



# Golden Valley and Greenbrier Animal Hospitals

## PUPPY HANDOUT INDEX

Potty Training: **pg. 1-2**

Crate Training: **pg. 3-4**

Play Biting: **pg. 5-6**

Puppy Check List: **pg. 7-8**

Myths and Facts about Neuter Surgery: **pg. 9**

Myths and Facts about Spay Surgery: **pg. 10**

Puppy Feeding Guidelines: **pg. 11**

DCM Grain Free Handout **pg. 12**

Golden Valley Animal Hospital  
651 Winnetka Avenue North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
763-546-2323



Greenbrier Animal Hospital  
10916 Greenbrier Rd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
952-542-1012

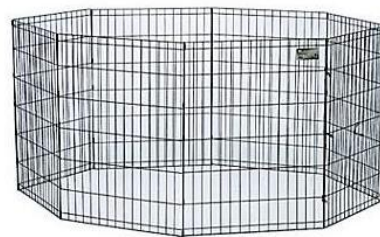
## POTTY TRAINING

Potty training your puppy can certainly give you some gray hair, but it doesn't have to be difficult if you get started on the right paw from the beginning. There are 3 things you are trying to teach your puppy when you start potty training.

- When your puppy goes potty outside, (s)he earns free-time in the house.
- When your puppy comes out of their crate, (s)he gets the opportunity to potty outside. If (s)he doesn't, the puppy goes back in their crate.
- When your puppy goes outside, they have one goal - to potty for a reward (not to sniff, eat leaves, bark at squirrels, etc). This is why you only want to give him/her 3-5 minutes to go.

### IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Adhere strictly to the suggested schedule. **Accidents mean too much freedom!**
- Allow only **3-5 minutes** to potty outside.
- Reward urinating/defecating immediately (within 1 second) after it happens. Praise and treat.
- If the puppy doesn't potty within 3-5 minutes, bring him/her inside and put him/her back in their crate for 20-30 minutes. Try again.
- When your puppy goes potty outside, bring him/her in and give 30 minutes of free time in a confined area. You should be with him/her during this time. The confinement area should be a small mudroom or doggie exercise pen (ex: image to the right).
- Always use high reward treats when training (the stinkier the better). Use tiny amounts to avoid diarrhea. Examples include any meaty training treats or cooked soft food packaged in rolls like Fresh Pet. Try to avoid human food for training.



### CONFINEMENT

Confinement in a crate or small area is used to teach your puppy's bladder and bowels how to physically hold urine and feces. Puppies will typically not soil an area they are confined in, as long as the area of confinement is the appropriate size. Please see the handout on Crate Training to learn how to choose the right kennel and how to acclimate your dog to it. The more consistent the training, the faster your puppy will learn where to potty, and how to hold their bladder and bowels. You will alternate confinement and free time until your puppy learns the appropriate time and place to go potty. Every time your puppy comes out of their crate, take him/her outside. Follow schedule below:

- 3-5 minutes outside – **Potty** – 30 minutes free time – Back into crate for 30 minutes – 3-5 minutes outside
- 3-5 minutes outside – **NO Potty** – Back into crate for 30 minutes – 3-5 minutes outside

### CREATE A SCHEDULE

In the morning, carry the puppy outside, place him/her on the ground (with leash attached), and give a command like "go potty." Allow 3-5 minutes for urination/defecation. Do not give any attention to your puppy while waiting for it to potty - the only communication that you should have is the command "go potty." Once (s)he has urinated/defecated, that is the appropriate time to praise. Gently repeat the command "go potty" and soon as your puppy responds, treat and praise immediately after they have finished (always have the treat outside with you). Be sure your puppy is finished before you start to praise him/her or you could interrupt the behavior!

- 1). **START WITH:** Potty Outside = ½ -hour free time then 1 ½-hours confinement. This routine will continue until your puppy goes potty outside consistently. Then you can experiment with giving him more freedom and less confinement.
- 2). **INCREASE TIME:** Potty Outside = 1-hour free-time then 2-hours confinement. When your puppy becomes reliable with this amount of time, increase 'free-time' again.
- 3). **CONTINUE TO INCREASE TIME:** Potty Outside = 2-hour free-time then 2-hours confinement. Increase free time as your puppy becomes more reliable with 'holding it'.

