

CARING FOR ORPHANED PUPS

1. Use only Esbilac formula - it is not cheap, but is the best and the others will fall short. Do not change formulas quickly, if you have to change formulas, do it gradually over several days. Mix the formula as the directions tell you with water. Do not mix with milk, goats milk, etc - even if someone has told you this is a great idea. Do not use homemade formula as it is really hard to make sure it is nutritionally complete and will usually go bad prior to using it all. Formula is only good for 12 to 24 hours after you make it and only if it is kept cold

2. Scrub and boil the bottles and nipples EVERY SINGLE DALY - without fail. Do not leave formula in the bottles out of the refrigerator longer than you are using them. Ideally you should have a separate bottle and nipple for each pup. The small size human baby bottles are usually good for larger pups since the veterinary ones are really small and the nipples don't fit into most pups mouths well.

3. Warm formula prior to using it. Either by holding under hot water or in a microwave for a few seconds at a time. If you microwave, shake REALLY well to avoid hot spots that can burn the pup's mouth.

4. 10 day old pups still need to be fed every 4 hours and possibly more frequently if they seem hungry before four hours is up. Eventually you can increase the intervals between feedings, but do not jump the gun. These are infants and need to be fed as such.

5. Every pup needs to be stimulated to pee and poop at each feeding. Use a really soft rag and warm water to stimulate pee and poop. Pups should pee everytime (if they don't they may be dehydrated) and poop at least once daily and more likely will poop several times daily. If a pup has not pooped in a day, you need to see a vet to see if the pup is constipated. If the pup doesn't pee with each feeding, feed it formula more often and if this doesn't fix the problem right away, see a vet to see if the pup is dehydrated.

6. Puppies need to be kept clean. This means lots of baths (remember the mom would have licked the pups all the time to keep them clean). Use a gentle, non-medicated puppy or baby shampoo. Don't get water in the ears or soap in the eyes. Use warm water. Dry well and warm the pups up very quickly. Don't be suprised if you are washing the pups more than once daily.

7. Keep pups in a warm location. Keep a heating pad set to low (never set above low) under the bedding so it will gently warm the bedding, but the pups cannot get to the heating pad itself.

8. Offer high quality dry puppy food and small dish of water somewhere between 4 and 5 weeks of age. They will mostly walk in it and make a mess, but it will eventually dawn on them that this is food.

9. Weaning will happen somewhere between 6 and 8 weeks of age. Don't rush this and make sure you have seen a pup both eat and drink before you stop giving the bottle.

10. Deworm with pyrantel at 3, 6, and 9 weeks of age. 1 ml per 8 lbs of pup. If the pups are less than 8 lbs, go ahead and give 1 ml anyway.

11. Start vaccines at 6 weeks of age since they won't have any maternal antibodies from nursing. Be really careful not to expose them to any dog diseases until they are fully vaccinated.

12. If a puppy seems lethargic or not quite right, get it to a vet **RIGHT AWAY**. These guys do not have the reserve to hang on until the morning or the end of a work day, etc. Bottle fed pups have a poor survival rate, but this is usually because folks don't feed them correctly and don't see vet care **ASAP**. Remember that they are infants and lack the benefit of their mother. Their care is hard and may often be expensive, but they can and will survive if handled correctly.

10/02/07