

CARING FOR YOUR DOG



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Foreword

For some owners, having a dog as a pet is similar to having a child although physically there is really no comparison, but emotionally, this really is the case, as dogs are feeling creatures and thus deserve care and love too. Thus, in the quest to be a good and caring owner, the owner should be able to perform some very basic actions that showcase this caring attitude, which will be well received and enjoyed by the pet.

Caring For Your Dog

Chapter 1:

Dog Care Basics

Synopsis

The following are some of the basic care tips that every dog owner should put into practice.

Basic Information

Perhaps the first act of caring as an owner would be to provide the dog with a proper collar, preferably with the dog name and address clearly depicted on the collar. The collar chosen should be one that is safe and functional to ensure the dog is not undue stress when using it.

Bathing the dog regularly is also important. The frequency of the baths should be according to the lifestyle the dog keeps, and if unsure, the owner should seek the advice of a good vet. Bathing too frequently or infrequently enough, could have adverse results, such as skin problems, lack luster coat and hair fall or fur loss.

Designing a diet plan that is well rounded and complete is also another important point that should be looked into when trying to provide basic care for the dog. Improper diet plans can eventually end up costing the owner more, when there is a necessity to visit the vet often. A sick dog is often very unsettling and worrisome for the owner and certainly unpleasant for the dog too.

Providing the dog with the chance to exercise regularly is also another important basic requirement in caring for the pet. Without adequate exercise, the dog will not be able to have strong bones and a healthy body condition.

Chapter 2:

What Items Do You Need For Your Dog

Synopsis

In order to care for a dog well, there are several elements that need to be considered and provided for at all times. This will ensure that the dog is happy and well looked after and the owner is saddled with less dog related problems.

The Essentials

The following are some of the essential items that would be ideal to have for the comforts of the dog:

- Dog food – some people make it a habit to give the dog table scraps and leftover food, this is really not good for the dog. A dog's digestive system is different from that of a human, thus it requires a different diet plan. Ensuring the dog has proper food to eat that is specifically designed for animal consumption is better for the dog's health and the owner's wallet in the long run.
- Providing proper food containers, which the dog identifies as its own, is also important. This will help the animal to identify the food in it, as its own, and therefore be trained not to touch other food items, unless specifically allowed to do so.
- Grooming tools are also among the items that should be part of the caring kit for the dog. This is especially essential if the breed of the dog requires frequent grooming sessions. Having items such as brushes, nail clippers, wipes, fur clippers, shampoos and conditioners are all part of the normal regimen of grooming tools for a dog.
- Chew toys are also items to be included in the list, as these will keep the dog distracted and less likely to resort to destroying the owner's things in the quest to satisfy its natural instinct to chew on anything and everything. It also helps to keep their teeth clean and alleviate any discomfort from teething problems.

Chapter 3:

The Vet Is Your Friend

Synopsis

Finding a good and reputable vet whom the owner and dog can be comfortable with can sometimes be something of a challenge. However, if this scenario is found, then a good and beneficial relationship will prevail.

Don't Avoid The Vet!

The vet understands the deep bond that is usually formed between the owners and their pets, and therefore they are very delicate when coming to matters pertaining to the sick animal. The vet will be able to help the owner understand the problem and find a solution that is most suitable and acceptable to the owner, while all the while keeping the well being and comfort of the dog in mind. Most pet owner will stick to one vet as soon as a comfortable bond is formed.

As the animal cannot talk, the vet is trained to recognize and diagnose the problem accordingly, and then decide on the next course of action suitable for the given situation. Although this solution can sometimes be rather costly, the fact that there is a relationship formed over a period of time, the owner can be assured of getting the best rates possible. The owner can also be assured of the vet's commitment and problem solving skills over time.

Most people will ask for recommendations from friends when it comes to finding a suitable vet for their pet. Arranging to meet with the vet without the pet present will allow the owner to get the feel of the doctor and the services provided. If the owner is satisfied with the outcome of the first meeting, then perhaps the services of the particular vet can be used.

There are also several questions that the owner can pose to the vet, and these should include:

- Is the practice AAHA accredited?
- How are overnight patients monitored?
- What sort of equipment is used?
- Are there referral facilities for severe cases?

Chapter 4:

Caring For An Elderly Dog

Synopsis

As pets get older, they often require additional care and this can be a problem if the owner is not adequately informed on how to do this and thus unprepared.

Special Care For Older Dogs

There are quite a few tell tale signs of an aging dog besides the obvious age factor. Some of these signs would include the overall slowing down in the general activity of the dog, the longer periods of rest the dog now is prone to taking, graying around the face and muzzle which is more notable in darker furred dogs, obvious hearing problems and perhaps cloudy eyes. Other signs to look out for may include arthritis pains, bad breath or bleeding gums, sudden blindness and changes of weight and appetite, changes in urine output and overall thirst and may be more symptoms.

The following are some methods that can be adopted by the owner when caring for an elderly dog:

- Making the dog as comfortable as possible is perhaps the first place to start. As the dog is less like to be active, placing its resting basket or designated resting items such as blankets and throw rugs, in a more accessible location would help the animal find comfort easily.
- Making sure the dog has access to clean water perhaps at different locations in the house, especially if there are stairs to attempt, will be convenient for the dog.
- Changing the diet plan to a low calorie and a low fat plan would be better, as at this point the dog would very unlikely be capable of coping with a vigorous exercise routine.

- General grooming for the dog should be done more frequently as it will also help the dog's circulation and will be comforting for the animal. Generally most dogs enjoy a gentle hair brushing session and it also helps to reassure the dog, that it is still very much loved.