## **DO'S and DON'TS TO POTTY TRAINING**

**DO NOT:** Scold your puppy if they have an accident even if you catch them 'in the act.' This could lead to many behavioral problems down the road.

**DO:** If you catch them 'in the act,' pick them up and carry them outside to finish. Reward once they are finished, and then back into the crate.

**DO NOT:** Assume that your puppy can wait to go potty all day while you're away at work.

**DO:** If you work during the day away from home, arrange to come home at lunch or have someone take your puppy out every 2-3 hours. Some dogs will require to be walked once during the day when they are older.

**DO NOT:** Train your puppy to a bell to let you know when he/she has to go outside.

**DO:** It is much more effective to teach your puppy to hold it until you take her out, and will set your puppy up for success in the future. What if you're not there and (s)he rings the bell? Some dogs will abuse the privilege of the bell, and ring it when they want to play outside.

## **HELPFUL TIPS**

- Keep a potty journal to keep track of your puppy's schedule. It is very helpful to be able to track urination and bowel movements, especially if there is more than one person taking care of the puppy.
- If you are having issues, adjust feeding schedules so your puppy is only fed three times a day (what goes in comes out, so having free access to food and water can hinder the potty training process).
- If your puppy seems to go 'all the time,' talk to your veterinarian. In some cases it is appropriate to consider having urine and fecal tests done to rule out a medical problem. It is somewhat common for puppies to have bladder infections, and extremely common for them to have intestinal parasites, regardless if it is a stray or purchased through a breeder.

ADAPTED FROM MATERIAL PROVIDED BY:



**WAG & TRAIN**, LLC  
Animal Behavior Specialists

Kari Bastyr, MS, CDBC, VSPDT  
720-312-5499  
kari@wagandtrain.com  
wagandtrain.com

Personal Message from Kari:

If you mention this worksheet, I'll give you and your puppy \$15 off your first session. We can also work on biting, mouthing, barking, crate training, leash walking, jumping, etc... Training doesn't need to be frustrating!

Golden Valley Animal Hospital  
651 Winnetka Avenue North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
763-546-2323



Greenbrier Animal Hospital  
10916 Greenbrier Rd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
952-542-1012

## CRATE TRAINING

Crate training is a process of desensitizing your dog to staying in their crate/kennel while you are gone. It can help a dog feel more comfortable at home because it acts like a den and provides safety from the outside world. Most dogs love their crate, while some dogs are terrified of it and don't want to be confined. However, every dog should be crate trained even if your household decides to not use a kennel on a permanent basis. Boarding, time at the vet, going to the groomer, and unforeseen emergencies can all require being kenneled, which can be very stressful if not properly trained. Crate training is also an important training technique in preventing and managing separation anxiety in dogs.

Crate training and potty training go hand in hand. Refer to our potty training handout for how crate training can make potty training easier and quicker.

The following describes proper technique for crate training. Try not to get discouraged if your dog seems too upset while in his crate. Your puppy is looking for your direction and if you are firm, yet fair, (s)he will calm down in no time.

### PICKING THE RIGHT KENNEL

There are three main options to pick from when choosing a crate: metal, plastic, or fabric.

- Larger dogs do well with metal crates. They are less bulky and can fold up easily.
- For smaller dogs, plastic crate work great - they have handles that make them easy to carry and are sturdy enough to last many years. Fabric crates are another great option for smaller dogs. Fabric crates fit well under seats on airplanes if you plan on traveling with your pet.



- When selecting a kennel for your puppy, be sure to choose one that is just large enough for your puppy to stand up, turn around, and completely lay down in. If a kennel is too small for your puppy it can become very uncomfortable for him/her; if the kennel is too large for your puppy, (s)he is more likely to have accidents in the kennel. For large breed puppies, it is okay to

purchase a larger kennel that they can grow into, but be sure to use a divider in the kennel to slowly increase the size as (s)he grows. In this case, look for a kennel to purchase that comes with a divider that can grow along with your dog.



