

Your Corgi

Caring for Your Faithful Companion



Corgis: What a Unique Breed!

Your dog is special! She's your best friend and companion and a source of unconditional love. Chances are that you chose her because you like corgis, and you expected her to have certain traits that would fit your lifestyle:

- Outgoing, friendly personality
- An excellent companion, family, or working dog
- Sensible watchdog
- Highly trainable and eager to please
- Devoted, loyal, and protective
- Small, but sturdy
- Athletic and agile

No dog is perfect, though, and you may have noticed these characteristics, too:

- Can easily become overweight if not exercised regularly
- Coat sheds heavily and needs to be brushed regularly
- Has a tendency to herd, including small children
- Might be bossy and overprotective if not socialized early and well
- Must be given mental stimulation or she barks and chews
- May be territorial when it comes to cats and other dogs
- Willful and strong-minded if you don't show strong leadership

Is it all worth it? Of course! She's got her own personality, and you love her for it.

About My Dog

Your dog's name: _____

Date of your pet's birth: _____

Veterinary hospital's name: _____

Veterinarian's name: _____

Phone number: _____

Website: _____

Your Corgi





Your Corgi's Health

We know that because you care so much about your dog, you want to take good care of him. That's why we'll tell you about the health concerns we'll be discussing with you over the life of your Pembroke Welsh corgi.

Many diseases and health conditions are genetic, meaning they're related to your pet's breed. That doesn't mean your dog will have these problems; it just means that he's more at risk than other dogs. We'll describe the most common issues for corgis to give you an idea of what may come up. Of course we can't cover every possibility here, so always check with us if you notice any unusual signs or symptoms.

This guide, and the health evaluation schedule it contains, helps us and you plan for your pet's health-care needs. At the end of the booklet, we've included a description of what you can do at home to keep your corgi looking and feeling his best. You'll know what to watch for, and we'll all feel better knowing that we're taking the best possible care of your pal.

Back Problems

Intervertebral disc disease (IVDD) is a common condition in dogs with long backs and short legs, which includes your friend. The disease is caused when the jelly-like cushion between one or more vertebrae slips or ruptures, causing the disc to press on the spinal cord. If your dog is suddenly unable or unwilling to jump up or go up stairs, is reluctant to move around, has a hunched back, cries out, or refuses to eat or go potty, she is likely in severe pain. She may even drag her back feet or be suddenly paralyzed and unable to get up or use her back legs. If you see symptoms, don't wait. Call us or an emergency clinic immediately! For less severe cases, rest and medication may resolve the problem. In many cases involving paralysis, we'll recommend surgical removal of the ruptured discs (within 24 hours of the onset of symptoms to get the best results).

As with so many other diseases, weight control helps to prevent this problem. You should also use ramps or steps from puppyhood on so that your dog doesn't spend a lifetime stressing her back by jumping on and off of the furniture.

Bleeding Disorder

Your corgi is prone to a blood clotting disorder called von Willebrand disease. We'll conduct diagnostic testing for blood clotting time before we perform surgery to check for this problem. This is an important test, as we may not know your pet has this disorder until severe bleeding occurs during surgery or after a serious injury.

Cancer

Cancer is a leading cause of death in older dogs. Your corgi will live longer than many other breeds and is likely to get cancer in his golden years. Half of all cancers are cured by surgically removing them, and some types are treatable with chemotherapy. Early detection is critical! We'll perform periodic diagnostic tests and look for lumps and bumps when we examine your pet. If he is overweight, we'll discuss exercise and diet because obesity is a risk factor for some types of cancer.

Degenerative Myelopathy

This neurologic condition causes weakness and poor nerve function in the hind legs. It affects corgis more frequently than other breeds. If your dog has this disease, she will become more and more weak and disabled in the hind legs and will eventually suffer from paralysis of her hindquarters, along with incontinence. Rehabilitation, acupuncture, exercise, and dietary supplements can be helpful, but there is no cure. There is a DNA test available for this disease, which helps us diagnose and treat it much earlier in your pet's life.

