



During your initial visit we will discuss.....

Biannual wellness exams and your dog's vaccine schedule. Here at Peachtree Hills Animal Hospital, our wellness examination and vaccination protocol is slightly different than what you may be used to. We are very interested in preventative care. We have found that early detection of diseases makes for better treatment outcomes. Since every year of your dog's life is equivalent to seven human years, we believe that biannual wellness exams are the best method for early disease detection. We have seen that biannual wellness exams allow us to provide the best possible health care to your pet for a variety of reasons: In addition to early disease detection, seeing your pet twice a year allows us to split up how many vaccines your pet receives at one time. Dogs, just like humans, can have reactions to vaccines, and splitting the vaccines among two visits six months apart decreases the chance of a vaccine reaction. Biannual wellness exams also allow us to individually tailor a vaccine protocol to the needs of your pet. Once your biannual exam schedule is established, our reminder systems will be set to alert you via email, regular mail, or telephone when your pet's next wellness exam is due to help ensure the health of your four-legged family member.

Most dogs' vaccine schedules will follow the recommended protocol including **DHPP** (or "distemper-parvo") and **rabies** vaccines (RV). These are considered "**core**" vaccines because nearly all dogs are at some risk for contracting these diseases. We also recommend certain "**non core**" vaccines for dogs whose daily activities may put them at risk for other diseases. Dogs who regularly go to a grooming facility, a dog day care, dog park or boarding facility need to be vaccinated for **Influenza H3N2** and for **Bordetella** (also called "kennel cough"). Both of these diseases are highly contagious. Dogs who go on wilderness walks, go camping, swim in lakes and rivers or visit farms are at increased risk of contracting **Leptospirosis** (or "Lepto"). These dogs need to be vaccinated not only for their own protection but also for the safety of their family as Leptospirosis can be transmitted to humans.

Intestinal parasites: Roundworms, hookworms and whipworms are the most common intestinal parasites of dogs. We recommend testing a stool sample every 6 months. Our protocol is designed to protect your dog and your family as well. Intestinal parasites can be transmitted to humans. Children, the elderly and immune compromised individuals are at greatest risk. Intestinal parasite eggs are shed in the feces, so be sure to clean up after your dog.



Fleas: Year-round flea prevention is very important. Not only are flea bites very itchy, they also can transmit **tapeworms** and other parasites to your dog. Fleas are difficult to eradicate from a home once they are introduced. We recommend **Parastar**[®] for *topical* flea and tick prevention. Depending on your pet's needs, we may recommend an *oral* flea preventative such as **Capstar**[®] or **Comfortis**[®] or **Trifexis**[®] which combines flea, intestinal parasite and heartworm prevention in one chewable pill.

Heartworm disease: Heartworms are a blood borne parasite transmitted by mosquito bites. Heartworm disease is characterized by coughing, lethargy and weight loss. If left untreated, heartworm disease can result in lung disease, heart failure and sudden death. For this reason, your dog needs to take a monthly heartworm preventative. Although mosquitoes are considered a summertime pest, in the Southeast they live year round, so we recommend giving heartworm preventatives all year. In addition to **Trifexis**[®], we also carry **Interceptor Plus**[®] - a monthly chewable tablet that prevents heartworms and controls a broad spectrum of intestinal parasites, and **Heartgard Plus**[®] - a monthly chewable treat that prevents heartworms and controls common intestinal parasites. We'll help you decide which one is right for your dog.

Diet: Good nutrition is important during all phases of life. We recommend that your dog be given a food that is easy to find and purchase, of a reasonable level of quality and appropriate for his/her age and size. In order to determine how many calories your dog needs in a day, we can do a "**diet calculation**" and provide you with an accurate measuring cup.

Pet insurance: Health insurance is available for pets. If you decide to purchase insurance for your pet, we recommend you research carefully and find a plan that is right for you and your dog. Although we do not endorse any particular insurance company, we can provide you with some brochures and websites.

Breed specific information: If your dog is a purebred dog, we may be able to anticipate certain medical conditions that could arise over the life of your pet. With this knowledge, we can take precautions early on and be quick to act if signs develop. We also want to ensure that you are informed about your dog's breed so you can recognize potential concerns at an early stage.



Spay and neuter: If not already done, we may recommend having your dog spayed or neutered if you're not planning on breeding. Although there are risks inherent with general anesthesia and surgery, there are many benefits to your dog's health and well-being. Having your female dog spayed eliminates the risk of ovarian or uterine cancer and greatly decreases the risk of mammary cancer. She also will not have heat cycles or unexpected puppies. Having your male dog neutered eliminates the risk of testicular cancer and reduces the risk of prostatitis. Neutered males tend to be less territorial than intact males and male aggression is greatly decreased. Before your dog undergoes surgery, he/she will be examined thoroughly by your doctor. We will also run blood work in order to make sure your dog is a good candidate for anesthesia (i.e. all major organs are functioning properly).

Microchipping: A microchip is a permanent identification device that can be implanted under your dog's skin. We use the **HomeAgain**® microchip and recovery service, and the fee includes both the microchip placement and initial registration. All you need to do is confirm that your information is correct. If at any time you change your address or phone number, be sure to inform the microchip company so they can keep your information current. Microchip scanners are used at all animal shelters and veterinary hospitals, and can help get your pet back to you safely if he or she is ever lost!

Oral care: Your dog's physical exam at Peachtree Hills Animal Hospital will always include careful examination of his or her mouth, teeth and gums; this is an extremely important tool to help maintain your dog's oral health for years to come! Home dental care can include brushing the teeth, the topical application of products like Oravet® Plaque Prevention Gel, water additives, or even special chews and treats. We will find the home care that works best for your dog and your lifestyle, and demonstrate how easily you can accomplish it!