

INTERNAL PARASITES: When the dog is in for his regular check-up, your Veterinarian will probably suggest an internal parasite (worm) exam. If positive, your Vet will recommend an appropriate worming regimen. Many monthly heartworm preventatives will also prevent most internal parasites.

EXTERNAL PARASITES: Fleas and ticks are not only a nuisance to the dog, causing itching and hair loss, but can also cause serious health problems like Anemia and Lyme Disease. Always keep in mind that if you see fleas on your dog, there are also fleas in the dog's living space. So treating the dog alone will do little good. You must treat the house and yard as well. Ask your Veterinarian to recommend the appropriate flea and tick products for you.

HEARTWORM PREVENTATIVE: Heartworm Disease is also a big problem in our area. The dog contracts heartworms by being bitten by an affected mosquito. Heartworms can cause the dog great physical stress, health problems, and ultimately death. The treatment for Heartworms is also risky. But Heartworm Disease is relatively easy to prevent. So prevention is the key. Ask your Veterinarian to recommend a daily or monthly Heartworm Preventative medication, and use it year-round. And because no preventative is 100% effective, make sure that you have your dog tested for Heartworm annually.

REMEMBER TO SCHEDULE YOUR PET'S ANNUAL PHYSICAL EXAM.

IT'S IMPORTANT!

CARING FOR YOUR GREAT DANE

By Georgia
Alyce Thomas



Mid-Atlantic Great Dane Rescue League, Inc.

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FEEDING: Select a high-quality dry dog food. Avoid generic brands and any foods that contain high protein levels, food coloring, sugar, excessive salt, and other unnecessary (and potentially harmful) additives. You may determine the correct amount to feed by the directions on the bag, and by later adjusting the amount according to your dog's resulting weight and condition. Warm water can be added to dry dog food to make it more palatable. Adding table scraps and other goodies is unnecessary, and can actually cause digestive upset or nutritional imbalance. Dogs should be fed twice a day to help prevent hunger-tension and Gastric Torsion (Bloat). Do not free-feed your dog, as it promotes house-soiling and obesity. Give your dog about 15 minutes to eat, and then pick-up his bowl. He will soon learn to eat his scheduled meals. Dogs should generally be fed at the same time each day, and in the same quiet place, preferably a crate. However, to prevent the dog from being too possessive of his food, you should occasionally practice adding food to his bowl, and holding the bowl while he is eating. If you have questions about feeding, nutrition, or specific brands, please contact your Veterinarian.

COAT CARE: Your Great Dane should be brushed and bathed regularly (once a week is fine) to keep him fresh and clean. Avoid excessive bathing as it will dry the skin. Dogs should be bathed with shampoos formulated especially for their skin. Do not use human products. The dog must be rinsed thoroughly to prevent itching and flaking. Take care not to get shampoo in the dog's eyes or ears.

NAIL CARE: If a dog does not receive adequate nail care, his nails can grow so long that they curve around and grow back into the foot pads, causing him a great deal of pain. Even moderately long nails can split or catch on objects, and cause the dog discomfort. Therefore it is very important to either learn to trim (or grind) your dog's nails yourself, or be sure that they are trimmed regularly by your Veterinarian or Dog Groomer.

EAR CARE: Dog's ears should be cleaned regularly to prevent dirty build-up, ear parasites, and infection. Ask your Veterinarian to recommend an ear cleansing solution, and to show you how to safely clean your dog's ears.

TEETH CARE: Many Veterinarians are recommending that dog owners brush their dog's teeth regularly to help prevent tartar build-up. There are several canine dental products (toothpaste and solutions) that are available to the dog owner. Of course, brushing at home, as with humans, is only part of the dental care that a dog should receive. The dog's teeth should be checked by your Veterinarian at his regular check-ups, and should be professionally cleaned as needed.

SECURITY: All dogs should be confined to the house or secure yard when unattended. All fences should be checked regularly to ensure that they are in good repair, and all doors and gates should be kept securely latched and/or locked. When outside of this protected environment, the dog should

always be kept on leash. In this way, he is protected from being lost, hit by a car, or otherwise injured. He should **always** be kept on leash. In this way, he is protected from being lost, hit by a car, or otherwise injured.

IDENTIFICATION: All dogs should wear a buckle collar and identification tags at all times. This collar should be checked frequently to make sure that it isn't getting too tight - especially on a fast-growing Dane puppy. Slip collars (chain or fabric) are often used for training, but should never be left on an un-supervised dog. Many dogs have strangled to death when their slip collar has become caught on furniture or a fence. Identification tags are important because any dog, no matter how well cared for or well-trained, can become separated from his owner. A permanent identification tattoo also provides your dog with protection should he lose his collar and tag.

VACCINATIONS: State laws require that all dogs receive a Rabies vaccination before they are six months of age, and annually thereafter. Many rabies vaccines are now good for three years and are allowable by law. Dogs should also be inoculated against other canine diseases like Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptosirosis, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus, Coronavirus, Lyme Disease, and Kennel Cough. Many vaccination programs require a series of injections during the puppy stage, and then boosters either every six months or annually.