



Eden
Veterinary Practice

professional affordable care with a personal touch



7
steps

**to keeping a
healthy pet**

01334 650888 www.edenvets.co.uk

Pet ownership is an important part of modern life, it is estimated that there are currently 24 million pets owned in the UK, (65 million if you include fish!), and that approximately 46% of households have at least one pet. We all know the joy that animals bring to our lives, their unconditional love and companionship help prevent loneliness but

did you know that they keep us healthier as well? Studies have shown that pet owners are 30% less likely to die from heart disease and that on average pet owners have lower blood pressure than non pet owners. All the more reason therefore why we should try to return the favour and keep our animals as healthy as we can.

There are many things we can do to help our animals but for a start we thought we would give you seven simple steps to ensure you keep your animal as healthy as possible between vet checks.

1 vaccination & general health checks

Vaccination is a vital part of keeping your pet healthy and starts from a young age. Many of the diseases that we vaccinate against are potentially fatal, in fact infectious diseases once killed thousands of pets in the UK each year. Vaccination has drastically changed this and now thankfully seeing an animal die from one of these diseases is rare. Unlike some diseases that humans are vaccinated against however, we have not eradicated the diseases of pets and so the threat to unvaccinated animals is still present.



In recent years there has been some concern regarding over vaccination of pets. At Eden vets we use different vaccine components each year to ensure that your pet receives the optimum protection without over vaccinating. When you come in for a vaccination your pet will receive a thorough health

check, which is not only important to check that you have purchased a healthy puppy or kitten but also to monitor health throughout your pets life. We often pick up little problems at these routine health check and the earlier problems are identified the better.

dogs:

We vaccinate dogs against 5 main infectious diseases:

- **Distemper**
- **Hepatitis**
- **Parvo virus**
- **Paro influenza**
- **Leptospirosis**

Your puppies first vaccination is given at 8 weeks of age and the second 2 weeks later but not earlier than 10 weeks of age. Your puppy will be classed as fully vaccinated a week later and can then mix with any other dogs safely.

Annual booster vaccinations are required to maintain sufficient immunity, however not all of the components are required each year and we will ensure you get the right vaccine for your dog.

Dogs can additionally receive another vaccination to offer protection from kennel cough. Kennel cough although not fatal can be severely debilitating and sometimes lead to a long term cough. The vaccine is a little bit different and is squirted up your dogs nose, it may not completely prevent your dog getting kennel cough but if they do get it, it is less severe and generally doesn't last as long.



cats:

We vaccinate cats against:

- **Cat flu**
- **Infectious enteritis**
- **Leukaemia**

Your kittens first vaccination is due at 9 weeks of age and a second vaccination is given 3-4 weeks later but not earlier than 12 weeks of age. Kittens are classed as fully protected a week after the second vaccine although many owners chose not to let their new kittens out until they are neutered at approximately 5 months of age.

Annual booster vaccination is also necessary but once again not all components need to be given every year and here at Eden Vets we will make sure your cat gets the right protection.



2 microchipping

A microchip is a small device inserted under your pet's skin usually at the back of the neck, it is coated in the same glass-like material as human pacemakers so that your pet is very unlikely to react to it. When a special scanner is placed over your animal's back it reads a unique serial number, this number is registered against your personal details on a central database.

Microchipping your pet is very important and has helped reunite thousands of pets with their owners. The microchip is easy to insert, it can be done within a normal appointment and lasts for your pet's lifetime. If any of your contact details change during your pet's life it is important to notify the microchip company.

The government have announced that from April 2016 it will be a legal requirement for all dogs in the



UK to be microchipped. This is in order to minimise the number of dogs lost or stolen, reduce stray dogs and allow dangerous dogs to be tracked more easily.

3 worming

All cats and dogs in the UK are at risk of picking up gastrointestinal worms, there are several types of worm that can cause health problems for your pet, the most common are roundworms and tapeworms but they can also get lungworm, hook and whipworms.

