

## CARE INSTRUCTIONS FOR YOUR NEW PUPPY

Every effort has been made to assure that your puppy is healthy, happy and well socialized when you take him/her home. We cannot control what happens once a healthy puppy leaves us, but we can give you some information so that your puppy stays healthy and happy.

First your puppy has been eating Wellness Small Breed Puppy Food. I suggest soaking it at first to make sure they eat plenty as traveling can deplete their sugars and you want to make sure they eat well right away. Make sure he/she has access to food and fresh water at all times. (Please make sure your puppy is actually eating as sometimes the stress of changing environments will cause them to go off of their food and they then risk hypoglycemia.) In which case use Nutri-Cal.

To make sure they are eating enough, weighing them is important, especially on those puppies who are 2.5 pounds or less, I highly recommend that you have an accurate scale that weighs in ounces. A common food scale is usually sufficient for this. Not gaining is fine for a while, but losing weight can be fatal! It is common for them to weigh a little less in the morning than later in the day, just like it is for people, but if they continue to lose weight you must intervene.

Second, your puppy is used to sleeping with either siblings or mom and therefore body temperature is easier for them to regulate. When you take your puppy home, most likely they will be sleeping by themselves. Remember to keep them out of drafts, and in a warm place (comfortable for you). Puppies can catch colds and upper respiratory infections if they are chilled. Never feed a chilled puppy. Always warm them first. Only a touch of Nutri cal under the tongue until the puppy is fully warmed, then feed normally.

### Vaccines

Please keep in mind that your new puppy is NOT fully protecting from Parvo or Distemper until they have finished their full series of shots. When your puppy leaves here, they are up to date on shots but may still need one or two to complete the series. It is recommended that you do NOT take your puppy places that other dogs frequent until they have had their full series of shots. This includes your pet food stores, dog parks, groomers etc. The due date for the next shot will be noted on your shot record that is provided with your puppy. The labels from each vaccine given will be on your shot record as well. Please do NOT allow your vet to give another core shot until the date indicated on their shot record. No matter how many vaccines a puppy received before the age of 16 weeks they will not be fully

immune until 3 to 4 weeks after the 16 week old shot. It is also recommended that Rabies NOT be given at the same time as the 12 or 16 week core shot. Give the puppy a chance to build the immunities to the core shots first, then have your vet give the Rabies 3 to 4 weeks later. If you have any problems or questions please feel free to call and I will be happy to advise you.

Please read up on and study to familiarize yourself with Hypoglycemia. This can be life threatening if you do not recognize the symptoms immediately and treat.

### **House Breaking and Crate Training:**

We highly recommend Crate Training your puppy. This serves several purposes. It helps in the house breaking process and it keeps them safe and secure while they are not being supervised. A puppy is usually capable of holding their bladders and bowels through the night at about 12 weeks old. Until then, it is good to get your puppy used to their crates by putting them in the crate for short periods of time, first 10 or 15 minutes, then 30, then an hour and so on. They learn to love their crates and will willingly go in them to sleep even with the door open if they have access to them. A crate should only be big enough for them to comfortably stand and turn around in and stretch out. You can buy them slightly larger to allow for room to grow but too big and your puppy will just sleep on one side and do his business on the other. During the day when your puppy is sleeping, they should be in their crates and when they wake up, take them straight to the place that you want them to do their business whether it be a pad or outdoors. Tell them go potty or whatever term you want to use. This gets them used to going on command so you don't have to spend time out in the cold while they figure out what they are out there for. Once they have finished bring them indoors for play or to eat or drink. Supervise your puppy during play and when he gets tired, take him out again to see if he can go then put him back in his crate to sleep. Repeat the process when he wakes. Puppies usually have to go shortly after eating as well so that is also a good time to take them out.

### **Basic Grooming:**

Whether you want to keep your puppy in full coat throughout his/her life or you want to give him/her a cute little cut there are some basic grooming requirements that you can do at home and special attention must be paid to certain areas.

With any dog who has long hair, the hair under the tail on his bottom must be trimmed or you risk getting what we call a "poop plug". This is where their poop sticks to their hair and they will try to rub it off by scooting. This only makes it

worse and smashes it tighter against them. It dries, and creates a plug. Aside from being just plain gross, it can cause other problems and if not removed immediately, it will cause redness and swelling of the rectum and is very painful for the dog. Best to prevent this than to have to “treat” it so keep this hair cut very short.