Dental Disease

Dental disease is the most common chronic problem in pets, affecting 80% of all dogs by age two. It starts with tartar build-up on the teeth and progresses to infection of the gums and roots of the teeth. If we don't prevent or treat dental disease, your buddy will lose his teeth and be in danger of damaging his kidneys, liver, heart, and joints. In fact, the disease could shorten your pet's life by one to three years! We'll clean your dog's teeth regularly and let you know what you can do at home to keep those pearly whites clean.

Eye Injuries

Because your corgi has eyeballs that bulge, she is more vulnerable to eye injuries. The cornea is the clear window at the front of the eye, and it can be damaged by a scrape or puncture, or it can develop an open sore and become infected. Don't let your dog ride in the car with her head out the window; this is a frequent cause of eye injuries. Call us right away if she has any problems with her eyes.



A damaged cornea is painful and should be treated immediately. Medication and sometimes surgery is required.

Infections

Corgis are susceptible to bacterial and viral infections—the same ones that all dogs can get—such as parvovirus, rabies, and distemper. Many of these infections are preventable through vaccination, which we'll administer to your dog based on the diseases we see in our area, his age, and other factors.

Kidney Stones

There are half a dozen different types of stones that can form in the kidney or in the bladder, and corgis are more likely to develop them than other breeds. We'll periodically test for the presence of kidney and bladder stones; they are painful! If your buddy has blood in her urine, can't urinate, or is straining to urinate, it is a medical emergency. Call us immediately!

Obesity

Obesity is a significant health problem in dogs and a serious disease that may cause arthritis, some types of cancer, back pain, and heart disease. Though it's tempting to give your pal food when he looks at you with those soulful eyes, you can love him to death with human food and treats.

Parasites

All kinds of worms and bugs can invade your dog's body, inside and out. Everything from fleas to ticks to ear mites can infest her skin and ears. Hookworms, roundworms, heartworms, and whipworms can get into her system in any number of ways: drinking unclean water, eating or stepping on feces, or being bitten by an infected mosquito.

Some of these parasites can be transmitted to you or a family member and are a serious concern for everyone. For your friend, these parasites can cause pain, discomfort, and even death, so it's important that we test for them on a regular basis. We'll also recommend preventative medication as necessary to keep her healthy.

Spaying or Neutering

One of the best things you can do for your corgi is to have him neutered (called spaying in females). In males, this means we surgically remove the testicles, and in females, it means we surgically remove the uterus and ovaries. Spaying or neutering decreases the likelihood of certain types of cancers and eliminates the possibility of your pet becoming pregnant or fathering unwanted puppies. Performing this surgery also gives us a chance, while your pet is under anesthesia, to evaluate and possibly address some of the diseases your corgi is likely to develop. This is convenient for you and easy for your friend. Don't worry; we'll let you know what specific problems we'll look for when the time arrives.

Taking Care of Your Corgi at Home

Much of what you can do to keep your dog happy and healthy is common sense, just like it is for people. Watch his diet, make sure he gets plenty of exercise, regularly brush his teeth and coat, and call us or a pet emergency hospital when something seems unusual (see “What to Watch For” below). Be sure to adhere to the schedule of examinations and vaccinations that we recommend for him. This is when we’ll give him the necessary “check-ups” and test for diseases and conditions that are common in corgis. Another very important step in caring for your pet is signing up for pet health insurance. There will certainly be medical tests and procedures he will need throughout his life and pet health insurance will help you cover those costs.

Routine Care, Diet, and Exercise

Build her routine care into your schedule to help your corgi live longer, stay healthy, and be happier during her lifetime. We cannot overemphasize the importance of a proper diet and exercise routine. Overweight corgis are more prone to cancer, back pain, and other problems.

- ✓ Brush her coat at least weekly.
- ✓ Brush her teeth at least three times a week.
- ✓ Keep your dog’s diet consistent, and don’t give her people food.
- ✓ Feed a high-quality diet appropriate for her age.
- ✓ Exercise your dog regularly, and don’t overdo exercise.