Puppies and kittens can have worms too, they are commonly transferred through the milk and across the placenta and so worming should start from 2 weeks of age. At Eden vets we recommend that you treat puppies and kittens every 2-3 weeks until they are 12 weeks of age with a good roundworm treatment.

Worming doesn't stop there! Unfortunately none of the wormers last, they just treat the animal at that moment in time. Dogs and cats can pick up worms from anywhere - contacting other animals or animal

faeces, or from hunting wildlife. We recommend that all cats and dogs are treated with a wormer every 3-6 months throughout their lives. The great news for cat owners is that we now have a 'spot on' wormer that treats all worms and so there is no need to battle with tablets anymore!

Unfortunately most animals do not show any signs if they have worms, some get diarrhoea, a loss of weight, change in appetite or dullness of coat however many appear very healthy despite significant infestations! At any time up to 25% of dogs have been shown to have microscopic worm eggs on their coat. Some of these worms can also infect humans, children are particularly susceptible and worms can even lead to blindness in people so keeping your pet adequately wormed is very important.

4 flea & tick control

Fleas are everywhere and can affect your pet at any time of the year! They can live off of an animal for 100 days but once they find your pet can start feeding on their blood within five minutes and start laying eggs shortly afterwards. They lay eggs at the rate of 40-50 a day, that then drop off of your animal and develop in your household. These eggs hatch into pupae that again live in your carpets or in the animal's bedding, so for every flea you see on your pet there are likely to be 1000 eggs and larvae in your house.....it's easy to see how quickly a problem can develop.

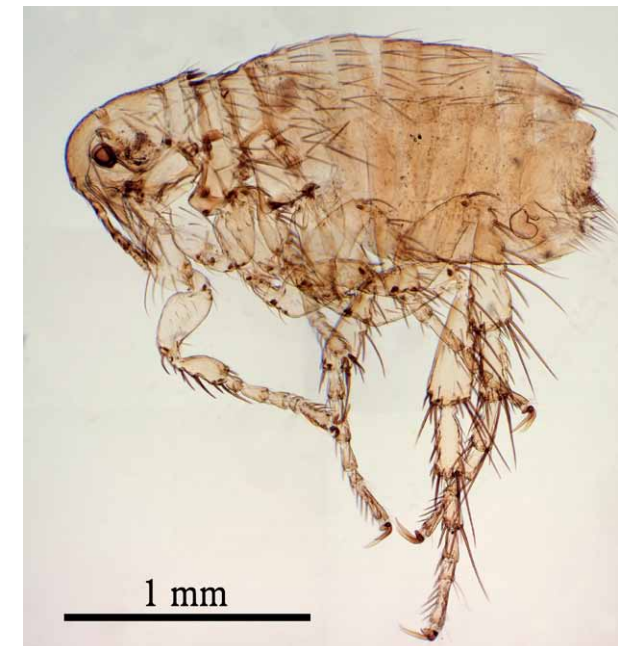
Fleas can cause your pet to itch and some pets get so sensitive to fleas that a single bite can start an itching reaction that lasts many months. Fleas can also transmit the dog tapeworm and because a female flea drinks 15 times her own bodyweight in blood every day a severe infestation can even leave your pet anaemic.

Ticks are blood sucking parasites related to spiders and scorpions that live for most of the time on vegetation awaiting a host walking by. When an animal walks by they grab hold with their legs and start looking for a soft spot of skin to attach to. They bury their mouth piece into your pet's skin and glue it there with a cement-like substance, drinking blood for 24-48 hours. During this time their bodies swell to many times their original size with the blood they ingest.

Ticks can cause a significant local reaction and irritate your pet, they can also carry Lyme disease which pets and humans can catch when they bite so controlling ticks is very important.

Ticks and fleas seem to be becoming more common and now we see them at all times of year, although they are more common during spring and summer months.

The good news is that treating fleas and ticks is quick and effective. We have a variety of different products that can be used to kill fleas some are 'spot on' treatments that kill fleas on contact - before they bite, we also have tablets that last longer but require the flea or tick to bite before they kill them. We can discuss an individual flea and tick prevention plan to suit your needs. We also have products that can be used to treat your household and last for a full 12 months.



