

LIGHTHOUSE LABRADOODLES – PUPPY CARE NOTES

FIRST NIGHT

Your puppy will come to you at around 9/10 weeks and at this very young age will still sleep a lot! It is important to start your puppy off on the right track the first night he arrives by establishing a sleep, feed, play routine that best suits your lifestyle, although I do encourage you to be flexible with this routine in the early days. It is important to establish this as quickly as possible and be persistent and consistent – a new puppy will thrive on routine and my advice is as follows.

Puppies will wake early and be full of energy – offer his breakfast and allow him time to release some of that pent up energy. You will find after quite a short period of time he will want to sleep and this can be for quite some time when he is still very young – young puppies sleep a lot and when they sleep you will see they breathe quite heavily and fast – this is normal for young puppies so don't be alarmed. Their heart rate is quicker than in older dogs.

Your day time routine will obviously depend on what you have planned for your puppy and whether you have decided to crate train or not – we do recommend this as a way to help with potty training and sleeping routine.

We suggest you offer the puppy two meals a day – morning and afternoon – some breeders suggest three smaller ones – we have found over time that if puppies are over fed it can cause them to have diarrhea so we choose to feed twice.

Remember your puppy is still a baby and his whole world has been turned upside down by heading off to a new home – the first few nights he will miss his siblings and familiar surrounds but with work and time he will quickly learn that his new home is now his forever home and with help from you he will soon become very comfortable in his new environment. You will need to expect some crying for the first few days so possibly a good idea to let your neighbours know you are going to be settling a new puppy and that you will try to keep the disruption to a minimum. While doing this you don't want the added stress of upset neighbours.

CRATE TRAINING

Here at Lighthouse we certainly recommend crate training so should you choose to do so, purchase one that is large enough (we normally use 36 – 48 inch) to accommodate your dog when it is fully grown. Puppies actually enjoy spending time in their crate as it becomes their safe haven and a comfortable 'den'. If your puppy is not settling, we suggest you cover it with a large towel or blanket to make him feel a

little safer until he gets used to his new environment. Your puppies are not officially started with crate training but do certainly spend some time in them while here. We don't believe it is beneficial to start toilet training etc here as once in their new environment things are different to here once again – therefore I believe it is best to start this new training once they reach their forever homes.

TOILET TRAINING

Your puppy is most likely to need to pee or poop just after waking up from a sleep or after eating or drinking so be prepared to whisk him outside at these times. Often the most telling sign is sniffing of the ground, prior to squatting but you do only have a short period of time to catch him.

Puppies are accustomed to doing wees and poops on the grass at Lighthouse so it is a natural instinct to head to that area to go to the toilet. At night we have a tray that is filled with wood shavings that is their indoor wee station. An option at your home is to use the puppy pee pads readily available from Petbarn or The Reject Shop. Always place the toileting area away from food and water. Take him outside every hour (take him to the same spot) and use lots of positive praise when he does his wee where he is supposed to do it.

Avoid cleaning up accidents using products containing ammonia. Ammonia smells similar to urine and will encourage him to return to that place to toilet. There are no hard and fast rules as to how soon they will pick up their toileting routine – every puppy is different.

FEEDING YOUR PUPPY

While here at Lighthouse your puppies have been fed a mix of Advance Puppy Growth (medium dog) dry kibble and tinned Advance for some moisture content – depending on the size of your puppy ½ - 1 cup – the smaller puppies will require only ½ a cup) of dry kibble mixed with one desert spoon of the tinned Advance, morning, middle of the day and evenings if doing three meals or a little more if only feeding twice. As they reach about 6 weeks we also add some human grade low fat beef mince, alternating between the tinned food and beef mince.

As puppies sizes vary please be guided by your vet as to when to increase food amounts. The amount your puppy eats will also vary – some puppies are big eaters and others are picky eaters but as long as you regularly check your puppies weight with your vet and they are happy and growing as required all should be good.

You can choose to change your puppies food but our suggestion is to do it gradually so as not to upset you puppies tummy. Start by adding a small amount of the new feed and gradually decreasing the original food.

Over time you can add some raw vegies, large meaty bones, chicken necks, wings, and feet. Large bones help provide calcium and can keep puppies entertained for hours at a time, and are great for their teeth but they must be raw as cooked bones can splinter and cause injury to small puppies and dogs. Always monitor puppies when they start on these larger foods as there is a rare choking risk.

For training treats we recommend small pieces of chopped up boiled chicken breast meat – if you are purchasing training treats please consider natural Australian made products only.

PLEASE DO NOT FEED YOUR PUPPY LEFT OVER HUMAN FOOD – THIS IS NOT GOOD FOR HIS HEALTH – unless it is something that you have researched and is considered a food that is safe to them but over feeding can in turn cause health issues so be careful their weight is kept in check with regular weigh ins at the vets.

VACCINATIONS

Your puppy will have his first vaccination administered by our vet at the time of health check and microchip. He will then be required to have a second vaccination at the approx. age of 12 weeks and then a third at approx. 16 weeks. Your vaccination card with dates will come with your puppy and you will need to make an appointment for the following two vaccinations with your vet.