### IMPORTANT REMINDERS

- Do NOT put any bedding in the kennel with your puppy. Puppies are more likely to tear up fabric (especially when bored), which can be ingested and risk causing a blockage in their intestines. Until your dog is older and more trustworthy, using no bedding is the safest option. When older you can introduce bedding first during short periods of time.
- Do NOT put any toys in the kennel with your puppy, for the same reasons as bedding noted above. The exception is durable toys like a Kong, which can be filled with some frozen canned dog food to help with boredom while you're away.
- No food or water should be kept in the kennel when your puppy is confined alone.
- Do NOT use kennel as punishment. The kennel should be a safe space for your puppy to be able to go to have alone time. Going in to the kennel should always be a positive experience.
- If your puppy whines or cries, IGNORE HIM/HER. This includes not talking to or even looking at your dog! Do not let him/her out if (s)he is barking or whining, or your puppy will start to associate whining/crying with being let out.

- Only let your puppy out of the kennel when (s)he has calmed down, or has quieted down. At first, these moments may be brief, but you can work up to expecting longer periods of calm/silence.
- Completely ignore your puppy when leaving and returning. If excitement is created it will make crate training MUCH harder. They will only look forward to your attention when you leave or return.
- Have a consistent command for your puppy's kennel (ex. "kennel," "naptime," "house,").
- Always use high reward treats when training (the stinkier the better). Use tiny amounts to avoid diarrhea. Examples are any meaty training treats or cooked soft food packaged in rolls like Fresh Pet. Try to avoid using human food for training.

#### **STEP 1: INTRODUCING YOUR PUPPY TO THE KENNEL**

- Do NOT immediately shut your puppy in the kennel, let him/her explore it first. Always leave the kennel door open for your puppy to use as they wish. Prop the kennel door open, and secure to ensure the kennel door will not hit or close on them.
- Make the kennel accessible at all times. Put in a family room or another area your puppy is in frequently, rather than an isolated basement or closet. Some puppies will be more nervous if they are in a kennel in a confined dark place.
- If your puppy does not seem confident with the kennel and does not explore it, throw some high-reward treats in just inside the kennel to entice him/her.

#### **STEP 2: FEED YOUR PUPPY IN KENNEL**

- Put his/her food dish just on the outside of the kennel and feed him/her there. Once your puppy becomes comfortable eating in front of it, put the dish inside the crate, directly inside the open door. When he/she goes in to eat, praise your puppy like crazy in a soft tone.
- Once (s)he is comfortably eating with the dish in the front of the crate, move the food dish back into the middle of the crate. Once your puppy is confident in the middle, move the food to the back of the crate. Eventually, once he/she becomes completely comfortable eating at the back of the crate, shut the door while (s)he eats (while your puppy is inside).
- Praise him/her the entire time, throw some additional high-reward treats in the crate while (s)he eats their food.

#### **STEP 3: PUPPY CRATE TIME WHILE YOU'RE HOME**

- After your puppy has no problems eating in the crate, leave your puppy in it for 1-3 minutes at a time while you are home. Increase the time alone in the kennel as your puppy acclimates.
- After you begin leaving your puppy in the crate while you're home, put him/her in the crate when you leave for short periods of time (i.e. to go get the mail, to walk down to the end of the street and back, etc). If you come back inside and (s)he's relaxed, let your puppy out of the crate and treat/praise him/her.

#### **STEP 4: INCREASE CRATE TIME WHILE AWAY FROM HOME**

- Gradually lengthen the amount of time your puppy is in the crate. Then, leave him/her in it when you go to the store or to a movie. Eventually, you'll be able to leave him in there for more than a few hours, or while you're gone for the day.
- Do NOT let your puppy out when you first get home. Let your puppy out after about 5 minutes of being home, or when (s)he calms down.
- The key to crate training is consistency!

#### **NOTE! Crating at Night**

- Many people love to be able to sleep with their dog at night. Before having your new puppy sleep with you, make sure (s)he is potty trained, otherwise this could create accidents.

ADAPTED FROM MATERIAL PROVIDED BY:



**WAG & TRAIN**<sup>LLC</sup>  
Animal Behavior Specialists

Kari Bastyr, MS, CDBC, VSPDT  
720-312-5499  
kari@wagandtrain.com  
wagandtrain.com



Golden Valley Animal Hospital  
651 Winnetka Avenue North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
763-546-2323



Greenbrier Animal Hospital  
10916 Greenbrier Rd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
952-542-1012

## PLAY BITING/BITE INHIBITION

**Play biting** is very frustrating problem to deal with, but rest assured you can train your puppy to stop biting! This is a several step process to eventually decrease the frequency of biting. First, the bite force or “bite inhibition” should be addressed.

