

Taking Home Your Dog

Congratulations on your new dog! Adding a new pet to the family is both exciting and nerve-racking! Those first several weeks with your new addition can be quite the whirlwind. Here are some tips and tricks to consider to help things transition smoothly for everyone:

Health & Behavioral Concerns – Is it normal or not?

- 1) Diarrhea – more often than not in a new environment a dog will have loose, runny or watery stool. This is NORMAL. This stool can even be *slightly* tinted with blood (red streaks or a pink hue) and/or mucus (slimy, clear to green globs or streaks). Why? Stress. Do you ever get nervous and have a tummy ache? The stress of the new environment and the new smells, sights and sounds can cause them to have diarrhea. The blood can come from extreme stress or straining to use the bathroom. A lot of blood can be cause for concern and is best to follow up with your vet. (Other normal causes for blood your vet can check for are parasites, anal fissures, allergies and ulcers.)
- 2) Excessive peeing – sometimes your new dog will pee on everything or pee when you try to engage him/her. This is NORMAL. Why? Two reasons; stress and submission. A stressed dog may pee more as it is uncomfortable to hold it in or to comfort itself (the scent is a self-soothing tactic in some dogs). A dog may also pee in front of you to show it is submissive to you. Puppies do this to their mother and siblings to show they understand their place in the chain and are being respectful. It is dog language.
- 3) Lots of poop – pooping a lot is very, very NORMAL. Puppies in particular eat a lot and poop a lot. It's just how they are. Also, it can be very painful or uncomfortable to hold it in. Like toddlers, the feeling of a bowel movement is upsetting and takes time to understand when to go and how to hold it.
- 4) Crying (Barking/Whining) – adults and puppies will cry in their new home. It's very NORMAL. Barking and whining are forms of dealing with the stress, fear and uncertainty of the new home. It is perfectly fine to comfort your dog, but be careful not to do so while in the crate too often otherwise you may build a habit of barking or crying just to get out. Acknowledge your dog's needs, including to be comforted.
- 5) Showing teeth – showing a mouthful of teeth is not always a bad thing. Though not a very common behavior, it is generally safe. Showing teeth can be a grin or smile. It is a form of submission; dog language. Your dog may whine or “sing”, as we call it. What is NOT NORMAL is if the grin is accompanied by a growl, scrunched up posture and hackles raised.
- 6) Sleeping all the time – Sleeping often is actually a great sign. It means your dog is comfortable enough to snooze away. It also means your puppy is growing. As long as your puppy is eating, drinking and using the bathroom sleeping frequently is perfectly fine. What is NOT NORMAL is if your puppy or dog loses all interest in eating, drinking, moving and refuses to get up take him/her into the vet asap. (Sometimes a pup will lose interest for a few days when first getting into it's new home. That is normal, but if it persist past 3 days schedule a vet appointment.)

My Dog has What?!

- 1) Your new pooch may come home with fleas. Fleas are common on puppies and rather difficult to eradicate on such a young animal. Flea control for puppies under 6-8 weeks is limited to mild oral pills or liquid and topical sprays. Most options are not potent enough to kill off all stages of fleas, just adults. The toxins and chemicals in most flea meds are safest on heavier, older puppies. We do treat for fleas but leave long-term flea control methods up to the new owner. We use Caps, medicated baths and sprays on our puppies.
- 2) Parasites are also very normal. We treat with two types of liquid wormers. Until aged 6-8 weeks the wormers only cover round, whip and hookworms. At 8 weeks we start on a more potent yet still mild 3-day application wormer (Safeguard) that covers all common forms of worms in canines, including flea-born tapeworms. Parasites can be picked up from grass, dirt, stepping on stool, contact with other animals (dead

and alive), contaminated water, bug bites (fleas, ticks, mosquitos, etc.), bird droppings, raw foods (especially meats and eggs), as well as sit dormant inside the intestinal tract. Some parasites that survive de-worming attempts go on to pass down immunity to their offspring making it even more difficult to get rid of them.

- 3) Allergies are prevalent in dogs. Some breeds are more prone to sensitivities and allergies over other breeds. Common allergies include chicken, wheat, corn, soy, lentils, nylon (collars and carpet), pollen, perfumes, and cleaning chemicals.

Tips – How to handle the unexpected or the frustrating things.