PLEASE BE AWARE THAT YOUR PUPPY IS NOT FULLY COVERED UNTIL AFTER ALL HIS VACCINATIONS HAVE BEEN ADMINISTERED AND HE SHOULD NOT BE EXPOSED TO THE GROUND OR FOREIGN AREAS UNTIL TWO WEEKS AFTER THE FINAL VACCINATION. You can take your puppies to safe areas where you know other dogs are that are vaccinated but no dogs parks or restaurants where lots of other dogs will have been. Socialising is important but the health of your puppy is far more important in my opinion.

You can test your dog each year after that at your vets to see if they are still covered or need to have an annual vaccination. Discuss this with your vet.

WORMING - FLEA AND TICK TREATMENT

PLEASE PURCHASE FLEA AND TICK MEDS TO HAVE AT THE READY TO ADMINISTER TO YOUR PUPPY ON ARRIVAL

Puppies need to be wormed every two weeks until they are 12 weeks of age, then every month until they are 6 months of age. From 6 months it is every 3 months.

They are wormed here prior to departure at 2,4,6 and then at 8 weeks – starting with Drontal paste and then Milbemax or endogard for puppies appropriate weights.

There are many different products to use and you can discuss this with your vet – here at Lighthouse we use Milbemax for our puppies and Endogard or Nexgard Spectra for our adult dogs. You will also need to make sure you start treating your puppy with an all wormer that covers heart worm. Another discussion to have with your vet – there is an annual injection for this also. Your puppy has had Frontline spray administered here but on arrival you will need to administer flea and tick medication – this can be combined with your worming treatment.

GROOMING – THE BASICS

The Australian Labradoodle coat is not a low maintenance coat, therefore will require some time and effort to keep it looking lush and prevent matting. My suggestion is to make contact with a good groomer and book a regular appointment to help with this – approx. every 6 – 8 weeks would be ideal

Young puppies will require what is called a sanitary clip prior to needing a full groom (this is a clip around their privates and just a general tidy up around face and eyes)

In the mean time you can purchase brushes (there are many) and spend time on the lounge in the evenings getting your puppy used to regular brushing so his experience with a groomer is not traumatic – some dogs have to be sedated to have a groom and if you take time initially to get your puppy used to having his coat brushed you will lessen the anxiety he may feel when heading off for a groom.

A slicker brush is good to have on hand and a wire comb will help keep those knots at bay but keep in mind not to pull on his coat as this can be quite painful for the puppy. At the age of approx. 9 – 12 months your puppies coat will change to its adult coat and some people believe their dog is starting to shed – this is a normal process.

There are many products you can use to help keep these beautiful coats tidy and knot free but my suggestion would be to speak to a groomer and purchase the correct products – there are so many on the market and some are pretty much useless. We use Fido shampoo, conditioner and coat spray from Petbarn. Only wash your puppy when they are dirty – puppies don't need to be washed too often as this can remove some of the good oils from their skin and coats – once again making contact with a good groomer is my suggestion. Another good tip is to find a picture of a groom or clip that you love and take it with you to your groomer appointments. Please be aware also that if your dog has any knots that are close to the skin the only option may be a close shave so to prevent this regular brushing is a must.

EAR INFECTIONS

Labradoodles have naturally droopy ears with varying amounts of hair within the ear canal. Because of this there is a lack of airflow to the ear and moisture can easily be trapped forming the perfect environment for bacteria growth and therefore infection. Signs of this can be shaking of the head and scratching of the ears and a rather

pungent smell. Ear infections are quite common. Some suggest to change their to a raw diet to prevent this but this is not always a successful remedy. There is no magic fix for this issue unfortunately and it is often a matter of trial and error with different remedies to see which one works for your dog.

PUPPY STRESS DIARRHEA

Stress – just like in people, can cause a dogs bowel to leak excess fluid along with blood from the inflammation. This is often referred to as stress colitis and is something we often see in young puppies when they leave here and are trying to transition to a new environment. It is quite normal and as long as the puppy is not lethargic or is vomiting and has explosive bloody diarrhea there is nothing to be overly concerned about. As long as your puppy is happy and still eating and drinking often this will fix itself in a short period of time with boiled chicken and rice but on the odd occasion a quick trip to the vets and a short course of antibiotics is sometimes required. This is not something we cover for as it is a normal reaction in some puppies to change of environment.

IF YOU, AT ANY STAGE HAVE CONCERNS ABOUT THE HEALTH OF YOUR PUPPY PLEASE CONTACT YOUR VET – WE ARE HERE FOR SUPPORT BUT ARE BREEDERS AND NOT VETS.

YOUR PUPPY WILL LEAVE HERE WITH 30 DAYS FREE INSURANCE WITH TRUPANION AND WE HIGHLY RECOMMEND YOU CONTINUE THIS POLICY OR ARRANGE AN ALTERNATE ONE, OR HAVE A BANK ACCOUNT SET UP FOR THOSE UNEXPECTED ISSUES THAT CAN AND DO ARISE. WHILE WE DO THE BEST WE CAN TO PRODUCE HAPPY AND HEALTHY PUPPIES, SOMETIMES MOTHER NATURE STEPS IN WITH ISSUES OUT OF OUR CONTROL AND WHILE WE GUARANTEE PROVEN GENETIC ISSUES THERE ARE MANY HEALTH CONCERNS WE HAVE NO CONTROL OVER.

On a final note please take the time to enjoy your puppy and don't stress the small stuff!

Anna Howard – Lighthouse Labradoodles

