**Adopting a Kitten or Puppy: What should you know?**

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Bringing home a new furry member of the family is an exciting time for the entire household. You've bought the new bed, food, toys, and a shiny new collar. It takes time for your new pet to get used to the new smells, routines, other pets, and people.  There are other extremely important things to consider for your new pet such as vaccinations, deforming, oral hygiene, and nail/paw care. A visit to your veterinarian’s clinic is a must within the first week or two after adoption to make sure your new [**pet care**](http://www.cityvethospital.com/) is protected and disease free. Your puppy or kitten should receive his first set of vaccines between six to eight weeks of age. This age is the time when the youngster’s antibodies that it received from its mother’s milk will start to wear off; your puppy/kitten will be susceptible to common diseases at this time. Your veterinarian will perform a wellness exam, which means getting to know your pet’s history and performing a full physical exam. Your veterinarian has to do a wellness exam to determine that your pet is healthy before he receives vaccines. If your pet receives vaccines when he isn't fully healthy, giving a vaccination can put more pressure on the immune system. A puppy or kitten should receive three sets of vaccines three to four weeks apart to ensure the immune response is strong and at optimal antibody levels. Between the vaccine booster periods, it is recommended that you keep your pet away from any new unknown animals or off leash areas as they can still be susceptible until their immune system is fully booster-ed.

[](http://www.cityvethospital.com/)

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Most puppies and kittens are born having intestinal parasites. Therefore, it is essential to the pets as well as your health to have them deformed as soon as possible. When your pet has its first examination by the veterinarian, they will get the current weight and be able to give a proper dosage. Most times, it is recommended that the puppy or kitten receive regular deforming until their last set of vaccines. After that, there are monthly deforming options as a preventative to help protect your pet.Oral hygiene, such as brushing your pet’s teeth, is very important to start early. Getting your young pet used to pet toothpaste and the toothbrush will make it so much easier when they get older. Once they are into a routine, most dogs and cats think of it as a treat because they love the taste of the toothpaste so much! There is no substitution to brushing your pet’s teeth for a healthy mouth, and the earlier you start, the easier it will be for the future.

[](http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-GJjz_dHEU-0/Ux2MTBwl8HI/AAAAAAAAACk/3-v0jWTlpX0/s1600/services.jpg)

Most often, veterinary clinics will be the ones unruly pets are referred to for a nail trim from groomers. If our pets do not have their paws played with or trimmed right from when they are young, they will be fearful of the sensation when they are adults. Make sure to touch and play with your pet’s paws daily, and praise them when they allow you to touch their paws. Buy a good set of nail trimmers and start out by just taking the tips off of the nails. Your pet needs to get used to the sensation, as it does cause pressure on the nail when the nail clippers are used, and this is what animals become fearful of. Ask your [**veterinary clinic**](http://www.cityvethospital.com/about.html) team to show you how to trim your pet’s nails properly. Starting early will save you, as the owner, a lot of grief and money in the long run!

Although adopting a new pet is an extremely fun and exciting time in your life, it is important to know that you’re new pet depends on you for its health and safety. You are their advocate; make sure to educate yourself as an owner and start teaching your pet early so that things such as brushing their teeth and routine visits to the veterinarian aren't so scary! Owning a new pet takes time and patience, but the more you know about the health of your pet, the easier it will be to realize when they need help.