**Bite inhibition** means the puppy or adult dog learns how to have a soft mouth and does not consciously use the full force of his/her biting ability. It should be taught before 12 weeks of age. If a dog does not have good bite inhibition, (s)he could seriously injure or kill another dog or human.

Our goals when working with puppies are to:

- First, inhibit the force of the puppy’s bite (teach a ‘soft mouth’).
- Second, to lessen the frequency of puppy mouthing.

### PUPPY CLASSES

EVERY puppy should be enrolled in a puppy class regardless of your experience with obedience training. The main goal in puppy classes is for your dog to learn bite inhibition from other puppies, and to learn proper socialization/body language. When you are looking for a puppy class, be sure to find one that has the majority of time devoted to play, in addition to bite inhibition, socialization and desensitization exercises. Puppy classes should be no bigger than 10 puppies or divided up into smaller play groups and should ideally have a mixture of small, medium, and large breed puppies. Ages can range from 8-18 weeks and all puppies must have at least their first set of vaccines. As with any behavior class, it is critical that only positive, gentle methods are used and your instructor must have a background in teaching proper bite inhibition and puppy socialization. Please ask us if you need a recommendation for great local trainers!

Puppy classes are ESPECIALLY important for singleton puppies (only one puppy in the litter). These dogs tend to have the hardest time learning bite inhibition due to not having other littermates to learn from.

Many people think that socializing a puppy at home with their other dog or the neighbor’s dog is enough, but it is not. Your puppy needs to learn how to socialize with many other puppies, humans, and friendly adult dogs. If your puppy is only familiar with how to play with your older dog, he will not learn about other dogs’ language or how to generalize play time to other dogs. Without proper socialization, your puppy could develop fearful reactions to other dogs that can turn into aggression.

### GUIDELINES FOR TEACHING BITE INHIBITION

As mentioned above, the first goal with training is to teach your puppy the appropriate amount of pressure when play biting. They must learn this from experience, both from other dogs and from you, their family. This way if your puppy reacts and bites someone or something later in life, they will know to use a softer mouth.

- Use the word “ouch” or make a loud yip similar to a puppy if (s)he begins to bite with any force that is uncomfortable. When (s)he stops, praise and give lots of love to your puppy.
- Use the command “gentle” or “nice” when giving treats. Use your fist to roll the treat out of your hand if your puppy is not using his teeth.
- Always have plenty of Kong toys or Everlasting Treat Balls to give your puppy to chew on appropriately. Fabric toys is not a good option, most puppies will chew them up, which could result in potential ingestion of unwanted material.
- Remember the MOST effective way for your puppy to learn bite inhibition is through OTHER puppies. Older dogs tend to be more accepting or more irritable around puppies.

## **GUIDELINES FOR LESSENING FREQUENCY OF PUPPY MOUTHING**

Once your puppy has successfully learned to use a soft mouth, it is time to start decreasing the frequency of puppy mouthing. It will be ultimately up to your family if play biting will be allowed in the household, but regardless your puppy should know when to stop biting on command.

- Make sure ALL play stops when your puppy begins mouthing or biting. Turn your body away and cross your arms for a few seconds, then resume play when your puppy stops mouthing.
- Do not tease your puppy or try to start playing roughly with him/her using your hands.
- Smear a dab of peanut butter on the back of your hand and give your puppy the command “No Bite.” Praise him/her for licking the peanut butter off and not using his/her teeth.
- Do not clamp his/her mouth shut or hit him on the nose as punishment for biting. This could cause serious consequences later.

