

Finding the Right Veterinary Care for Your Breeding Dogs

When you breed and raise dogs, you will need different types of veterinary care. This care will depend on your needs and the needs of your dogs. Care is also dependent on their life stage and breeding status.

Basic veterinary care

Every dog and puppy in your care will need to see a veterinarian at some point. A yearly preventative exam includes a basic health check, parasite control, and vaccine updates. Your veterinarian can also assess your dogs' dietary needs.

Puppies will need deworming, parasite prevention, and multiple vaccines. You may need a health certificate from a veterinarian before sending puppies to a new home, distributor, or pet store.

If available, look for a mobile veterinarian who can do on-site visits for you. If you have multiple breeding dogs and puppies, it will be much easier than transporting all your animals to a clinic.



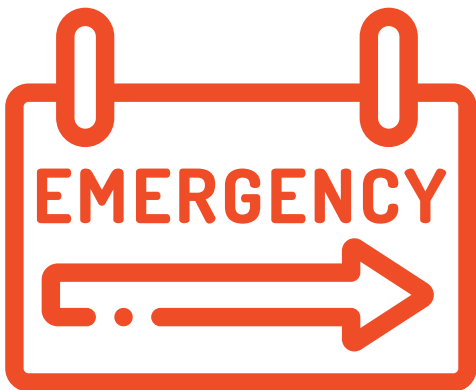
Emergency care

Have a plan for emergencies – including knowing whether your veterinarian offers emergency services. Most veterinary clinics can refer you to local emergency clinics.

Keep the address and phone number for emergency clinics handy. It can be helpful to call when you are on the way to the clinic, so they are best prepared to help your dog.

Several companies now offer tele-triage services, meaning you can talk to a veterinarian via video chat or phone call. This can be helpful when you have a medical question, but your veterinarian is not available. A quick search on the web will bring up several options.

The type of advice you can receive via call depends on state laws. A tele-triage veterinarian can offer basic advice but generally cannot prescribe medication. They can advise you as to whether your dog is having a medical emergency, or if you can wait to see your regular veterinarian.



Reproductive care



If you have breeding dogs, you will want to work with a reproductive veterinary specialist (theriogenologist). A search at the Society for Theriogenology website can help you find a specialist near you.

A theriogenologist has specialized training and experience working with breeders. They can help with all phases of reproduction, including:

- pre-breeding screenings
- supporting your dog through pregnancy
- understanding the needs of vulnerable neonatal puppies

A reproductive veterinary specialist can also help you with:

- progesterone testing and semen analysis
- artificial insemination
- Cesarean sections (planned or emergency)



Health screening and testing

Many breeding dogs will need some form of pre-breeding health testing to reduce or eliminate the prevalence or risks of certain health conditions. See our article on **Pre-Breeding Health Screening** to learn how to determine which tests are appropriate for your breeding dogs.

Health testing by general practitioners: Some health tests, such as x-rays for diagnosing hip and elbow dysplasia, can be done at your regular veterinary clinic. Your veterinarian will submit the x-rays to the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA) for assessment by board-certified radiologists. A your attending veterinarian can also check your dogs for patellar luxation and perform blood tests (autoimmune hypothyroid and liver shunts).

Health testing by veterinary specialists: Some health testing or veterinary care requires a specialist. Board-certified veterinary specialists have additional training beyond their veterinary degree, including a supervised residency and an examination to assess their skills and knowledge in that specialty.

Examples:

- A board-certified cardiologist is recommended if your dogs need a cardiac evaluation, which usually includes an echocardiogram. Find a [Veterinary Internal Medicine Specialist](#)
- A board-certified ophthalmologist can perform an eye certification exam. Find a [Veterinary Ophthalmologist](#)
- While not required, in some cases a neurologist may be needed for BAER testing (for deafness). Find a [Veterinary Neurologist](#)
- For more advanced dentistry needs including root canals you will need to consult with a veterinary dentist. Find a [Veterinary Dentist](#)
- A dermatologist may be needed to diagnose and treat some autoimmune conditions such as lupus as well as allergies. Find a [Veterinary Dermatologist](#)