

# Taking Care of Your Puppy's Health

## Finding a Veterinarian

Just like you, your new puppy needs high-quality health care on a regular basis. Ask a number of friends with small breed dogs, trainers, groomers and your local humane society to recommend a veterinarian, then choose one with these factors in mind:

- Education and experience. Find out how long the veterinarian has been practicing and if he or she is a graduate of a well-regarded veterinary college. Do they have experience with small breed dogs?
- Specialty. In urban areas, it may be possible to find veterinarians who deal exclusively with the special problems of dogs and cats.
- Location. This factor should not override the areas of education, experience and specialty, but should nevertheless be taken into consideration. A drive across town during a medical emergency can be frustrating and delay needed treatment.
- There is a wide variation in skill levels of different vets, so be careful to choose one who is trustworthy and competent. Does the vet have time to answer your questions?

## Schedule a visit and interview

Once you've narrowed down your choices, visit the veterinarian's office. Inspect the facility and talk to the veterinarian about your new puppy's planned arrival. Be sure to choose a vet before your puppy arrives, as we require a visit to the veterinarian within the first three days after you bring your puppy home. The veterinarian may want to check the following things:

- Stool. A fecal exam will reveal the presence of internal parasites. Take a fresh stool sample with you.
- Body. A thorough physical exam includes inspecting your dog's coat and feeling his body for abnormalities, as well as checking the eyes, ears, mouth and heart and examining the anus for signs of intestinal parasites.
- Weight. Your vet will keep a record of your puppy's growth.
- Be sure to bring along your puppy's shot and deworming record, and his birth date.

Once an exam is completed, your veterinarian can schedule further preventative health care (like vaccinations), and advise you on the importance of spaying and neutering.