

## Thank You for Saving a Life & Adopting a Puppy!

Thank you for adopting from East Coast Adoptions, a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization! We hope the adoption process went well for you, and that you are enjoying your new dog. This document contains a lot of important information, and we urge you to read it all. Remember, you made the best choice with adoption now make the best of it and enjoy your new family member for a lifetime!

We have been rescuing dogs and puppies for the past 8 years from shelters in the south. The shelters where these dogs are from are high kill shelters, which means over half of the dogs that come in have to be euthanized due to lack of space, or lack of adopters just because these places are very rural.

Each week, shelters and rescues in the south will contact us for help. **It is important to know that many dogs are euthanized every day at these places, including puppies!** They are overcrowded, cold and sad places where the dogs are nervous, lonely and alone. We use a transport company that comes on a weekly basis to bring dogs to a number of rescues in northern states, where they have a higher chance of a better life.

Some of the dogs we take in have lived what we consider a normal puppy life so far, others have been neglected, abandoned and/or mistreated. Most are untrained, scared and excited to know what love is! Because of your decision to have a rescue partnership with us, your new puppy has a new leash on life!

Here's a little information to help you off to a good start with your new family addition. Let's start with:

### **\*IMPORTANT - PET INSURANCE - IMPORTANT\***

East Coast Adoptions has provided to you as part of your adoption, the opportunity to receive free, 30 days of basic pet insurance for your new family member.

**We strongly suggest that you take advantage of this as soon as you get your new pet home.**

Insurance coverage starts at midnight following your activation/sign-up. It is in your best interests to sign up **IMMEDIATELY** upon returning to your home with your dog. Doing so will allow the insurance to be in effect at 12:01 A.M. the next day!. If you have to go to the vet the next day, your visit would be covered (within the policy provisions) only **if** you've activated the policy.

There is a \$50 deductible per visit/incident and maximums do apply. More details can be found on our website, [www.eastcoastadoptions.com/insurance-info](http://www.eastcoastadoptions.com/insurance-info) and complete info can be found on the insurers website, [www.petfirst.com](http://www.petfirst.com).

This policy will cover **common** health issues that puppies can have. **It is not an all-inclusive policy that covers everything.**

*\*You also have the option of upgrading your policy, which is highly recommended (just in case there is an accident OR illness!) Policies begin at around \$37.00 per month and, like all insurance plans, go up from there. There is even an option to add basic wellness care to your policy to help you cover some of the routine care costs you'd normally incur anyway.*

**REMEMBER** - You are not obligated to purchase insurance beyond the free 30 days we provide to you with your adoption. **BUT WE STRONGLY RECOMMEND THAT YOU DO.**

Once your policy is set up, you will get claim forms, (or you can download them from <http://www.petfirst.com>). The provider's website, as well as information you receive from Pet First will guide you through filing a claim if needed. Remember, we are not affiliated with the company directly, so please

call them at **855-270-PETS (7387)** with any questions regarding your policy. Reimbursements on claims typically take 2-4 weeks.

To begin the process and claim your free 30 days of insurance you must call Pet First Pet Insurance at **855-710-7387** to activate your plan.

**East Coast Adoptions strongly urges you to call the same day you adopt your dog from us and take him/her home.**

## Feeding Your Dog

Purina Puppy Chow is what we use to feed our pups. Please see the back of the bag for amounts. If you are switching food we recommend you mix the new food and the Purina slowly until it is switched over. Changing food quickly can cause an upset stomach. We use this food because most places that send the dogs to us use it too. We recommend feeding 2-3 times a day.

## Training

Remember to understand your puppy has been in unknown circumstances prior to being dumped at a shelter, transported (by a USDA certified animal transport company) hours upon hours to our foster home, and then have left their siblings to be with you!

Attention, socialization, training, routine, patience and determination are everything. *A dog is only as good as how his/her owner trains them!* Whether you have raised your own dogs before or not, it's a good idea to freshen up on your knowledge of various training methods that work for some dogs and not others, and see what works for you and your puppy.

For some tips and links to great training sites, check out our website, [www.eastcoastadoptions.com](http://www.eastcoastadoptions.com) and click on the training/care links found there.

## Health care

Most of the puppies we receive from shelters are healthy and live long wonderful lives but we have no way of knowing how well your puppy may have been taken care of by their original owners.

We want to try to inform our adopters of unseen health complications that may arise. If any of your new puppy's symptoms match the descriptions below, you should make a vet appointment right away. We don't mean to startle you with this information but rather make you aware of things to look for to assure your dog is happy and healthy!

