



EAST FREMANTLE
Veterinary Clinic

Owners Handout – Week 2

EAST FREMANTLE VET CLINIC

Puppy Preschool

Handling your puppy and doing a health check

Handling

Puppies need to interact with and be gently handled, picked up and cuddled by friends and family, especially those who don't live in your household, so that they become used to being handled by other humans.

Training your puppy to accept handling by others will have lifelong benefits such as reduced stress when visiting the veterinarian or groomer.

Health check

You will need to regularly check your puppy for any health problems by performing a simple examination that covers all major areas as follows:

- **Face:** observe the nose closely. Look at and lift lips and examine the facial skin
- **Eyes:** look for any irregular discharge, abnormal pupil size or unusual colour of the sclera (white of the eye)
- **Mouth:** look at your puppy's teeth, gums and tongue
- **Ears:** look in and smell the ears for any indication of infection
- **Outer body:** massage the puppy's skin all over the body and down the legs, feeling for any lumps, bumps or scratches
- **Paws:** check all claws including the dewclaws
- Check the anus, scrotum, prepuce, penis and vulva for abnormal discharges or rashes.



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TIPS – Handling and Examination

- Always monitor your puppy's response to handling or examination. If your puppy gets stressed, agitated or worried, stop immediately
- Start handling your puppy in a relaxed, calm environment. This may mean waiting until you get home from class
- Start with your puppy laying on your lap or lying while settled on his mat
- Stroke the puppy at the same time to keep him relaxed
- Signs of distress while being handled could include:
 - Not settling
 - Growling or crying
 - Moving away
 - Showing the whites of the eyes
 - Mouthing your hands.
- If your puppy becomes distressed ask your puppy to do something that you are confident he can do like "sit" and reward him for doing so
- If your puppy becomes distressed during a health examination it means you have moved too fast and need to slow the process down. If you see anything unusual seek veterinary advice
- Keep praising and treating your puppy if he is calm and relaxed and is accepting the handling
- You should be able to handle your puppy and perform an examination before allowing strangers to examine your puppy
- Keep practising handling and health examinations (either on the floor or a table) as your puppy grows into adulthood. This will keep veterinary examinations and grooming stress free.

