

**Bringing Your New Dog Home** So you've taken the plunge and adopted a dog of your own. Congratulations! But what do you do now? No doubt you're excited and looking forward to forging a lifelong friendship with your new buddy. But try to keep in mind the confusion he is feeling right now. Whatever his past history, coming home with you is a new experience. He is likely to be a little disoriented, wondering where he is, and who all these new people are. The key to helping your new dog make a successful adjustment to your home is being *prepared* and being *patient*. It can take anywhere from two days to two months for you and your pet to adjust to each other. The following tips can help ensure a smooth transition:

**Supplies** Prepare the things your dog will need. You'll need a crate, collar and leash, food and water bowls, food (try to feed food your pet was already eating to change diet, wean them over to new food slowly), and, of course, *some toys*. Check with your new pet's foster home for available supplies—the proceeds go to save another life! And don't forget to order an identification tag right away. Please keep any identification your new dog is wearing on, until you supply him or her with a new one! **DON'T** forget to register his or her micro-chip & sign up for your pet insurance right away!!!!



**Welcome Home** Try to arrange the arrival of your new dog for a weekend or when you can be home for just a couple days only. Get to know each other and spend some quality time together. But, get back to your normal routine as soon as possible. Routine is the best for your new furry family member. Don't forget the jealousy factor—make sure you don't neglect other pets and people in your household!

**Health Care** Rescues take in animals with widely varying backgrounds, some of whom have not been previously vaccinated. Inevitably, despite the best efforts of rescues, viruses can be spread and may occasionally go home with adopted animals. *If you already have dogs or cats at home*, make sure they are up-to-date on their shots and in good general health before introducing your new pet dog. Take your new dog to the veterinarian within 72 hours of adoption. There, he will receive a health check and any needed vaccinations. If your dog has not been spayed or neutered, make that appointment! There are already far too many homeless puppies and dogs; don't let your new pet add to the problem. The rescue will require that you have your pet spayed or neutered, anyway. Also be sure to put together your dog's first-aid kit.

**\* PUPPIES- What you should know about Canine Parvovirus- What is canine parvovirus?** Canine parvovirus is a highly contagious and serious disease caused by a virus that attacks the gastrointestinal tract of puppies, dogs, and wild canids. It was first identified in 1978 and is seen worldwide. It also can damage the heart muscle in very young and unborn puppies.

**How is parvovirus spread?** Puppies and dogs usually become infected when they ingest virus that is passed in the feces (stool) of an infected dog. Canine parvovirus is resistant to changes in environmental conditions and can survive for long periods of time. Trace amounts of feces containing parvovirus may serve as reservoirs of infection and the virus is readily transmitted from place to place on the hair or feet of dogs or via contaminated cages, shoes, or other objects.

**What dogs are at risk?** All dogs are at risk, but puppies less than four months old and dogs that have not been vaccinated against canine parvovirus are at increased risk of acquiring the disease. Certain breeds (e.g. Rottweiler and Doberman Pinscher) appear to have a high risk of experiencing severe disease.

**What are some signs of parvovirus infection?** Canine parvovirus causes lethargy; loss of appetite; fever; vomiting; and severe, often bloody, diarrhea. Vomiting and diarrhea can cause rapid dehydration, and most deaths from parvovirus occur within 48 to 72 hours following onset of clinical signs. If your puppy or dog shows any of these signs, you should contact your veterinarian promptly.

**How is canine parvovirus diagnosed and treated?** Veterinarians diagnose canine parvovirus on the basis of clinical appearance and laboratory tests. No specific drug is available that will kill the virus in infected dogs. Treatment should be started immediately and consists primarily of efforts to combat dehydration by replacing electrolyte and fluid losses, controlling vomiting and diarrhea, and preventing secondary infections. Sick dogs should be kept warm, receive good nursing care, and be separated from other dogs. Proper cleaning and disinfection of contaminated kennels and other areas where infected dogs are housed is essential to control the spread of parvovirus. Canine parvovirus is not easily killed, so consult your veterinarian for specific guidance on cleaning and disinfecting agents.

