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[Editor's Note: Pet Health Network's parent company is IDEXX, which offers a preventive care solution. However, the author of this article is not recommending any specific brand of preventive care plan, nor is this article intended as an endorsement for any IDEXX offerings.]

Preventive care plans are a great way to provide care, and to keep your dog healthy. One of the greatest concerns among [veterinarians](#) and dog guardians alike is how best to maintain your dog in as healthy a condition as possible for his entire life—from puppyhood to the senior years.

Recent surveys, conducted by veterinary professionals, have recognized that many dog guardians would rather pay for veterinary care in monthly installments than in one lump sum¹. Personal experience tells me that dog guardians would appreciate some help with a better understanding of what is entailed in good [preventive healthcare](#). Many could also use help with planning and budgeting. Fortunately, preventative care plans can help with all of that.

Preventive care plans explained

Preventive care plans can be purchased from your veterinarian with monthly or quarterly payments. They may have an initial cost and include services like [checkups](#), [vaccinations](#), [nail trimmings](#), blood work and potentially much more, depending on the plan you use.

Why is a preventive care plan the right option?

[The American Veterinary Medical Association](#) and the [American Animal Hospital Association](#) have jointly developed [canine preventive healthcare guidelines](#). These guidelines are an excellent resource for keeping your dog healthy and following them will require a real commitment on your part, and that significant thought be given to the costs. This is where preventive care plans come in.

Keep in mind that preventive care could include:

- Examinations
- Vaccinations
- [Internal parasite screenings](#)
- Blood screenings
- [Dental cleaning packages](#)

While the list might seem overwhelming at first glance, by making regular payments, and adhering to a preventive care plan, pet guardians are able to assure their dog of the best preventive care protection possible without unexpected, large expenses that can be a jolt to the budget.

Preventive care plans vary in their provisions, so be sure you are clear about what is covered in terms of early diagnostics and [disease](#) prevention. These programs are not [insurance](#) plans, but together with insurance programs your dog can be covered for both anticipated and unexpected costs. ([Click here to learn about the difference between preventive care plans and insurance.](#)) This allows you to more easily provide the sort of care your dog needs, and you want to provide.

No one wants to have to make medical decisions for their dog based on financial concerns. Ask your veterinarian if he offers a preventive care plan.

Regardless of what you choose, it is important to keep your dog and your family healthy. Rely on your veterinarian to provide the best of care.

Resources

1. ["Bayer Veterinary Care Usage Study." AVMAWork Blog. AVMA, 17 June 2011. 22 June 2015.](#)