### **Worms:**

We strongly urge you to make a vet appointment as soon as you can for a check up and fecal test. Even though our dogs have been de-wormed more than once, it is best to have the stool checked to assure there aren't any internal parasites still there. As they are only with us usually for a short time, we can not complete the deworming program all puppies need.

Puppies can become infected with hookworms and roundworms while they are still in the mother's uterus. The larvae (immature forms) of the worms migrate through the mother's uterus and into the developing fetus. Puppies can also be infected with roundworms and hookworms through their mother's milk. This is why it is so important to begin a deworming program (Most puppies need to be wormed numerous time no matter where they come from) when the puppies are 2 weeks old. You may or may not see worms in the dog's stool but whipworms, and other common parasites like giardia, campylobacter and coccidiosis you cannot see.

Deworming is something you can do yourself . Over the counter wormers we recommend are: Panacur C, Safeguard and Worm X.

**Please note: Heartworms are completely different than intestinal worms.**

#### **Fleas:**

We bathe all of our animals upon arrival with flea/tick shampoo that works wonders. However, sometimes we are not able to get them all and other times eggs can hatch a few days later.

We recommend a bath for your puppy as soon as you get home. For now, bathe him/her in a gentle dish detergent (we highly recommend Dawn). Pick off or comb off the fleas and drown them in some water (add a few drops of Dawn to the water) or they will become active again when the pet dries. **Do not put anything with pesticide on the puppy unless recommended by the vet.**

When you take the puppy to the vet for their first exam ask the vet what they recommend for the puppy to kill and prevent fleas. Also, be sure to ask the vet what you should use to treat your home if needed. You don't want an infestation there or the problem will continue.

**We recommend Advantix for puppies over 8 weeks.**

#### **Kennel Cough/Upper Respiratory Infections:**

These are extremely common in shelter dogs. Unfortunately it is seen in most shelters. It is kind of like a cold, which humans can't catch. Your pup will sneeze, or make a dry hacking cough (some flem may come up). This is simply treated with low-cost antibiotics by your vet. If kennel cough is not treated soon enough, and it is cold outside, it can turn into pneumonia. So make sure you are able to start him/her on antibiotics as soon as you can. Warm honey as well as can help suppress the cough. Usually with some antibiotics, it goes away in 1-2 weeks. Other dogs which are not vaccinated against Bordetella (kennel cough), can pick up this airborne infection. This is very common and is not considered an emergency.

#### **Coccidia::**

Coccidia is a common internal parasite we see that is found in the intestines. It is received usually from exposure to the mother's feces if she is infected, and can also flare up during stress. It can cause loose stool, lack of appetite and occasional vomiting. Blood and/or mucus can be present in the stool. If your dog has watery stool, or it seems like he/she can not control when they go, this is a sign of coccidia. This is also treated with medicine only prescribed from a vet. The pup should start feeling better very soon after medication. If coccidia goes untreated in a small puppy, it can be very serious. A simple fecal test that we recommend at your first vet visit. will tell if the dog has this or other parasites.

#### **Parvovirus:**

Everyone that owns a dog should know about Parvovirus (or Parvo as it is called). Parvo is a disease that every shelter and rescuer fears and dreads. It is highly contagious in dogs that are not fully vaccinated for it. Right now your puppy **may** have 1 or 2 sets of vaccines, which gives them some immunity to the virus but not fully. Vaccines are given 3-4 weeks apart and are a part of your puppy's vaccination program your vet will begin. **Even fully vaccinated dogs may catch Parvo.** Adult dogs that are up to date on their vaccines *usually* have a slim chance of catching it.

Parvo is a virus that attacks the immune and intestinal systems. One day a puppy can be happy and playful, and the next day he will be down in the dumps. Vomiting, lethargy, bloody/loose and extremely foul smelling stool are symptoms. A puppy will not want to eat, and if they do eat or drink they will usually vomit everything back up. They lose weight rapidly, and usually the first thing to really hurt them is dehydration. Parvo is treated usually at an emergency vet. It is extremely important to catch it sooner than later so if you notice any of these signs in your puppy or suspect they may have Parvo, take them to the vet immediately... **Do not wait a couple of days to see if everything will clear up. If it's Parvo, it won't.**

**There is no way for us to test for Parvo unless the dogs are showing symptoms of the illness.** We work with shelters and rescues that vaccinate and quarantine the dogs prior to coming to us and we do the

best we can to prevent and recognize signs of Parvovirus in our puppies but nature can take its course, and we are always here to listen to your questions or concerns.