**How is parvovirus prevented?** Vaccination and good hygiene are critical components of canine parvovirus prevention. **Vaccination**—Vaccination is important. Young puppies are very susceptible to infection, particularly because the natural

immunity provided in their mothers' milk may wear off before the puppies' own immune systems are mature enough to fight off infection. If a puppy is exposed to canine parvovirus during this gap in protection, it may become ill. An additional concern is that immunity provided by a mother's milk may interfere with an effective response to vaccination. This means even vaccinated puppies may occasionally succumb to parvovirus. To narrow gaps in protection and provide optimal protection against parvovirus during the first few months of life, a series of puppy vaccinations are administered. To protect their adult dogs, pet owners should be sure that their dog's parvovirus vaccination is up-to-date. Ask your veterinarian about a recommended vaccination program for your canine companion. In spite of proper vaccination, a small percentage of dogs do not develop protective immunity and remain susceptible to infection. Hygiene—Until a puppy has received its complete series of vaccinations, pet owners should use caution when bringing their pet to places where young puppies congregate (e.g. pet shops, parks, puppy classes, obedience classes, doggy daycare, and grooming establishments). Reputable establishments and training programs reduce exposure risk by requiring vaccinations, health examinations, good hygiene, and isolation of ill puppies and dogs. Contact with known infected dogs and their premises should always be avoided. Finally, do not allow your puppy or dog to come into contact with the fecal waste of other dogs while walking or playing outdoors. Prompt and proper disposal of waste material is always advisable as a way to limit spread of canine parvovirus infection. Although this provides basic information about canine parvovirus, your veterinarian is always your best source of health information. Consult your veterinarian for more information about canine parvovirus and its prevention.

**Kennel Cough (Bordetella)** Congratulations on your new dog! The RESCUE has worked very hard to ensure the health of your dog, but kennel cough is a very common disease in dogs adopted from shelters. Here is some information about this condition and you on how you can help your newly adopted dog to recover from this condition and lead a long and healthy life! Kennel cough is common, contagious, and very rarely fatal. The disease is caused by bacteria and/or viruses that spread among dogs and cats in shelters. Kennel cough is spread by air and hands, therefore is as common in an animal shelter foster home, or dog daycare, as the common cold is in a day care center. Kennel cough could spread to your other dogs. Vaccinated, healthy dogs in a home usually develop mild if any signs of kennel cough after exposure to a new dog, however in some cases serious illness may be transmitted. Talk to your veterinarian if you have concerns. There are vaccines that either prevent kennel cough or reduce the severity, but giving these vaccines to an animal who is already infected will not help the animal recover any quicker. Most times antibiotics are used in treating kennel cough, and may help the dog deal with the disease. These medications can be obtained through your regular veterinarian. Severe, untreated cases of kennel cough can develop into pneumonia, so it is important to discuss kennel cough with your veterinarian.

**When should you seek treatment?** We recommend that all newly adopted dogs be seen by a veterinarian within a few days of adoption, for a routine health check. If any of your dogs develop a cough, reverse sneezes, discharge from eyes and nose, lethargy, or loss of appetite, you should make an appointment with a veterinarian. If your dog or puppy was sent home with antibiotics, make sure you do not discontinue them until your vet recommends to.

### **Puppies, Dogs and Intestinal Parasites - Keeping Your Dog Safe!**

Deworming your puppy or dog is very important. Even in the best of conditions, most rescue dogs and puppies will have intestinal parasites. What intestinal parasites are: The most common intestinal parasites are roundworms, hookworms, whipworms, tapeworms, giardia, and coccidia. Roundworms are long round worms that look like spaghetti. Hookworms are small, thin worms that attach to the intestinal wall with 'hooks' or 'teeth' and drain blood from their host. Whipworms are tiny, thread-like worms that live in the colon and in the first section of the large intestine called the cecum, causing irritation in these areas. Tapeworms are long flat segmented worms. They burrow into the intestinal wall and segments may break off and be passed in the feces. Dogs get tapeworms from ingesting a flea host. Giardia is a microscopic parasite that attaches to the surface of the intestine. It can be passed from one dog to another through standing water, food, or contaminated areas. Giardia is present in greater than 50% of rescued pets.

Coccidia is a microscopic parasite that lives in the lining of the intestinal tract.

**How puppies get intestinal parasites** Dormant larvae live in the muscles of adult dogs and may be activated by hormones during pregnancy. They are then transmitted from the mother to her puppies before birth or during nursing. Puppies also contract intestinal parasites when they ingest microscopic larvae in an environment. Or by ingesting flies, fleas, rodents, birds, or other hosts and their droppings. In other cases, parasite larvae may penetrate the skin of the puppy.