5 neutering

Neutering your animals is very important part of pet ownership. It prevents unwanted pregnancies and make cats and male dogs less likely to stray and to fight. The most important benefits however are medical. Neutering female animals makes life threatening womb infections (a condition called pyometra) highly unlikely, whereas 1 in 4 un-neutered bitches will develop a pyometra sometime in their lives. Spaying female animals also prevents get ovarian or uterine tumours. One of the most significant advantages though is the reduction in occurrence of mammary tumours, bitches spayed before their first season have 0.5% chance of developing a mammary tumour compared to an un-neutered bitch. This protective effect of neutering decreases with the number of seasons that the bitch has, however even if a bitch does develop mammary tumours, if they are spayed the tumours tend to grow more slowly.

Male dogs cannot get testicular tumours if they are castrated and are much less likely to get prostatic problems, they also are likely to be easier to train and less likely to fight.

Neutering is a day procedure which involves a general anaesthetic, for the boy it is a relatively minor operation but for the girls it quite a major procedure. In most cases however they will go home with you that night, all animals need to be kept quiet for a few days after surgery to allow them to recover but within 2 weeks can be expected to be running around absolutely as normal. The anaesthetic risk now with modern drugs and monitoring techniques is very small and can be discussed with any of our vets, however on balance the positive health advantages massively outweigh a small risk.

6 weight management

Obesity is the most common disease we see in pets today, an animal is defined as obese once it is 20-25% above its ideal body weight, and just as is true with us obesity is linked to some serious health issues.

Over weight animals are more likely to suffer from:

- **Diabetes**
- **Respiratory problems**
- **Heart disease**
- **Certain tumours**
- **Obesity worsens the signs of arthritis.**

Obesity is a preventable issue and can be corrected via good dietary management and exercise, it is certainly worth managing as

recent studies have shown that animals kept at the correct weight will live on average 2 years longer than obese animals.

We have scales in the surgery that are free to use at any time, we can keep track of your pets weight and help you with choosing the right diet to help your pet reach its ideal body condition.



7 dental care

Dental disease is very common in our pets, in fact 80% of animals over the age of 2 have some sign of dental disease and it progresses throughout life. Dental disease begins with the adhesion of plaque – a kind of bacterial soup to the teeth, in time this hardens to form tartar – a yellow or brown solid deposit on the teeth. In response to this bacterial insult the gums become red and inflamed; a process called gingivitis, the gums then recede away from the diseased tooth, exposing more and more tooth root until the tooth becomes wobbly.

Not only is dental disease painful for your pet but it is also linked with heart disease as animals biting down with diseased teeth inoculate their blood stream with bacteria that can then infect the heart valves.

The good news is that we can do plenty to help slow the progression of dental disease:

- **Brushing your animals teeth with a good enzymatic toothpaste can help, although this must be done daily to keep up with plaque adhesion to the teeth.**
- **Solutions can be put into your pets water to help to reduce the bacterial burden in your pets mouth.**

- **Once dental disease has really started there is no better way of improving the situation than us ultrasonically scaling and polishing your pets teeth to remove the tartar. This is a process that involves a general anaesthetic but allows us to properly clean every tooth and remove any that have problems. Then its down to you to keep up the care at home!**





Eden

Veterinary Practice

Opening Times

Monday to Friday 8.30am to 7.00pm
Saturday 9.00am to 1.00pm

Consultation Times

Monday to Friday 9.00am to 9.30pm
2.30pm to 4.30pm
5.00pm to 7.00pm



Saturday morning
by appointment

24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE

01334 650888 www.edenvets.co.uk

professional affordable care with a personal touch

Eden Veterinary Practice
Cupar Trading Estate, Cupar
Fife, KY15 4SX

Telephone: 01334 650888
Fax no: 01334 650888
email: edenvets@hotmail.co.uk