

# Your **Miniature Schnauzer**

Caring for Your Faithful Companion



## About **My Dog**

Your Miniature Schnauzer's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of your pet's birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Veterinary hospital's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Veterinarian's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Miniature Schnauzer

## **Miniature Schnauzers: 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 miniature schnauzers, and you expected her to have certain traits that would fit your lifestyle:

- Hypoallergenic coat sheds very little
- Good watchdog with a loud bark
- Intelligent and reliable
- Excellent companion and family dog
- Friendly and willing to please

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

- Coat requires regular grooming
- Wary of strangers, with a tendency to vocalize
- Does not tolerate harsh reprimands or negative-reinforcement training
- Easily bored and will find her own fun
- Prone to attack other small animals, including cats

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

## **Your Miniature Schnauzer'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 schnauzer.

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 miniature schnauzers 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, along with the health evaluation schedule in this booklet, 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 schnauzer 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.

### *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 her teeth and be in danger of damaging her kidneys, liver, heart, and joints. In fact, your schnauzer's life span may be cut short 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.

### *Diabetes*

If your miniature schnauzer has diabetes, it means he has a problem regulating how his body processes sugars and carbohydrates. It is a serious condition and one that is important to diagnose and treat as early as possible. Symptoms include increased eating, drinking, and urination, along with weight loss. If he shows signs, we will do lab tests to determine if he has this condition and discuss treatment options with you.

### *Ear Infections*

Schnauzers often get ear infections, which are painful and annoying. Infections can be caused bacteria, yeast, and allergies. The earlier we catch this, the less discomfort and pain she suffers. Be sure to call us if you notice that she is scratching or shaking her head, there is a foul odor about the ears, or her ears seem painful to the touch. By monitoring for ear infections and treating them early, we also reduce the likelihood of ear-drum damage that can lead to deafness. We'll pay special attention to her ears each time we see her. No one likes an earache!

### *Eye Problems*

Your friend is prone to several eye diseases, including cataracts, dry eye, and glaucoma. Cataracts and glaucoma eventually lead to blindness. With cataracts, surgery is an option to restore his sight. Many dogs adjust well to losing their sight and get along just fine. Dry eye is a condition where the tear glands don't product enough tears to keep the eye moist, and it results in sores and infections. Ouch! If you notice anything unusual at all about your pet's eyes, call us immediately! Dry eye and glaucoma are extremely painful, and glaucoma is a medical emergency and must be treated immediately.

### *Heart Disease*

Your schnauzer is more likely than other dogs to inherit several different kinds of heart disease, including mitral valve disease (where the valve wears out), sick sinus syndrome (where a part of the electrical system of the heart that signals the heart to beat doesn't work properly), and pulmonic stenosis (where there is a partial obstruction of blood flow in the heart). We'll do annual heart health checks, but let us know if your dog is coughing or seems weak. If heart disease is diagnosed early, we may be able to prescribe medications that could prolong your pet's life for many years. Proper dental care and weight control also go a long way in preventing heart disease.

### *Infections*

In addition to ear infections, miniature schnauzers are susceptible to other 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, her 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 miniature schnauzers 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 his urine, can't urinate, or is straining to urinate, it is a medical emergency. Call us immediately!



### *Liver Disease*

Your schnauzer is more likely than other dogs to have a liver disorder called portosystemic shunt, which is a debilitating, genetically linked disease that keeps her liver from working properly. To test for this problem, we'll conduct a liver function test in addition to a standard pre-anesthetic panel every time your dog goes under anesthesia. If she develops symptoms, we'll test her blood and conduct an ultrasound scan of her liver and bladder. We may recommend surgery, but it's more likely that we'll treat your friend with a special diet and medication.

### *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.

### *Pancreatitis*

Schnauzers are prone to develop pancreatitis, which is an inflammation of the pancreas, the organ that produces digestive enzymes and insulin. Symptoms include vomiting, diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, lethargy, and dehydration. This is a very serious disease which may require intensive care, pain management, and fluid support. Please call us or an emergency clinic if symptoms develop.

### *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.

### *Skin Problems*

Your pal is especially susceptible to different kinds of skin infections and diseases. He may get "hay fever" just like humans, which is an allergy to pollen, mold, mildew, or dust. Another type of skin infection is caused by yeast (*Malassezia dermatitis*). When it infects the ears, it causes itching, redness, and an accumulation of brown waxy discharge. On the skin, it leads to greasy, hairless areas, especially on the neck and throat, with a characteristic yeasty odor. He is also likely to get different kinds of skin lumps, and all of these problems may make your pet itchy and uncomfortable. The earlier you call to have skin problems checked out, the less likely it is that you'll end up with an itchy, bald, smelly dog to take care of. You don't want that, and neither does he!

