

Murrells Inlet Veterinary Hospital

A Lifetime of Wellness Plan

Now that you are completing the Puppy or Kitten Wellness Care, you may be wondering, "What comes next regarding my pet's health care?". The following is an outline of what you can expect in terms of your pet's health care needs and what we typically recommend. We do recognize that every pet is an individual and may have different needs depending upon their lifestyle and specific medical condition. We also anticipate the years to come to bring advances in veterinary medicine that will allow us to do even more for your pet to keep them happy and healthy! In addition to regular home care, including a healthy, safe environment, lots of love, good nutrition, skin/coat care, and monthly heartworm and flea medication we recommend the following:

1. If your pet has not already been **spayed** or **neutered**, we recommend doing so when (or after) they are 6 months of age.
2. At 10 months of age we recommend that puppies have their **first heartworm test**, and for both puppies and kittens, it is typically time for their **6 month fecal test, preventative deworming** and **Bordetella vaccination** (puppies). Depending on when their last Physical Examination was, it may be time for their **6-month Examination** with their doctor as well.
3. From this point, regarding Wellness Care, because animals age more quickly than humans and they can develop conditions quickly, we recommend **Bi-Annual Physical Examinations**. We recommend bi-annual **Heartworm testing, Fecal testing, and Preventative Deworming** because in our area, heartworms and intestinal parasites are very prevalent. We also recommend Bi-Annual **Bordetella Vaccinations** for dogs. We will also continue to provide: **nutritional counseling, weight management advice, mobility evaluations** and **behavioral counseling** if needed.
4. Once your pet reaches 2-3 years of age, in addition to their regular **Wellness Care**, we will begin discussing and recommending **Wellness Bloodwork** and **Professional Dental Cleanings** for those pets that have begun to develop dental disease (approximately 80% of pets by the age of 3 are in need of professional dental care).
5. Between the ages of 2-3 and 5-7 depending on the size and overall health of your pet, **bi-annual physical examinations, heartworm testing (dogs), fecal testing, preventative deworming, vaccinations and periodic wellness bloodwork and professional dental care**. We will also continue to provide: **nutritional counseling, weight management advice, mobility evaluations** and **behavioral counseling** if needed.
6. After your pet reaches the age of 5-7, for the rest of their life, we will recommend additional diagnostic tests to make sure your pet is free from disease and should your pet develop a disease, we want to detect it as soon as possible. As with people, early detection gives your pet the best chance to battle any type of disease. These tests may include, but are not limited to: more comprehensive **bloodwork panels, radiographs (x-rays) of the abdomen, chest and limbs, ultrasound screenings, tonometry for glaucoma tests, blood pressure checks and ECG's**. Your pet's technicians and doctor will make the recommendations appropriate for your pet. We will also provide on-going **nutritional counseling, weight management advice, mobility evaluations** and **behavioral counseling** if needed.

Our medical philosophy at MIVH is to provide comprehensive wellness care in order to keep your pet as healthy as possible. We believe that the physical examination is the cornerstone of wellness care and is the single most important thing that you can do for your pet. We are your partner in pet care and we are here when you need us. We are very proactive in providing wellness care and should your pet develop an illness or become injured, our hospital is second to none in terms of the medical care we provide. Please don't hesitate to ask questions - our veterinary team is expertly trained and here to help you!