

Humane Society of West Michigan

Initially don't leave your new dog with the run of the house. As he becomes more mature and learns to be better behaved, you can give him more freedom. Try not to blame your dog for being a dog, blame yourself for not putting things away.

Your New Dog's Health

Dogs and puppies need time to adjust to their new home and surroundings. The stress of the change in environment can weaken a dog's immune system and make him more susceptible to illness. In the first few weeks following the adoption, monitor your pet closely for the following:

Kennel Cough

Kennel cough, or canine infectious tracheobronchitis, is one of the most prevalent infectious diseases in dogs. All HSWM dogs are vaccinated against kennel cough before being placed in the adoption kennels. However, sometimes dogs HSWM receives as transfers from other shelters may have already have been exposed to the virus, or a dog may be exposed within the window of time before the vaccine becomes protective. Potential adopters who bring in their own dogs for a pet meet at the shelter should be aware that their pet is being exposed to kennel cough.

The following can all be signs of kennel cough:

- A dry, hacking cough (often sounds as if something is caught in the throat)
- Retching or gagging (often producing clear, foamy saliva)
- Nasal discharge
- Sneezing
- Lethargy

Most dogs with kennel cough do not have a fever and, apart from the cough, can appear healthy and energetic. If your dog has a fever, is less active than usual, has a decreased appetite, has discharge from the eyes or nose or has difficulty breathing, please consult your veterinarian immediately, as a more serious problem may be present.

Important! Please remember that kennel cough is common and contagious but is very rarely fatal. We always recommend that all newly adopted dogs be seen by a vet of the adopter's choice within a week of leaving the shelter.

Parvovirus

At HSWM all incoming puppies are vaccinated for the most common canine diseases immediately upon arrival. One virus that primarily targets puppies less than 6 months of age is the canine parvovirus. Parvovirus infection causes vomiting and diarrhea which is often bloody. Puppies are lethargic and reluctant to eat. This disease progresses quickly and can be fatal. If you notice the above symptoms in your newly adopted puppy, please contact your veterinarian immediately. If your puppy is diagnosed with parvo by your veterinarian, please call the HSWM staff at 616-453-8900 ext. 215.

Until your puppy receives a full series of the DA2PP vaccine following the schedule your veterinarian recommends, it is important to limit his exposure to areas where other dogs frequent, such as dog parks, pet stores and public green spaces.



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Medical Treatment

While at Humane Society of West Michigan, the dog you adopted may have received the following vaccines and/or treatments:

DA2PP: This is a standard vaccine administered to dogs. It provides protection against canine distemper, adenovirus, parvovirus and parainfluenza. Pups and some dogs need additional boosters of this vaccine administered by your veterinarian over a period of weeks to achieve maximum immunity from diseases. Until these are completed, it is best to limit exposure to other dogs. Many serious dog illnesses are spread by fecal material from other dogs—so properly dispose of waste and avoid areas of elimination used by other dogs. Parvovirus is an especially contagious and often fatal disease which primarily affects puppies, so any dog under one year of age without sufficient vaccine boosters should not be taken to public parks and outdoor areas, even sidewalks, until he has received a full series of DA2PP vaccine. Your veterinarian will work with you to determine a booster schedule and may recommend additional vaccines based on your dog's age and lifestyle.

Bordetella: Commonly known as kennel cough, bordetella, or canine tracheobronchitis, is an upper respiratory illness spread in facilities with lots of other dogs. All animal shelters are familiar with this disease and most protect all incoming dogs by administering a bordetella vaccine. However, the dogs often come in contact with the bacteria before the vaccine takes full effect, so often dogs leaving the shelter will develop an illness with cold-like symptoms for a week or longer. Should symptoms develop, keep him quiet, entice him to eat and get plenty of rest. Your veterinarian may prescribe antibiotics to prevent him from developing a secondary infection. Canine infectious tracheobronchitis is most often characterized by a frequent dry cough which is aggravated by pressure from pulling on the leash or strenuous activity. Most dogs seem to be minimally affected by the illness and continue to behave normally, eat and play. Lethargy, reluctance to eat, or white or yellow nasal discharge could be signs that the kennel cough has progressed into a more respiratory infection or even pneumonia, so see your veterinarian right away if you notice these symptoms.

Rabies Vaccine: All animals four months of age and older are vaccinated against rabies. HSWM uses a one year vaccine. Follow your veterinarians' advice regarding follow-up vaccination.