**What to watch for** Vomiting, Diarrhea or bloody diarrhea, Change in appetite, Lethargy, Weight loss, dull coat, bloated abdomen, worms or evidence of eggs in stool or on fur. NOTE: dogs shed the parasites in their stool after being dewormed.

**What you should do** Your adopted pet was dewormed. However, it normally takes a series of dewormings to ensure your pet is clear of intestinal parasites- Bring a stool sample to your first vet exam-The results of the test will tell the vet which type of dewormer is necessary- Make sure your dog or puppy is on a veterinarian supervised deworming schedule;

Ask about heartworm preventative that is also effective against some intestinal parasites; Scoop and clean up after your dog at least once daily; Keep food and water containers and bedding clean; Keep your dog free from fleas; Some parasites can be transmitted from dogs to humans. Children and anyone with a weaker immune system will be most vulnerable. Do not allow your dog to lick you on the face; Do not walk barefoot in areas where pets relieve themselves; Practice hand washing after handling your dog. Ask your veterinarian about other ways to keep you, your family, and your pet safe from intestinal parasites.

**House Rules** Work out your dog-care regimen in advance among the human members of your household. Who will walk the dog first thing in the morning? Who will feed him at night? Will Fido be allowed on the couch, or won't he? Where will he rest at night? Are there any rooms in the house that are off-limits?

**Training and Discipline** Dogs need order. Remember, they are pack animals, so make yourself the "pack leader." Let your pet know from the start who is the boss. When you catch him doing something he shouldn't, don't lose your cool. Stay calm, and let him know immediately that he has misbehaved, by removing him from the situation, and redirecting him to an acceptable behavior. Reward him with praise when he does well, too! Sign up for a local dog obedience class, and you'll learn what a joy it is to have a well-trained dog. Also be sure to read our [Dog Behavior Tip Sheets](#).

**Housetraining** Assume your new dog is not housetrained, and work from there. Read over the housetraining information given to you at the time of adoption and [check out our housetraining tips](#). Be consistent, and maintain a routine. A little extra effort on your part to come home straight from work each day will pay off in easier, faster housetraining.

**Crate Training** A crate may look to you like the canine equivalent of a jail cell, but to your dog, who instinctively likes to den, it's a room of his own. It makes housetraining and obedience-training easier and saves your dog from the headache of being yelled at unnecessarily for problem behavior. Of course, you won't want to crate your dog all day and all night, or he *will* consider it a jail cell. Just a few, regular hours a day (but no more than four hours at a time) should be sufficient. The crate should be roomy enough to allow your dog to stand up, turn around, and sleep comfortably. If you still can't face the idea of a crate, at the very least consider some sort of confinement to a dog-proofed part of your home. A portion of the kitchen or family room can serve the purpose very well. (A baby gate works perfectly.)

**Let the Games Begin** Dogs need an active life. That means you should plan (post your 2 week shut-down) plenty of exercise and game time for your pet. Enjoy jogging or Frisbee? You can bet your dog will, too. If running around the park is too energetic for your taste, try throwing a ball or a stick, or just going for a long walk together. When you take a drive in the country or visit family and friends, bring your dog and a leash along.

**A Friend for Life** Finally, *be reasonable in your expectations*. Life with you is a different experience for your new companion, so give him time to adjust. You'll soon find out that you've made a friend for life. No one will ever greet you with as much enthusiasm or provide you with as much unqualified love and loyalty as your dog will. Be patient, and you will be amply rewarded.

Notes:

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Each new dog reacts differently in each new environment. I agree that I will allow my newly adopted dog a proper period of adjustment time of at least two weeks without excess stimuli (i.e. Introducing to dogs or people who are not a part of the household); to keep the environment as quiet as possible for the adopted animal for said period of time; to not leave adopted pets unattended with elderly, young children or pets; to crate train my new dog according to ARA recommendations.

I have read, understand and will abide by any information given to me. I have been given a summary of my pet's medical history and vaccination status. All questions on the information given to me have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that information given in no way constitutes a guarantee of my adopted pet's behavior or health. Despite all efforts on the part of Animal Rescue Associates to disclose any and all pertinent medical/behavioral information, additional health/behavioral issues may become evident upon examination by a veterinarian or post adoption. As the adopter, I assume all financial and medical responsibility for any further expenses, liabilities or costs the animal incurs or requires.

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Adopter's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date