- 1) Don't punish for accidents or crying. Punishing will only exacerbate crate/home soiling and submissive peeing. It tells the dog/pup you are unhappy so they use their dog language to appeal to you.
- 2) Go out to potty as often as necessary, not on a schedule. The younger the dog the smaller the bladder and stomach which means more bathroom trips. Take your dog out as needed when you first get him/her home. Over time and with age you can and will build up to a schedule. Remember an 8-12 week old puppy can only hold it for 1-2 hours MAX until it runs the risk of bladder infection or diarrhea.
- 3) Crate training is key to a happy dog. It is their own room, space and place to retreat when stressed, sick, overwhelmed, tired, etc. It will help drastically with training.
- 4) Good vet and good vet care. Keep up with regular vaccines (The Dobb schedule limits over vaccination) and deworm every 2-3 months with a quality wormer (Panacur and Safeguard are good choices).
- 5) Diet will help keep your pet happy and healthy. Cost doesn't always equal quality. Skin/coat trouble can be a manifestation of poor diet even if using an \$80 dog food.
- 6) Know your breed. Knowing the breed history, disposition and overall health will prepare you on how to manage your own dog.
- 7) Don't limit food and water. Never restrict food and water access to a puppy. They need to eat when hungry and drink when thirsty. (In our home at 7-8 weeks we take up the bowls at 9-10pm and put them back down with fresh food and water at 6-7am to encourage them sleeping through the night for 6-9 hours.)
- 8) Some anxiety is normal. In certain breeds (like guardian and protection breeds) that low-mild anxiety is what drives their instinct. It makes them keen. It should be handled with compassion and acceptance since, after all, the breed was made to be that way. Behavioral training will help curb a lot of the unwanted anxiety and redirect coping methods to healthy outlets.
- 9) Walk away when you hit that boiling point. New shoes chewed, staircase torn up, business papers shredded, suit peed on, carpet poop stained, new glasses destroyed ... walkaway. Kennel your dog or let it outside to play in a safe, contained area. Call a professional cleaner for big messes, call your boss and explain why you won't be wearing that suit on Friday, and find your calm again. Come back in an hour to handle things once you have calmed down.

What to Look Out For

- 1) Depression – prolonged sulking, hiding, refusing to leave the cage/kennel, not eating, not drinking, poor stool and urination, skittishness, extreme shyness
- 2) Extreme stress – hiding its face in the corner of the cage/kennel/wall, screaming when touched, snapping, growling, baring teeth (showing teeth), struggling to get away when held (stretching when held and wiggling is normal, but desperation to get free is not)
- 3) Extreme Anxiety – constant pacing, destructive behavior, digging, shredding, whining, extreme mood swings (hyper, calm), poor appetite, loud crying or persistent crying, self harming
- 4) Light Fixation/OCD – chasing lights, fixated on shiny objects, whining at windows/doors, refusing to leave one area where light beams come through, shaking/panting/digging at lights and beams

Don'ts

- 1) Don't use lasers as toys. – May trigger OCD
- 2) Don't let a new puppy free roam until COMPLETELY housebroken.
- 3) Don't force a dog to be held or petted.
- 4) Don't hit, kick, punch, scream at or abuse your dog. (If you get that upset, kennel your dog or put it outside and walk away for an hour.)
- 5) Don't leave a new dog unattended with adults, children and other household pets until the dog has adjusted and is confident (can take months).

For busy families you may want to consider hiring a nanny or a caretaker to come by every so often a day to feed, to water, to potty and to clean up after your dog. Or, consider signing up for a doggy daycare program (I love them). Both options offer valuable socialization and companionship for your dog while you are away. If neither of those work for you, look into smart toys or brain games for your dog. There are a variety of toys and difficulties to choose from. They are excellent options for the easily bored or the pup needing a task to do.

Remember, dog's have their own language and behaviors. They have a different social structure than we do. Watch for signs of discomfort and stress (excessive panting, digging, destructive behaviors, growling, yelping, skittishness, clinginess, excessive soiling, depression, anxiety, etc.). The sooner you can catch those behaviors the easier it is to correct them. And, most importantly, love your new pet!

If you need help contact us: email jacksonskennel@mail.com or visit www.jacksonskennel.weebly.com