

ARKLE Veterinary Care, LLC

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ESSENTIAL PET DOG CARE

- A. Puppies are usually old enough to go to a new home by 6-8 weeks of age, when they are eating, drinking and eliminating on their own without any help from their mother. If your new dog is younger than this, or does not immediately show that it knows how to eat, drink and eliminate on its own, you will need additional care recommendations from your veterinarian after they examine your new dog.
- B. Adequate **water** supply for all present. It is preferable, but not essential to have at least 2 bowls or sources if you have more than one dog. Water containers need to be emptied, cleaned and refilled with fresh, clean water daily. Containers should be large enough to hold a minimum of 8 ounces per 10 pounds of dog per day. (This means your 40 pound dog needs a container that will hold at least a quart of water.)
- C. Adequate **food** for all present. Strongly recommended to have a separate food dish or bowl for each dog. Dishes or bowls need to be kept clean on a regular basis. Food must be labeled with “nutritionally complete” for your pet’s stage of life (puppy, adult, pregnant, lactating) as proven in AAFCO feeding trials. Chemical analysis without feeding trials does not assure that your pet can absorb all needed nutrients from the food. Puppies need 2-3 meals daily (toy breeds under 12 weeks need at least 3 meals daily), adult dogs need 1-2 meals daily. Check with your veterinarian as to the right amount of food for your pet per day. There are rough guidelines for feeding on most dog food labels. Leaving food out all the time promotes an overweight pet and makes it impossible for you to know if your pet’s appetite has changed recently.
- D. Adequate **access for elimination of wastes**. Adult dogs need a minimum of 1 walk outside every 12 hours. Puppies need many trips outside because they can not hold urine more than 3-4 hours if they are less than 8 weeks old, and at least one trip outside every 8 hours until they are completely house trained and over 16 weeks old. Each walk needs to be at least 15 minutes long to give your pet needed exercise and a reasonable chance to eliminate completely.
- E. Adequate **parasite prevention & control**. This means flea control and intestinal parasite testing and elimination as recommended by your veterinarian and CDC for your dog’s specific environment and condition. Heartworm testing and regular administration of heartworm preventative is considered as essential as control and prevention of other parasites. Heartworm and intestinal parasite tests need to be done at least once a year.
- F. Adequate level of **mental stimulation & exercise** daily. Dogs need to be brushed, petted, exercised and talked to daily. They need to play regularly. They are social animals and should not be left isolated for the majority of each day. Dogs need a minimum of 30 minutes daily of interacting (walking, playing) with their “people” for exercise and mental stimulation.
- G. Annual **physical examination** by a veterinarian, and **preventative health care** (tests, vaccinations, medications) as recommended at the time of examination. Pets over 7 years of age, or with known medical problems need to be examined more often. Your veterinarian can give you specific recommendations for your pet(s).