ADAPTED FROM MATERIAL PROVIDED BY:



**WAG & TRAIN** LLC  
Animal Behavior Specialists

Kari Bastyr, MS, CDBC, VSPDT  
720-312-5499  
kari@wagandtrain.com  
wagandtrain.com

Golden Valley Animal Hospital  
651 Winnetka Avenue North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
763-546-2323



Greenbrier Animal Hospital  
10916 Greenbrier Rd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
952-542-1012

## PUPPY CHECK LIST

☐ **Food:** Feed your puppy a premium diet made for puppies. Large breed puppies must eat a diet that is formulated for large breeds to help prevent certain growth problems. Puppies should be fed 2-3 times per day (3 times daily for puppies under 16 weeks old, twice daily for older puppies). The food should be offered for 20 minutes and then picked up after that time, or when the puppy walks away. Feeding your puppy this way will help with housebreaking as it makes it more predictable when they are going to have a bowel movement (eating a meal should stimulate the bowels). When switching diets, make sure to transition your puppy gradually to the new diet. Dogs should be switched to an adult formula when they have reached their adult size (9-10 months for small breeds and 12-16 months for large breeds).

☐ **Treats:** Soft or small treats for training are ideal and can help with both housebreaking and basic obedience. Carry treats with you when taking your puppy outside to go potty to praise them immediately for going to the bathroom outside. Treats should only be given when the puppy has “worked” for it. Your puppy should only be given treats as a reward for good behavior. If your puppy isn’t very interested in treats try skipping a meal and keep the kibble in your pocket, giving it to them for good behavior throughout the day. Sometimes if they are more hungry, they are more interested in treats.

☐ **Toys:** Offer your puppy a variety of toys and things to chew on to prevent him from chewing on inappropriate things around the house. Make sure to choose durable toys that are appropriate for your puppy’s size and age. Avoid rope toys or toys with small pieces as they could be swallowed and cause blockages in the intestines. Avoid rawhides as many puppies will get an upset stomach from these and fragile puppy teeth can break if chewing on material that is too firm. When giving your dog a new toy, supervise them closely to make sure they are unable to rip it apart. Here are a few good suggestions:

- Balls (make sure they are large enough to prevent swallowing)
- Nylabones
- Kongs – utilize food to keep them entertained longer! \*See Kong stuffers section for ideas.
- Squeak toys

☐ **Bowls:** You will need a food and a water bowl. It is best to purchase ceramic or metal bowls. They are easier to keep clean and your puppy won’t be able to chew them up. For giant breed dogs (Great Dane, Mastiff, etc.) it is recommended to buy dishes that can be elevated. If your puppy eats too quickly there are also bowls with projections that come from the bottom of the bowl (see example at right). These help prevent puppies from gulping their food.



☐ **Leash and Collar:** Nylon or leather are recommended. A 4’-6’ leash is best for training purposes. A Gentle Leader system is also **very** useful for additional control. When purchasing through our hospitals, we will fit the headcollar to your puppy and show you how to fit and adjust it properly. Retractable leashes can be dangerous and make training more difficult – we do NOT recommend their use as a regular leash **especially when coming into the vet office**. The lobby of a vet office can be very unpredictable, this way you will have more control over your new puppy in an unfamiliar area.

☐ **ID Tag:** A tag should be worn at all times. Be sure it includes your contact information and make sure to update it frequently! You may also want to consider having your puppy microchipped. This is a permanent form of identification that is injected under the skin. The information associated with this chip should also be changed and updated as needed. Statistics show that when dogs are lost, they are 2.5 times more likely to be returned safely home if microchipped.



☐ **Kennel:** When selecting a kennel or crate for your puppy, be sure to choose one that is just large enough for your puppy to stand up, turn around and lay down in. If your puppy is a large breed puppy, we recommend purchasing a kennel that comes with a divider, so the kennel size can be slowly increased as your puppy grows. See the handout on Crate Training for other specifics.