Chapter 5:

Caring For A Disabled Dog

Synopsis

In order to still be able to provide adequate care and love for the dog, the owner must first be able to recognize the symptoms that cause the dog's discomfort and possibly even one that leads to disability issues. Once the owner is aware of the disability, steps can then be taken to help the dog live a better quality of life.

Taking Special Care Of Disabled Pets

Some of the warning signs to look out for are if the pet has been in an accident, if there is evidence of the inability to stand without assistance, difficulty in going up and down stairs, difficulty in getting in and out of cars, difficulty in walking and limping and whining is displayed, hesitancy to walk across slippery surfaces, uncontrolled or accidental urination episodes, unusual growths detected on the pets body, changes in weight, eating habits and temperament and general weakness.

Upon discovering any of the above symptoms, the dog owner would then have several options to consider, the most important of which would be to immediately seek the advice of a vet. The vet would be able to diagnose the animal and make the necessary recommendations for the animal's future comfort. Researching the situation is another option the owner can seek out. There are a lot of materials available today to help anyone seeking information on any particular subject. There is also the recourse of consulting with other pet owners who may be going through the same thing. There are also a lot of support groups that have been set up by others, either going through the same predicament or are experienced enough to help the owner in as many ways as needed.

There is also a lot of equipment that are specifically designed to help pets with various types of disabilities.

Chapter 6:

Caring For Small Dogs

Synopsis

Small dogs are usually a very popular and convenient choice when it comes to choosing pets. However, it should be noted that because of their small size, they may need a little more care and other breeds.

The Difference With Smaller Dogs

The following are some reasons for specific actions that should be taken when considering the caring processes for a small dog:

- There is usually a need to provide higher quality foods as smaller dogs have corresponding smaller stomachs and equally small appetites. The owner will need to ensure the dog gets the right amount of nutrition and several small meals a day.
- As small dogs are more prone to dental problems, frequent brushing exercises should become a routine. Also, feeding the dog treats that will further help to clean their teeth and freshen their breath is encouraged.
- Smaller dogs usually have higher levels of energy to dispel, thus the need to provide the dog with an adequate amount of toys to keep it occupied is essential. This is important as a dog which is bored will tend to develop bad behavioral patterns that will eventually cause problems for the owner.
- Creating a safe place for the pet to feel secure and protected is also another consideration that needs to be given some serious thought. Smaller dogs have the capacity to be easily excited, thus expounding a lot of energy at any given time, therefore it needs a comfortable place to wind down after such a display of energy.
- Keeping a small dog warm is important as often smaller breeds don't come with thick fur coats to insulate them from the cold.

Chapter 7:

Caring For Big Dogs

Synopsis

There are a lot of reasons why owners opt to choosing a large dog as a companion. These may include the comfort element the dog is able to provide for keeping the owner and family safe, or it may be because a big dog is more likely to be able to be robust, playful and cuddly. However, along with its size, there are usually a few considerations that should be focused upon in order to provide well for the big dog.

Making Them Feel Happy

The following are some of the areas in which caring for big dogs would require some consideration and implementation:

- A good diet plan is very important, as it can be instrumental in providing the necessary nutritional support for the well being of the dog. The correct nutritional balance in the diet plan will provide the dog with healthier bones, stronger joints and promote proper growth patterns. The owner should also provide larger kibbles to ensure the dog develops the ideal chewing motions required for the size.
- Having a yearly medical checkup scheduled, is also important, as it will allow the vet to detect any medical conditions before they grow into problems for the big dog. The vet will be able to monitor for conditions such as hip dysplasia, osteoarthritis, bone cancer, hypothyroidism, heart disease, bloat and many other possible negative conditions that are usually not evident until it is in an advanced stage.
- Bigger dogs also need the adequate amount of exercise incorporated into their daily routine. Without this daily allowance, there is a possibility of the dog developing other medical conditions. Obesity is usually the prime contributor that is evident in a big dog that lack exercise.

- Having all the relevant grooming tools for the big dog is also important. Almost all dogs enjoy a good brushing sessions as it usually displays the attention and love the owner has for the pet.

Chapter 8:

The Dangers Of Not Caring For Your Best Friend

Synopsis

Having a dog and not caring for it will definitely bring forth a lot of negative repercussions. Some of which would be more damaging than others but all would be equally painful and traumatizing for the dog.

Never Neglect Your Pet!

Perhaps the most notable of all the problems that can arise from not caring well for a pet dog would be the eventual deterioration of its health. Most dogs that are not well cared for ultimately suffer from malnutrition and generally lack a proper diet. Even having any meals at all may not be the norm, as the neglect could be considerably high, thus creating the circumstances where even the most basic needs such as food are not met.

The lack of proper food and nutrition would then have other impacting results, such as health decline in the animal. The ill health of the animal can go unnoticed for long periods of time until the animal is so under nourished that the animal's internal organs become effected and start collapsing. When this happens the situation is usually dire and very little can be done to save the animal from certain death. In some cases, if the animal is rescued from such neglect in time, adequate measures can be taken to nurse it back to health, however in most scenarios the organs are so badly damaged that the only humane recourse would be to put the animal down.

Other consequences for not caring for the dog would lead to the dog becoming anti social and unable to respond well to any interactions from people. This could end up being a very dangerous situation though through no real fault of the animal. Simply not being used to any sort of attention would bring out its natural instinct to be on guard when attention is directed towards it.

Wrapping Up

Properly caring for your pet is very important and not something to be taken lightly. Your pet counts on you to provide it with the care it needs so don't let them down. Neglected dogs are very sad to see and it is painful to imagine what their lives must be like. Make sure your pet is happy as they would stop at nothing to do the same for you!