

Care Of Puppies



For the first 3 weeks puppies require little care from the breeder, the mother should spend most of her time with the puppies to keep them warm, feed them and stimulate them to toilet. If the puppies feel cold then supplementary heat can be provided with a heat lamp.

Puppies are born blind and deaf. Their eyes will open around 14 days of age, if they haven't opened their eyes by day 16, or you notice any discharge coming from their eyes then contact your veterinary surgery.

Puppies will spend the majority of their time sleeping and only really wake when they feed off mum, if they are constantly crying then this may indicate a problem.

Visitors should be avoided for the first few weeks and handling kept to a minimum to avoid distressing the mother.

Puppies should be wormed with Panacur 10% oral solution at 2 weeks of age and then every 2 weeks until they go to their new homes.

At 3 weeks of age the puppies should be bright alert and walking around.

They should begin weaning at 3-4 weeks of age, this is when they move on to Royal Canin Starter food or puppy food that the bitch has been on.

The food may be soaked in hot water to create a mash for the first week of weaning, and should be served warm/at room temperature. Once the puppies are eating this then the mother will no longer clean up their faeces. They do not need supplementing with anything else.

Once they are eating the mash well you should encourage the bitch to spend some time away from them, she should be willing to at this stage. You can start adding in some normal biscuits to the mash to encourage them to eat solids and when they are eating this with ease then you can cut out the mash all together. At this point they should no longer be spending time with mum as they will naturally try to feed. By 6 weeks the puppies should be fully weaned.

Socialisation of young puppies is very important, the more the puppies experience at a young age the less fearful they will be as an adult. The puppies will play and interact with each other and teach each other. If the weather is warm enough the puppies should be put out in the garden to allow them to get used to outside noises, they should not be left unattended.

The puppies will need to be vaccinated and the first vaccine can be given from 6 weeks of age which is also an ideal time to have them health checked by your vet.

Hand Rearing Puppies

Should you need to hand rear the puppies then you will need to get some replacement milk and bottle feed them every 3 hours day/night for the first week. Royal Canin Baby Dog Milk comes with 4 sachets of powder and 3 variable-flow teats for different sized puppies. You will have to stimulate them to toilet after EVERY feed by using cotton wool and some tepid water to act like the mother licking around their genitals and bottom until they toilet. As each week goes on you increase the amount of milk, but reduce the number of feeds, follow the guide on the replacement milk closely. You may wish to weigh the puppies regularly to ensure they are growing well.