### *Spaying or Neutering*

One of the best things you can do for your miniature schnauzer is to have her spayed (called neutering in males). 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 schnauzer 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.

### *Thyroid Problems*

Mini schnauzers are prone to a common condition, called hypothyroidism, where the body doesn't make enough thyroid hormone. Signs can include dry skin and coat, hair loss, susceptibility to other skin diseases, weight gain, lethargy, mental dullness, sleeping excessively, fearfulness, aggression, or other behavioral changes. We'll do a blood screening test annually to test for the disease. Treatment is usually simple: replacement hormones given in the form of a pill.

## Taking Care of Your Miniature Schnauzer 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 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 miniature schnauzers. 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 schnauzer live longer, stay healthy, and be happier during her lifetime! Watch her diet, and make sure she gets regular exercise. Overweight mini schnauzers are more prone to cancer, heart disease, and other problems. 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.
- ✓ Have your dog groomed regularly.

### *What to Watch For*

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

- ✓ 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, discharge in the ear, or foul smell about the ear

## 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](http://www.Genesis4Pets.com).

Your schnauzer 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 Miniature Schnauzers

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 schnauzer 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 Miniature Schnauzer Healthy

*Puppy to Adolescent:  
Infant to 17 in People Years*

*Adult: 18 to 39 in  
People Years*

*Senior: 40 to 59  
in People Years*

*Senior: 40 to 59  
in People Years*

| <input checked="" type="radio"/> | Age                      | Services We'll Provide   | Miniature Schnauzer-Specific Problems We're Looking For  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/>            | 6-8 weeks                | Head-to-tail physical examination<br>Internal parasite test and/or deworming<br>Vaccinations<br>Discuss socialization and at-home puppy care   | Heart murmurs<br>Hernias<br>Proper dental alignment<br>Retained testicle<br>Parasites  |
| <input type="radio"/>            | 10-12 weeks              | Brief physical examination<br>Heartworm prevention<br>Vaccinations<br>Discuss caring for your dog's teeth and ears at home   | Proper growth rate<br>Behavioral problems<br>Parasites   |
| <input type="radio"/>            | 14-16 weeks              | Brief physical examination<br>Vaccinations<br>Internal parasite check<br>Discuss obedience training, nail trimming, and grooming<br>Schedule spay/neuter surgery   | Adult teeth coming in properly<br>Skin infections<br>Tonsillitis<br>Parasites  |
| <input type="radio"/>            | 4-6 months               | Head-to-tail physical examination<br>Presurgical diagnostics for spay or neuter surgery, including bile acids testing  | Retained testicle<br>Internal organ health prior to spay/neuter surgery<br>Liver disease   |
| <input type="radio"/>            | 1 year                   | Head-to-tail physical examination<br>Diabetes screen<br>Heartworm test<br>Internal parasite check<br>Vaccinations<br>Discuss diet, weight, and exercise  | Excessive weight gain<br>Skin infections, lumps<br>Ear infections<br>Behavioral problems<br>Diabetes<br>Heartworms and other parasites   |
| <input type="radio"/>            | 2 years through 8 years  | Head-to-tail physical examination<br>Internal organ health evaluation<br>Diabetes screen<br>Glaucoma screen<br>Tear test<br>Heart health check<br>Internal parasite check<br>Heartworm test<br>Vaccinations  | Dental disease<br>Skin infections, lumps<br>Ear infections<br>Healthy weight<br>Internal organ health and function<br>Kidney and bladder stones<br>Diabetes<br>Glaucoma<br>Dry eye<br>Heart disease<br>Heartworms and other parasites  |
| <input type="radio"/>            | 9 years through 11 years | Head-to-tail physical examination<br>Senior internal organ health evaluation<br>Diabetes screen<br>Glaucoma screen<br>Tear test<br>Cancer screen<br>Thyroid testing<br>Heart health check<br>Internal parasite check<br>Heartworm test<br>Vaccinations       | Dental disease<br>Skin infections, lumps<br>Ear infections<br>Cataracts<br>Internal organ health and function<br>Kidney and bladder stones<br>Diabetes<br>Glaucoma<br>Dry eye<br>Signs of cancer<br>Thyroid function<br>Heart disease<br>Heartworms and other parasites              |
| <input type="radio"/>            | 12 years and older       | Head-to-tail physical examination<br>Golden years internal organ health evaluation<br>Diabetes screen<br>Glaucoma screen<br>Tear test<br>Cancer screen<br>Thyroid testing<br>Heart health check<br>Internal parasite check<br>Heartworm test<br>Vaccinations | Dental disease<br>Ear infections<br>Skin infections, lumps<br>Arthritis<br>Cataracts<br>Internal organ health and function<br>Kidney and bladder stones<br>Diabetes<br>Glaucoma<br>Dry eye<br>Signs of cancer<br>Thyroid function<br>Heart disease<br>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.