What to Watch For

Give us a call immediately if you notice any of these signs in your corgi:

- ✓ Vomiting or chronic diarrhea
- ✓ Weight loss or weight gain
- ✓ Lumps, bumps, and moles
- ✓ Lethargy, mental dullness, or excessive sleeping
- ✓ Fearfulness, aggression, or other behavioral changes
- ✓ Limping or lameness
- ✓ Hair loss
- ✓ Coughing or difficulty breathing
- ✓ Episodes of weakness
- ✓ Pot-belly appearance
- ✓ Inability or straining to urinate
- ✓ Cloudiness, redness, itching or any other abnormality involving the eyes
- ✓ Itchy skin (scratching or licking)
- ✓ Change in appetite or water consumption
- ✓ Scratching or shaking the head, or discharge in the ear
- ✓ Unwillingness to jump up or go up stairs
- ✓ Sudden inability or unwillingness to jump, go up stairs, or walk
- ✓ Weak hind legs

Partners in Health Care

DNA testing is a rapidly advancing field with tests being developed to help diagnose conditions before they become problems for your friend. For the most up-to-date information on DNA and other screening tests available for your pal, visit www.Genesis4Pets.com.

Your Pembroke Welsh corgi counts on you to take good care of him, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that he lives a long and healthy life. Our goal is to ensure that your pal has the best health care possible: health care that's based on his breed, lifestyle, and age. Please contact us when you have questions or concerns:

Health Evaluation Schedule for Corgis

Now that you’ve read about the health issues we’ll be monitoring, we wanted to give you an at-a-glance summary of what services we’ll provide to keep your corgi happy and healthy. It may seem like your pet is prone to quite a few problems, but don’t worry; we’ll take the lead in keeping her healthy for a lifetime. We’ll review these health-care steps with you in more detail, but please feel free to ask questions or voice concerns at any time.

Studies to determine the frequency of inheritance or disease in this breed either have not been completed or are inconclusive. There is a general consensus among canine genetic researchers and veterinary practitioners that the conditions we’ve described herein have a significant rate of incidence and/or impact in this breed.



How We'll Keep Your Corgi Healthy

	(✓)	Age	Services We'll Provide	Corgi-Specific Problems We're Looking For
<i>Puppy to Adolescent: Infant to 17 in People Years</i>	<input type="radio"/>	6–8 weeks	Head-to-tail physical examination Internal parasite test and/or deworming Vaccinations Discuss socialization and at-home puppy care	Heart murmurs Hernias Proper dental alignment Parasites
	<input type="radio"/>	10–12 weeks	Brief physical examination Heartworm prevention Vaccinations Discuss caring for your dog's teeth at home	Proper growth rate Behavioral problems Parasites
	<input type="radio"/>	14–16 weeks	Brief physical examination Internal parasite check Vaccinations Discuss obedience training, nail trimming, and grooming Schedule spay/neuter surgery	Adult teeth coming in properly Skin infections Tonsillitis Parasites
	<input type="radio"/>	4–6 months	Head-to-tail physical examination Presurgical diagnostics for spay or neuter surgery Blood clotting time	Internal organ health prior to spay/neuter surgery von Willebrand disease
	<input type="radio"/>	1 year	Head-to-tail physical examination Heartworm test Internal parasite check Vaccinations Discuss diet, weight, and exercise	Excessive weight gain Back pain Behavioral problems Heartworms and other parasites
<i>Adult: 18 to 39 in People Years</i>	<input type="radio"/>	2 years through 7 years	Head-to-tail physical examination Internal organ health evaluation DNA test for degenerative myelopathy Internal parasite check Heartworm test Vaccinations	Dental disease Healthy weight Back pain Internal organ health and function Kidney stones Degenerative myelopathy Heartworms and other parasites
<i>Senior: 40 to 59 in People Years</i>	<input type="radio"/>	8 years through 10 years	Head-to-tail physical examination Senior internal organ health evaluation Heart health check Internal parasite check Heartworm test Vaccinations	Dental disease Healthy weight Back pain Arthritis Internal organ health and function Kidney stones Heart disease Heartworms and other parasites
<i>Senior: 40 to 59 in People Years</i>	<input type="radio"/>	11 years and older	Head-to-tail physical examination Golden years internal organ health evaluation Cancer screen Glaucoma screen Heart health check Internal parasite check Heartworm test Vaccinations	Dental disease Healthy weight Back pain Arthritis Internal organ health and function Kidney stones Signs of cancer Glaucoma Heart disease Heartworms and other parasites

Note: We recommend twice-a-year examinations so that we may diagnose problems sooner. This approach also gives you the budget-friendly option of spreading preventive testing over two visits rather than one.