

Food

Newborn puppies normally nurse from their mother every 2 hours for the first 2 weeks. Then every 4 hours for the next until 4 weeks old.

If puppies aren't nursing, they require puppy formula which is higher protein, fat, and mineral content than goat or cow milk; baby milk contains too much starch for puppies.

At 3-4 weeks old they can be offered puppy food. They should be fully weaned by 8-10 weeks old.



Temperature

Puppies under 3 weeks old are not able to regulate their body temperature. Therefore they require warmth from 17-25°C to maintain bodily functions like digestion.

If the room is cold where they are kept, heating pads can be used with a towel on top.

Monitoring is required with heating pads to ensure puppies don't get burned since they may not move off.

Normal body temperature is between 37.5°C to 39.2°C.



Environment

Both mother and puppies will appreciate a calm, safe, clean environment.

Mothers are protective over their puppies and may be aggressive towards humans or other pets if they are viewed as a threat. Move slowly and limit touching of the puppies.

The puppies should be close to food and water (also for the mother), pee pads or towels should be near by, and cleaning should be done every day.



Neonatal Puppy Care



Diseases

Puppies receive antibodies through their mother's milk for the first 6 weeks. After-which puppies are susceptible to many diseases due to their immature immune systems, and mild symptoms become fatal in a matter of days.

1. Parvovirus is often fatal to puppies. First symptoms may be lethargy, inappetence, and diarrhea. It is easily transmitted. There is no cure and survival rates with treatment are 68% to 92%.
2. Respiratory infections include Distemper virus, Bordetella (bacteria), Parainfluenza or others. The first symptoms often are nose or eye discharge, lethargy, or coughing. These are transmitted between dogs and are highly contagious. Treatment differs based on the puppy's symptoms and diagnosis.
3. Parasites include fleas, ticks, lice, mites, worms, and protozoa. They can cause itching, vomiting, diarrhea, and lethargy. Treatment is feasible with medications and grooming.



Preventing Disease

1. Vaccinate and deworm the mother before pregnancy.
2. Keep the environment clean.
3. Wash hands before and after being near the puppies
4. Limit human traffic and interactions.
5. Vaccinate puppies at 8 weeks old.
6. Keep puppies indoors.
7. Wait until the puppies are vaccinated to let them meet other pets.

