

# Your New Puppy Checkup

## Dr. Mike Paul, DVM

Mike has more than 35 years of experience in companion animal veterinary practice and is a valued member of IDEXX's Pet Health Network team since 2013.

Congratulations! You have a [new puppy](#)! If it has been some time since you had a puppy, you may be surprised to learn that, just as with raising a baby, recommendations can change quickly. Much has changed over the last few years when it comes to raising a new puppy. I always recommend that the first outing for your puppy should be to your [veterinarian](#). That way, you're off to a good start and can continue on a path of lifelong health.

### What might your puppy's checkup include?

The first thing your veterinarian will likely do is perform a complete, [physical examination](#). Most veterinarians will start using their hands to palpate or feel your puppy from nose to tail. You will notice that your veterinarian will feel the puppy's tummy and listen to the puppy's heart and lungs using a stethoscope. Other visual inspections may include:

- Checking the puppy's ears for [infection](#)
- Checking the puppy's genitals to be sure they are normal
- Checking the puppy's [teeth](#) and discussing brushing and [oral hygiene](#)

Much of what your veterinarian does may go unnoticed. Your puppy's movement and disposition will probably be evaluated too.

### What might your veterinarian discuss?

Your veterinarian might discuss preventive health measures such as:

- Your puppy's [nutrition](#) (including dietary suggestions)
- [Vaccinations](#) that your puppy should receive
- [Parasite preventives](#) to protect from bugs like [heartworms](#) and [intestinal worms](#)
- A preventive care plan
- [Flea](#) and [tick](#) control (including product suggestions)

Your veterinarian will probably ask you to bring in a [stool](#) sample to check for worms but, because you're bringing in a puppy, de-worming will probably be advised even if nothing is found.

### What should I ask my veterinarian?

One of the most important things your veterinarian will do is answer your questions. Puppies can be a real challenge and it is important to be comfortable asking questions of your veterinarian. Don't be shy; this is a great opportunity to strengthen the bond between you, your puppy and your veterinarian.

Like with children, your puppy will need to see your veterinarian every few weeks and your veterinary practice will set a schedule for your next appointment.

Your veterinarian is your puppy's health advocate. Together, you can make sure that every system is checked and all of your questions are answered.

*If you have any questions or concerns, you should always visit or call your veterinarian -- they are your best resource to ensure the health and well-being of your pets.*