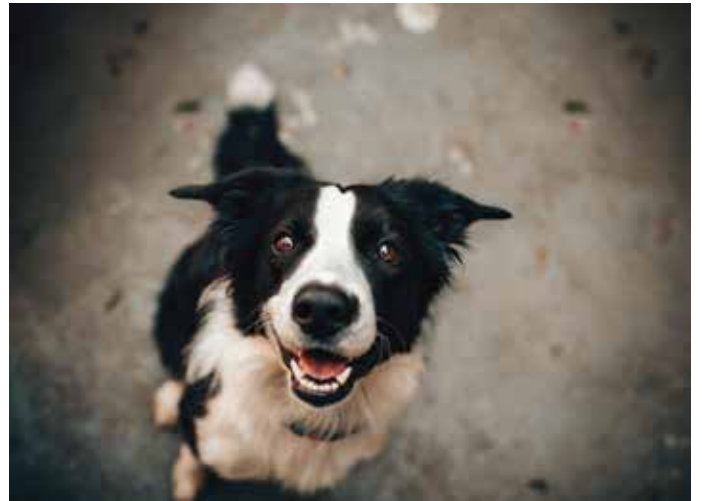


Q: What veterinary care does my dog need?

A: It depends on your dog's age and lifestyle

At a minimum, your dog should receive a yearly physical exam with a weight check. This gives you the opportunity to discuss any concerns or changes you may have about your dog. The veterinarian relies on you to be able to communicate if there are any changes to appetite, elimination, drinking or activity. This information, along with the physical exam, can help the veterinarian decide if additional testing is advisable. During your dog's yearly physical, you can also discuss which vaccinations are best for your dog, given your dog's lifestyle.



At a minimum, your dog should receive a yearly physical exam and weight check. Discuss which vaccinations and tests are best for your dog.

More commonly dogs are having problems with obesity or being overweight. The veterinarian can assess if your dog has any excess weight. If your dog has any weight issues, you and the veterinarian can come up with a plan to help get your dog to a healthy weight.

In Pennsylvania there are a lot of Lyme carrying ticks. Lyme disease can cause a range of symptoms in dogs. Commonly, dogs suffer from arthritis or flu-like symptoms when infected with Lyme disease. In some instances, Lyme disease can cause serious kidney damage. If your dog goes in areas where there may be ticks, such as parks, fields or woods, you should consider yearly testing for tick-borne diseases which includes Lyme, Anaplasma





and Ehrlichia. Anaplasma causes symptoms similar to Lyme disease without the potential for kidney damage. Ehrlichia can cause varying symptoms from lethargy to spontaneous bleeding. There is a convenient test which can be done during a visit. If your dog has potential exposure to ticks, a Lyme vaccine is the best way to help prevent the disease. This is a yearly vaccination. You can also discuss tick control with the veterinarian at your visit.

It is also recommended to test all dogs for exposure to heartworm disease. Heartworm disease is transmitted through the bite of a mosquito. Mosquitoes can easily sneak indoors so it is recommended for all dogs to be tested yearly. Again, there is a convenient test which can be done during a visit. If your dog tests negative for heartworm disease, there is a monthly pill you can give your dog to help prevent exposure to the heartworm from mosquitoes. This is something you could order on-line.

As your dog becomes a senior citizen, generally around 7 years old, yearly laboratory screening of liver, kidney, thyroid, urine and a CBC are recommended to catch diseases early. It can be difficult to detect the signs of early disease by just watching your dog, often blood work will help to reveal underlying problems.

One of the common problems dogs can have is dental disease. Unless your dog has some dental care on a regular basis, they will develop plaque, tartar and then gingivitis. As the dental disease progresses, the dog may experience discomfort and pain from infection. Only in some cases will dental disease make your dog act sick; dogs are good at hiding oral pain. Generally, a physical exam can help to detect problems in the mouth so plans can be made to improve the problems.

When your dog is having problems or changes from normal, you should seek veterinary care. This may include changes in: water consumption, volume or frequency of urination, bowel movements, appetite, appearance of eyes or ears. If you have any concerns about your dog, you should reach out for veterinary care.

Seek veterinary care if your dog has changes in water consumption, volume or frequency of urination, bowel movements, appetite, appearance of eyes or ears.