Worming: A dose of medicine to eliminate roundworms and/or tapeworms was given. HSWM usually uses a medication called Pyrantel (brand name Strongid-t). Do not be surprised to see worms passed in your dog's elimination. This is to be expected. Continued treatment and other types of parasite control may be recommended by your veterinarian to treat a wider range of parasites.

Antibiotics and Other Medications

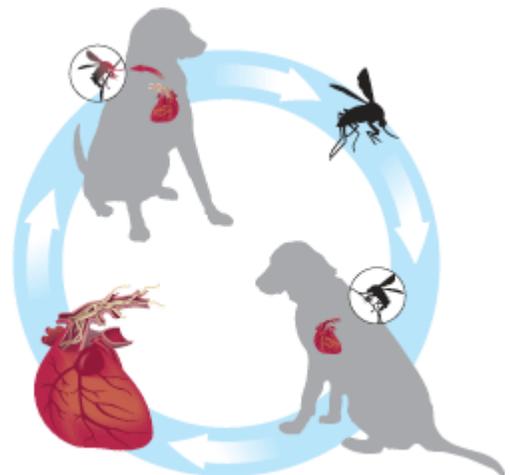
When an animal is sick with an upper respiratory infection we may prescribe antibiotics to treat the illness. If your newly adopted dog has antibiotics or other medications to go home with him, it is important that you follow the dispensing directions carefully and follow up with your veterinarian for rechecks and further treatment if necessary.

Flea / Parasite Control

Many products exist that protect your dog from fleas and parasites. Your dog has been given a monthly dose of flea preventative while in our care at HSWM. We recommend using flea and tick prevention year round. Your veterinarian has a wide range of high quality flea control products which are safer and more effective than over-the-counter flea products. HSWM also sells high quality flea and tick control products.

Heartworm

HSWM tests every dog over six months of age for heartworm disease. The disease is spread by the bite of an infected mosquito. Your dog has also been given a monthly dose of heartworm prevention by HSWM. We recommend that all dogs receive heartworm prevention monthly. Heartworm prevention can be purchased through your veterinarian or through HSWM.



Spaying and Neutering

All dogs and puppies that arrive at HSWM unaltered will be spayed or neutered by our shelter veterinarian. The incision was closed using surgical adhesive and there are not external sutures. If you have concerns or further questions, please contact your new pet's veterinarian immediately. We cannot be held responsible for complications arising from a failure to follow the post-operative instructions.

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Conclusion

Animals in our lives provide a blessing and an opportunity to share the world with another species. It is a responsibility to be taken seriously. Working through behavior and medical issues will deepen your relationship with your animals and provide a valuable lesson to children and adults that the bond is indeed one that will endure tough times and last for the lifetime of your pet. “Getting rid” of an animal because it does not meet expectations, has not been taught good manners, or needs expensive medical care is a poor example of animal ownership.

When the match isn't right...

Sometimes a relationship is not successful. If keeping your companion animal becomes impossible, please contact HSWM for plans of placement or make an appointment at 616-453-8900 x 216 to return the animal to the shelter. You have three weeks from the time of adoption to return the animal at no cost and put your adoption fee towards another animal that is more suitable for your family. If you wish to place the animal yourself, please select the home with care. Once transfer of ownership has taken place, please notify HSWM with the new owner's information so that the microchip and owner information can be updated in our database.



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All of us at Humane Society of West Michigan want to help you make the right pet choice and keep the loving bond for the lifetime of the pet. Please give us a call at **616-453-8900** with any questions you might have; *we are happy to help!*

SERVICES DIRECTORY

HSWM is dedicated to making our community a better place. Call (616) 453-8900 for more information or visit us online at www.hswestmi.org.

Animal Adoptions

Cats, dogs, birds, rodents, rabbits and more are available for adoption. (616) 453-8900 ext. 200

Animal Assistance

Food, supplies and vaccines are available to low income pet owners.

(616) 453-8900 ext. 210 or jtownsend@hswestmi.org

Behavior Help

If you have questions about problem pet behavior, contact our Behavior Specialist at (616) 453-8900 ext. 221 or namiko@hswestmi.org

Find a Home for your pet

If you are unable to keep your pet, HSWM may be able to place your pet in a new home.

Call first to schedule an appointment. (616) 453-8900 ext. 216