditioned in any warmer climates.

If you will be staying in a hotel or motel - CALL AHEAD! Even those that advertise “pet-friendly” may have restrictions, and a limited number of rooms in which a pet may stay. Keep your dog leashed, both for his safety and because courteous pet owners will insure that pets remain welcome. To find a hotel that takes pets, call the chamber of commerce in that state to ask for a list of lodgings that welcome animals or check with your local shelter or bookstore for a published listing. Bring enough of your own pet’s food - you may find yourself in an area where that brand of food is unavailable. A rapid change in your pet’s diet can cause gastrointestinal problems. If you will be out of town for any length of time, ask your veterinarian at home to suggest the name of a veterinarian or emergency clinic in the area in which you will be vacationing.

If you cannot travel with your pets, the best option is to have someone come stay with them at home during your absence. This is the least disruptive of their routines, and they feel secure in their own home environment. Visiting with a family member or close friend may also be a good choice. If this is not possible, there are basically two options for boarding your animal. Veterinary hospitals offer the advantage of supervision by a veterinarian in case your pet becomes ill, but often have limited space and activities for your pet. Kennels frequently have more space, but only rarely have an on-site veterinarian. Always visit any facility where you plan to board your pet. Check to see if the kennel is clean and dry and that pets are protected from the weather. Are pets kept separated from each other? If not, does the kennel require that all pets be currently vaccinated? What food does the kennel feed, etc.? Indeed there are lots of questions but it is important that you make certain to gather all your information prior to making your selection of boarding facilities.

## Special Considerations (cont'd)

### Introducing A Second Pet To The Family

#### Canines

Because dogs are very territorial, the best way to introduce two dogs is to have them first meet on neutral territory. Have both dogs on a lead and under control. Involve the dogs in a long walk, or some form of play or exercise.

When you arrive home, have the dogs walk the area around the house together, the same as you did on neutral territory. When you enter the house, have the new dog go through first (still on the lead) so that the existing resident canine does not feel he/she has to defend his/her territory. All items that could cause a possession challenge (toys, food & water bowls, bedding, etc.) should be removed prior to bringing the dogs inside. Observe their reactions towards each other. Feed them separately, and never leave them together unsupervised until you are confident that they have made friends with each other.

There may be small disagreements or outbreaks. Try to ignore these or distract them from continued confrontation. If you feel that there is a good chance that there will be a fight, attach a short lead (12 to 24 inches long) to their collars in case you have to separate them.

Try not to pay more attention to one dog than the other, and avoid situations that may aggravate one or both dogs. The establishment of the hierarchy will usually take about two weeks.

#### Felines

Time and supervision are the keys to a successful introduction of a cat with a new feline friend. Cats, because they are solitary by nature, do require long adjustment periods. Do not be concerned if it should take several weeks, so long as the situation is steadily improving and getting better.

During the initial adjustment when the cats will be together, they must be supervised. If you can not supervise them, place the newcomer into another room. Do not force the cats together or upon each other as this will only succeed in starting a fight.

Ample time must be spent with both cats in order to make the newcomer feel at home and the other cat not to feel ignored.

### Introducing A New Baby To Your Pet

If you are expecting a new baby, here are a few suggestions to get your dog or cat ready for your new arrival.

Prior to having the baby, you may want to think about brushing up on your dog's obedience training. If you are worried about your cat jumping into a cradle or crib, start setting limitations for the cat.

If you are preparing a nursery or decorating a room for the baby, and your pet was previously allowed in that room, continue to give him/her access. Do not start prohibiting your pet from going places where he or she was previously allowed to roam.

## Special Considerations (cont'd)

While still in the hospital with your baby, let someone bring home one of the baby's blankets or outfits for your pet to smell. Do not wash it prior to letting the dog or cat sniff it. This action gives your pet an introduction to what lies ahead. Do not allow your dog to tear, chew or wrestle with the object! And, no more tug-of-war, chasing or wrestling games, as these are perceived by your dog as direct challenges.

When you and the baby come home, let someone else carry the baby into the home. You (mom) have been away for a couple of days, and your pet will be very happy to see you. Pay attention to your dog or cat and spend some time petting, playing, giving some treats, and even taking the dog outside for a walk together.

While keeping the baby in a car seat, bassinet or crib, let your dog or cat in the room to hear, see and pick up the scent of the baby. Watch your pet's reactions and responses. When you feel comfortable, introduce the dog or cat to the baby under close supervision. You may want to put your dog on a leash and have someone else hold the baby.

It is important to spend time with your pet, without the baby, as you have done in the past. It is equally important to pay attention to your dog or cat while you are tending to your baby. When possible pet your dog or cat while holding or feeding the baby. This shows your pet that you still have time for both and not only when the baby is not around.

At night, you may want to put a gate across the entrance to the baby's room so your dog cannot walk in and out. You may also want to invest in a zippered netting that can be placed over your baby's crib (found in most baby supply stores). This netting will prevent your cat from jumping into the crib.

Most important, please remember that your pet became part of your family before the new baby. Please don't exclude your pet from family life and interactions. Family memories can be made with your pets included!

## Five Steps to a Healthier, Happier Pet

With careful planning, lots of patience and a consistent approach to training and healthcare, your pet will be a valued member of your family and be able to do what he/she wants most to do: Please you. Here are some of the most important ways to raise a happier, healthier pet:

1. Choose the right pet for your home and lifestyle. There are many different sizes, ages and temperaments available at your local shelter. Mixed breeds are often healthier, hardier animals, and they combine the best traits of the purebreds into one loveable package. To find a shelter near you, visit [www.AnimalLeague.org](http://www.AnimalLeague.org).
2. Proper nutrition is key. Choose a nutritionally complete and balanced pet food from a trusted manufacturer. Providing your pet with a premium pet food formula for each stage of their life gives them nutrition that will help them stay fit and healthy.
3. Get a wellness exam every six months. Because pets age up to seven times faster, on average, than people, dramatic health changes can occur in a very short amount of time. You wouldn't wait seven years to see your doctor for a checkup so why wait a whole year to have your pet examined? Twice-a-year wellness exams allow your veterinarian to detect, treat and, ideally, prevent problems before they become serious. Many diseases, such as leptospirosis, Lyme disease, rabies and giardia, can be prevented by vaccination. Contact your veterinarian today to schedule your pet's six-month wellness exam. For more information, visit the National Pet Wellness Month Web site at [www.NPWM.com](http://www.NPWM.com).
4. Prevent disease by controlling biting insects. The season begins when the temperature rises above freezing at night. Fleas, ticks and even mosquitoes can bring diseases into your home. So, the best time to apply control is before they start laying eggs and biting your pets. Your veterinarian can make a recommendation that is best for your pet.
5. Make a lifetime commitment. Before you make the decision to add a pet to your family, remember that this pet will rely on you for its well-being for a lifetime, which can last 10-15 years or more. The time and care you put into your pet will reward you both, with a lifetime return on love and affection.



25 Davis Avenue  
Port Washington, NY 11050  
[www.AnimalLeague.org](http://www.AnimalLeague.org)  
1.877.4.SAVE.PET