

Petfinder.com - Annual Health Checklist

- Take your pet to a veterinarian for regular check-ups at least once a year. At these visits, your vet will give your pet a physical exam, check blood work if necessary, examine her teeth and assess any changes your pet may be experiencing. Yearly check-ups are key to catching, diagnosing and treating any potential health problems. As your pet gets older, her physical and nutritional needs change.
- Keep your pet's vaccinations current.
- Follow vaccination guidelines as recommended by your vet to prevent illnesses such as rabies and kennel cough. See the links above for a full suggested-vaccination schedule.
- Spay (if female) or neuter (if male) your pet.
This important surgery is recommended as early as eight weeks or before adulthood. Discuss the time that is best for your pet with your veterinarian.
- Control fleas and ticks.
Fleas and ticks are terrible nuisances and may pose a real threat to the health and comfort of your pet. In addition to extreme discomfort for your pet, fleas can also infest your whole home and make it very unpleasant for your family.
FRONTLINE® Brand Products offer long-lasting, complete flea and tick control. Frontline®:
 - controls both fleas and ticks
 - is the brand veterinarians recommend most often
 - breaks the flea life cycle to prevent a flea infestation on your pet and in your home
 - works fast and lasts for a whole month
 - is waterproof even after a bath and swim
 - is safe for use on puppies and kittens

Visit Frontline.com® for more information.

- Use heartworm preventative.
All dogs, no matter if they go outside or are indoor pets, are at risk of contracting heartworm disease. Your dog should be tested for heartworms annually. If left untreated, heartworm disease can pose significant health threats to your pet and even cause death. Given once a month, HEARTGARD® or HEARTGARD Plus® (ivermectin) is the best way to prevent heartworms. HEARTGARD Plus® is also effective in the treatment and control of roundworms and hookworms.
Visit Heartgard.com® for more information.
- Control intestinal parasites.
- Practice good dental care and hygiene for your pets.
- Check your pet's teeth for tartar build-up every couple of months. Speak to your vet to schedule regular professional teeth cleanings.
- Feed your pet right.
Make sure your pet receives a complete and balanced diet, which is important for healthy growth and bone formation. Ask your vet for the nutritional needs of your pet.
- Groom your pet.
Brush your pet's coat and wipe away any discharge from around his or her eyes with a soft cloth daily. Regular baths not only will make him more pleasant to be around, they are an opportunity to check for any injuries, parasites or other skin or coat problems.
- Take care of your pet's ears.
 - Check and clean your pet's ears weekly to prevent infections.
 - Use an ear-cleaning solution made for dogs and cats. Squirt the solution into the ear, filling the entire canal and gently massage the ear base for sixty seconds. Let your pet shake its head, and then use a cotton ball to wipe out any debris.
 - Never use Q-tips® because they can easily break off and get stuck in your pet's ear canal.
 - Never use peroxide, soap, water or oil to clean your pet's ears.