☐ **Cleaning Supplies**

- Nature's Miracle (or another enzymatic cleaner) for accidents around the house
- Pooper-scooper
- Baggies to pick up bowel movements on your walks

☐ **Grooming** Select grooming tools appropriate for your dog's coat. Find a local groomer (if necessary) and discuss with them how often it is best to have your puppy groomed or bathed. Some dogs will need to be groomed regularly depending on the breed. If you have adopted a breed that needs to be groomed regularly, bring them in for their first grooming appointment while they are still young. This helps introduce your puppy to the location, the groomer, and the process. When selecting a shampoo to bathe your

puppy at home, select a shampoo made for puppies. A "soap free" shampoo is best. Do not use a shampoo that kills fleas and ticks. Never use a shampoo made for humans on your puppy. You may also want to buy grooming wipes to use in between baths or grooming appointments. When bathing, be sure to avoid getting shampoo in your puppy's eyes or ears. This can cause irritation or even infections. Use an ear cleaner with a drying solution after bathing to help prevent infections from occurring. Be sure to play with your puppy's mouth, eyes, ears, and feet frequently so they get used to having those areas touched. Here are some suggestions of grooming supplies to purchase:

- Brush or comb appropriate for your puppy's coat
- Puppy shampoo
- Grooming wipes
- Nail clipper and styptic powder (Kwik Stop)
- Toothbrush and puppy toothpaste (never use human toothpaste)

☐ **Kong Stuffers**

- Dry dog food (preferred)
- Canned dog food (preferred)
- Apples, green beans, carrots
- Peanut butter (check the ingredient list - if there is artificial sweetener, **do not give to your dog** ex. Xylitol)

☐ **Kong Stuffing Tips**

- Place "wet" ingredients in the small hole of the Kong toy and freeze to keep goodies inside. Keep a spare Kong in the freezer so you always have one available for your puppy.
- Occupy your puppy during dinner by feeding their regular amount of kibble in the Kong toy. Canned and dry foods can be mixed, or water can be added to dry kibble then frozen.
- Kong toys can be placed in the dishwasher to clean after use.



**Reminder!** Any new food can cause your puppy's stomach to become upset. Experiment with small amounts to see how your puppy reacts to the ingredients.

Golden Valley Animal Hospital  
651 Winnetka Avenue North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
763-546-2323



Greenbrier Animal Hospital  
10916 Greenbrier Rd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
952-542-1012

## MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT NEUTERING DOGS

**Definition of “neuter”:** Neutering or castration is the removal of both testicles. Occasionally, one or both testicles may be “retained” or “undescended” in a dog (a condition called cryptorchidism). Testicles that stay in the belly should be removed to prevent testicular torsion (a painful condition where a testicle twists on itself) or even testicular cancer (the risk of this condition is much higher when a testicle stays inside the belly). We recommend neutering your puppy after six months. Recent studies have suggested that sex hormones can help with bone development in puppyhood. For this reason, if you have a larger breed dog, we recommend neutering closer to a year, as it may help prevent orthopedic injuries.

**MYTH:** Neutering my dog may make him feel less masculine.

**FACT:** Pets don't have any concept of sexual identity or ego. Neutering will not change a pet's basic personality. He doesn't suffer any kind of emotional reaction or identity crisis when neutered. You might be surprised to learn that neutering may improve your dog's temperament. Dogs that are neutered tend to focus more on their owners and less on their mating drives. Males become less aggressive, less territorial, and wander less from their owners.

**MYTH:** My pet will get fat and lazy.

**FACT:** Over 50% of dogs in the U.S. are overweight or obese. Dogs do not need as much food as many owners may think. Over-feeding and lack of exercise will cause your pet to gain weight. Some dogs do become more interested in food after being altered, so you may need to feed smaller portions.

**MYTH:** Neutering is too expensive.

**FACT:** Neuter surgery is a one-time cost, and if you factor in the many benefits, such as improved health throughout your dog's lifetime, it is a relatively small charge. Keep in mind most puppies/dogs from a shelter or rescue will come neutered!

**MYTH:** I have good homes available for all of the puppies.

**FACT:** True, you may have homes for your puppies, but for every home you find, there is one less home available for a shelter dog. Moreover, do you have guarantees that the people who adopt your puppies will not breed them and thus add even more dogs to the problem? One less litter can make a difference. Furthermore, a litter of puppies have a huge financial cost and immense responsibility.

**MYTH:** Neutering is painful to my dog.

**FACT:** Surgical sterilization is performed under general anesthesia. The procedure itself is not felt by the patient. There may be mild discomfort after the surgery, but most animals return to normal activity within 24 to 72 hours. The minimal discomfort experienced by dogs that are neutered can be lessened with post-operative pain medications and is well worth the endless suffering that is prevented by eliminating homeless puppies.

