

## Frequently Asked Questions

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Are Vaccines safe?

How often should you vaccinate?

How long is a cat or dog pregnant?

Should my pet eat special food while pregnant?

How can I tell if my dog suffers from arthritis?

What do I Need to know about ticks?

Is it important to brush my pet's teeth and bring them in for checks? Are Vaccines safe? Yes. The great majority of pets respond well to vaccines, but as with human vaccines, there are some risks. Fortunately, serious side effects are rare. The most common side effects of vaccination are low-grade fever, depression or decreased appetite. These are usually short-lived (24- 48 hours), and require no treatment. They are similar to what people experience after a flu or tetanus shot. Vomiting, diarrhea, itching, difficulty breathing, swelling of the face or extremities, and hives are some of the rare allergic reactions that can occur. These signs should be reported to your veterinarian immediately. PLEASE ADVISE YOUR VETERINARIAN IF YOUR PET HAS EXPERIENCED AN ALLERGIC REACTION TO VACCINATION IN THE PAST. How often should you vaccinate? Pet owners should adhere to the vaccination protocols recommended by their veterinarian. Some are suggesting certain vaccines may protect animals for as long as three years, but scientific evidence remains inconclusive. New guidelines are based on limited published studies, or serologic tests which measure the level of antibodies in blood. According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, serologic tests that detect antibodies are unreliable indicator of immune response in cats and dogs. As a general rule, pet owners should adhere to the vaccination schedules recommended by their veterinarian for pets in their practice area. How long is a cat or dog pregnant?

The average length of a pregnancy for a cat or dog is 63 days. A doctor can see the kittens or puppies on an x-ray 45 days into the pregnancy. This x-ray can be taken safely with no harm to the fetus.

Should my pet eat a special food while pregnant?

You should place your pet on a growth (kitten/puppy) food towards the end of their pregnancy and keep them on it until the kittens or puppies are weaned. If they are on a high quality food such as Hill's Science Diet, no other supplements are needed. How can I tell if my dog suffers from arthritis?

Ask yourself if you have noticed any of the subtle signs (be aware that these signs may not be present at all times)

- Reluctance to climb stairs
- Difficulty jumping
- Stiffness after strenuous exercise or after resting following exercise
- Limping
- Difficulty rising, sitting or squatting to eliminate
- Changes in behavior
- Loss of appetite

Some dogs are at greater risk for osteoarthritis. Does your dog fall into any of these categories?

- Over the age of 5
- Inactive or overweight
- A large or giant breed dog
- Suffered joint injuries
- Predisposed to developmental orthopedic disorders such as hip or elbow dysplasia

Talk to your veterinarian if you notice any of these signs. There are many new medications and diets to help relieve the pain. What do I need to know about ticks? Ticks can transmit serious diseases to pets and people. So tiny they often go unnoticed, they may be hiding anywhere. There are various kinds of ticks throughout the county, each with the potential of carrying different diseases. Since tick-borne diseases may be dangerous and might even prove fatal — it's clear that protection against these potential health hazards is a concern for every pet owner. We recommend Frontline, it protects against both fleas and ticks. It eliminates fleas fast, is long-lasting and kills all major types of diseases carrying ticks — including those that transmit Lyme disease. Is it important that I brush my pet's teeth and bring them in for dental checks by my doctor?

Imagine how your teeth would look and feel if you didn't brush them routinely. Now imagine what it would be like if you never brushed them at all. Well, the same applies to your pet's teeth. Unless you are regularly providing some form of dental care, you are neglecting an important factor in the overall health of your pet. Gum (or periodontal) disease is one of the most common problems seen by veterinarians today. Periodontal disease is known as the "silent disease" because of its slow, progressive nature. Besides bad breath, gum disease can lead to loss of appetite, weight loss, serious generalized infections and even heart and kidney disease. Talk to your doctor about getting your pet on a dental program.