Another thing is they eyes. Those little pony tails are very cute, but they need to be maintained. They will need to be combed out every day or 2 and replaced or you will wind up with a big fat knot of hair on their head. They are good for keeping the hair out of the eyes if you chose to keep their hair long, or even just keep the hair on their heads long. Be careful not to put them in so tight that they cannot close their eyes. This can cause dry eye. Whether you want long, or short, the hair around the eyes needs to be kept out of the eyes. I keep my dogs in a shorter coat and use a flea comb daily to comb the hair back away from the eyes and to keep the corner of the eye, where there may be dried debris clean. Hair rubbing on the eyes can cause irritation to the cornea and will need antibiotic drops or ointment to treat. Do NOT use a steroid on a scratched cornea!! Steroids can cause the cornea to rupture. Signs of eye irritation are squinting or keeping eyes closed, rubbing the eyes, or crusty or goopy eyes. Clean the eye area with a soft warm wash cloth to remove any debris and if you suspect a damaged or irritated cornea, see your vet for some antibiotic ointment or drops. It is a good idea to keep Terramycin on hand as shih tzu of all sizes are prone to eye irritation from hair and eye injuries because of those cute little flat faces.

Ears and tail are usually kept with some hair on them so they will need to be combed out regularly to prevent matting. If you keep your Imperial Shih Tzu in full coat, they will need to be combed out and brushed every few days. Comb all the way to the skin to make sure you have gotten all the little tangles. Check the ears for things like fox tails or burrs if your dog has been outdoors because if those enter the ear canal, they can do some damage which will need to be treated by your vet. Check toe nails to make sure they are even with the paw pads. Overgrown nails are uncomfortable and cause damage to the feet.

You may choose to take your Imperial Shih Tzu to the groomers for baths and hair cuts, or do it at home. Be careful not to get water in the ears and make sure you rinse completely. Comb them out before bathing so that you don't set mats in and use a good

conditioner to make it easier to comb out after bath. Blow dry thoroughly while combing.

More tips.....

### Potty Training

You can stop your shih tzu from eliminating on the floor with some consistent training. Crate training works best for shih tzus, according to Prairie View Shih Tzu Kennels. Shih tzu puppies like to keep their sleeping quarters clean, so they are unlikely to make a mess in their crate. Take them out first thing in the morning. Go out the same door and put them in the same spot in the yard. Give them five minutes. If they don't eliminate, take them inside and hold them for five minutes. Repeat the process again until your pup finally has success. Take him out after each meal, after playtime and before retiring at night. If you are training her to relieve on a pad, the same is true. Take her to the pad instead of outdoors. Keep the pad in the same place.

### Barking

The shih tzu pup is a little watchdog. She likes to be the alpha dog, but she also needs your companionship. Separation anxiety is common with shih tzu pups. The shih tzu also becomes bored easily, so she barks. The first step in changing this barking habit is to find out what is making her bark. If she barks because she is bored, make sure she is getting enough exercise and has toys to entertain her. Cesar Milan suggests that you step in front of her when she begins to bark. His trademark of calm, assertive energy is meant to create an invisible wall. Cesar also suggests using a sound, a look or a light physical correction when your puppy barks. If she starts again, repeat the correction and do not return to your activity until the barking stops.

### Chewing

Shih tzu puppies love to chew. Teething is irritating for your pup, so she has to chew to relieve the hurt. Redirect the chewing with plenty of chew toys. Sometimes during playtime, your pup will get excited and chew on your fingers and toes. You want to stop this habit before the sharp puppy teeth come in and start to hurt. When she chews on your fingers or toes, use a consistent verbal command and stop the play. Put her in her crate. She will learn that her chewing stops her playtime.

## Considerations

The shih tzu puppy is stubborn and loves being the pack leader. It is your responsibility to redirect her and teach her that you are the leader. Cesar Milan states that if you are frustrated, so is your pup. He says, "Animals don't follow unbalanced leaders." Obedience classes are another option, if you find that your shih tzu has habits that you can't control. Classes are also a good place for socialization skills. You want to encourage the good habits and discourage the bad habits.