Golden Valley Animal Hospital  
651 Winnetka Avenue North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
763-546-2323



Greenbrier Animal Hospital  
10916 Greenbrier Rd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
952-542-1012

## MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT SPAYING DOGS

**Definition of “spay”:** Spaying animal means removing the ovaries only (ovariectomy) or removing the ovaries and the uterus (ovario-hysterectomy). Most U.S. veterinarians perform an ovario-hysterectomy. Spaying a puppy, as long as certain precautions are taken under anesthesia, is considered safer than spaying an adult because puppies tend to recover more quickly. We recommend spaying your puppy after six months. Recent studies have suggested that sex hormones can help with bone development in puppyhood. For this reason, if you have a larger breed dog, we recommend delaying the spay procedure slightly, as it may help prevent orthopedic injuries. Please discuss the optimal time to spay with your veterinarian, as it depends on your dog’s breed and risk factors.

**MYTH:** Female dogs should have at least one litter before having them spayed.

**FACT:** There is no medical evidence to justify allowing a dog to have a litter before spaying. In fact, spaying female dogs eliminates the possibility of developing uterine or ovarian cancer and greatly reduces the threat of mammary cancer. Additionally, your pet will not go through heat, which can be very messy and inconvenient.

**MYTH:** My pet will get fat and lazy.

**FACT:** Over 50% of dogs in the U.S. are overweight or obese. Pets do not need as much food as many owners may think. Over-feeding and lack of exercise will cause your pet to gain weight. Some dogs do become more interested in food after being altered, so you may need to feed smaller portions.

**MYTH:** Spaying is painful to my dog.

**FACT:** Surgical sterilization is performed under general anesthesia. The procedure itself is not felt by the patient. There may be mild discomfort after the surgery, but most animals return to normal activity within 24 to 72 hours. The minimal discomfort experienced by dogs that are spayed can be lessened with post-operative pain medications and is well worth the endless suffering that is prevented by eliminating homeless puppies.

**MYTH:** I have good homes available for all of the puppies.

**FACT:** True, you may have homes for your puppies, but for every home you find, there is one less home available for a shelter dog. Moreover, do you have guarantees that the people who adopt your puppies will not breed them and thus add even more dogs to the problem? One less litter can make a difference. A litter of puppies have a huge financial cost and immense responsibility.

**MYTH:** Purebred dogs should be bred.

**FACT:** You are not obligated to breed you dog just because she is purebred. Unless you plan to show your dog for conformation, spaying is highly recommended for her health and well-being. Spayed dogs are still eligible for obedience trials, field trials, hunting trials, and agility.

**MYTH:** Spaying is too expensive.

**FACT:** Spay surgery is a one-time cost, and if you factor in the many benefits, such as improved health throughout your dog’s lifetime, it is a relatively small charge. Keep in mind most puppies/dogs from a shelter or rescue will come neutered!

Golden Valley Animal Hospital  
651 Winnetka Avenue North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
763-546-2323



Greenbrier Animal Hospital  
10916 Greenbrier Rd.  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
952-542-1012

### Feeding Guidelines for Small-Medium Breed Puppies

Weight of Puppy	6-11 Weeks	3-4 Months	5-7 Months	8-12 Months
3lbs	$\frac{3}{4}$ -1c	$\frac{3}{4}$ -1 c	$\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ c	$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ c
5lbs	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	$\frac{3}{4}$ -1 c	$\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ c
10lbs	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	$\frac{3}{4}$ -1 c
15lbs	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -3 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	3-3 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ -2 c	1-1 $\frac{1}{4}$ c
20lbs	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -4 c	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -3 $\frac{3}{4}$ c	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c
30lbs	5-5 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ -5 c	3-3 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 $\frac{3}{4}$ c
40lbs	6-6 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	5 $\frac{3}{4}$ -6c	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -3 $\frac{3}{4}$ c	2-2 $\frac{1}{4}$ c
50lbs	7-7 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	6 $\frac{1}{2}$ -7 c	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ -4 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ c