All of our foster homes take huge precautions to keep our facilities clean and sanitized. We don't reuse anything from previous litters, use a hospital disinfectant on our pens/floors/bathtub, use gloves etc...we are well trained on these things and take all the necessary precautions to be content that no illnesses are being contracted from our homes.

We **do not** recommend taking your puppy to a dog park, Petsmart, or anywhere else where sickly dogs could have tracked through... even people's shoes can carry Parvo. If you'd like to take them to these places, wait until they are fully vaccinated puppies. Exposing your new puppy needlessly to possible illness or disease can be devastating to them and you... Puppies admitted to a hospital usually need to be hospitalized for 3-5 days, and it can be expensive.

**Please be sure to keep your puppy up to date with his/her vaccinations!**

### **Loose Stools:**

Loose stools are common after adoption. It could be the cause of something mentioned above, especially if combined with other symptoms, but there are also many other factors that can cause this. Change of environment, change of food, stress, more exercise, treats etc. have **ALL** been known to cause very loose stool. Changes are stressful to a puppy, and they need time to learn, adapt and adjust.

### **Your Dog's Breed and Background:**

We do the best we can in determining your dog's age and breed. Please understand we save these dogs from high kill shelters (who *constantly* euthanize puppies due to lack of space) in rural states, and the information given to us is limited at best.

One of the things we get asked a lot is "how the dog got into the shelter". Our rescue usually takes in litters of puppies. Usually when they are litters, their original owner brought them into the shelter. Often times, they drop off the dogs after hours and do not leave any information. Others, even as litters, are found as strays. Sometimes we know background stories, most of the time, not. The shelter staff, vets, and our fosters make the best guess for breeds, unless we were told who the parents were and their age.

The only way to get close to determining the breed is a DNA test. We have used, and strongly recommend the Wisdom Panel DNA test sold at PetSmart for about \$100. Within a few weeks, you will get back the results, which show the top 5 breeds your dog is.

Because of the lack of space in our foster homes, we do not take the mother of the puppies into our rescue but, if she was at the southern shelter or rescue, we assure she goes to a different rescue, and we assist with her spay, medical care etc. In almost every instance, the puppies are in the shelter without their mother to begin with.

### **Spay/Neuter:**

East Coast Adoptions had you sign a waiver when you adopted your puppy/dog that legally binds you to spay or neuter your dog. The foster you adopted from has discussed this with you and we will follow up with you on so we can get those records for our records of this when it is completed.

Getting your dog "fixed" helps with overpopulation, but there are also other important factors of doing so.

1. Your female dog will not get as many UTI's, and will be less prone to cancers.
2. Your male dog will not roam as much.
3. Your dog will be more behaved in general.

4. Your female will not have her "monthly" (she should be spayed BEFORE her first heat cycle (6-12 months old)).

Please don't add to the problem of so many unwanted animals due to owners not getting their animals fixed. Over 1.2 million unwanted, healthy dogs are euthanized in this country every day because people wanted to make a few dollars and breed their pets.

We have a lot of information on our website, [www.eastcoastadoptions.com/spay-neuter-clinic-info](http://www.eastcoastadoptions.com/spay-neuter-clinic-info) as well as a handy-dandy low cost clinic locator. Be sure to check it out!

In conclusion, we do not adopt out any animals we think have any medical issues. It doesn't mean we guarantee your puppy to be 100% healthy or that something won't arise in a few days. Things can and do happen. That's why we've put this information guide together for you. Remember, we are always happy to help you with any questions or concerns you may have and we love to hear "happy tales" about how it's all worked out...

Visit us on FaceBook at [facebook.com/eastcoastadoptions](https://facebook.com/eastcoastadoptions) and let us know how it's going and how your new family member is adjusting. Be sure to include a couple of great pictures as well and we just may post your story there or on our website.

If you or someone you know is interested in adopting or becoming a foster, help us save more dogs lives by letting us know.

We hope this information was helpful to you. If you have any recommendations, please let us know!

Best of luck with your new furry friend!

Sincerely,  
Darlene Hyett  
Vice President  
East Coast Adoptions - A dogs In Danger Rescue Inc. company  
We are a 501(c)(3) Non Profit Organization

908-745-9191

[darlene@eastcoastadoptions.com](mailto:darlene@eastcoastadoptions.com) | [www.eastcoastadoptions.com](http://www.eastcoastadoptions.com)