### Feeding Guidelines for Large Breed Puppies

Weight of Puppy	6-11 weeks	3-4 Months	5-7 Months	8-12 Months	12-24 Months
3lbs	$\frac{3}{4}$ -1c				
5lbs	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ -1 $\frac{1}{2}$ c				
10lbs	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	2-2 $\frac{1}{4}$ c			
15lbs	3-3 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -3c			
20lbs	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -4c	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -3 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	2-2 $\frac{1}{4}$ c		
30lbs	4 $\frac{3}{4}$ -5 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	4 $\frac{1}{4}$ -4 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -3c	2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -2 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	
40lbs	6-6 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	5 $\frac{1}{4}$ -5 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ -3 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -3c	2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -2 $\frac{3}{4}$ c
50lbs	6 $\frac{3}{4}$ -7 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	6-6 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	4-4 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -3 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	2 $\frac{3}{4}$ -3c
60lbs	7 $\frac{3}{4}$ -8 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	6 $\frac{3}{4}$ -7 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ -4 $\frac{3}{4}$ c	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -4c	3 $\frac{1}{4}$ -3 $\frac{1}{2}$ c
70lbs	8 $\frac{1}{2}$ -9 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	7 $\frac{1}{2}$ -8c	5-5 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	4-4 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ -4c
80lbs		8 $\frac{1}{4}$ -8 $\frac{3}{4}$ c	5 $\frac{1}{2}$ -5 $\frac{3}{4}$ c	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ -4 $\frac{3}{4}$ c	4-4 $\frac{1}{4}$ c
100lbs		9 $\frac{1}{2}$ -9 $\frac{3}{4}$ c	6 $\frac{1}{4}$ -6 $\frac{1}{2}$ c	5-5 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ -4 $\frac{3}{4}$ c
120lbs			7-7 $\frac{1}{4}$ c	5 $\frac{3}{4}$ -6c	5-5 $\frac{1}{4}$ c

Golden Valley Animal Hospital  
651 Winnetka Avenue North  
Golden Valley, MN 55427  
763-546-2323

Greenbrier Animal Hospital  
10916 Greenbrier Road  
Minnetonka, MN 55305  
952-542-1012

## Current Concerns with Grain-Free & Boutique Diets

**Summary:** Canine diets containing lentils, peas, other legumes, white potatoes, and sweet potatoes have recently been linked to a heart disease called Dilated Cardiomyopathy (DCM) in various breeds of dogs. This heart disease is usually undetectable on physical exam, unless it progresses to heart failure which can be fatal. Taurine deficiency can be a cause of DCM and is sometimes a component of this current issue. Grain-free diets contain the above ingredients at higher rates than traditional, grain-inclusive dog foods, so are more frequently causing disease. Diet change is recommended immediately if your dog is on a grain-free diet or ANY diet containing the above ingredients. Further testing may be warranted if your dog has any symptoms of heart disease (heart murmur, coughing, exercise intolerance, lethargy, etc) – please consult your veterinarian if you have any concerns.

### How to choose a new food:

- **Grain inclusive:** Be sure to choose a diet that is NOT grain-free. For the vast majority of dogs, grain-free diets are not medically necessary. The push for grain-free diets was born in marketing campaigns from smaller, boutique companies to set themselves apart from larger, more established brands.
- **Avoid implicated ingredients:** Be sure to look at nutrition labels to be certain that the new diet does not contain lentils, peas (or pea protein), other legumes (like chickpeas/garbanzo beans), white potatoes, and sweet potatoes.
- **Taurine addition not sufficient:** Many diets that have been implicated in causing disease are now advertising added taurine. This is **NOT** sufficient as many dogs developing DCM have normal blood taurine levels.
- **Research and Veterinary Nutritionist:** Choose a diet that is manufactured with rigorous quality control and research behind the formulation. The best way to ensure that your diet meets these recommendations is to follow the guidelines developed by a large number of the world's leading experts in veterinary nutrition, WSAVA (World Small Animal Veterinary Association). Please ask for these guidelines if interested.

Please be sure to let us know if you have any other specific questions, or if you need advice on specific foods or how much to feed after you transition. We will continue to keep you updated on this issue as it develops and we learn more – research is currently underway! For now, we don't want any of our patients affected and would rather be safe than sorry!

**Brands We Recommend (as very few of their foods are grain-free or contain implicated ingredients):** Royal Canin, Purina, Hills Science Diet, Eukanuba, Iams