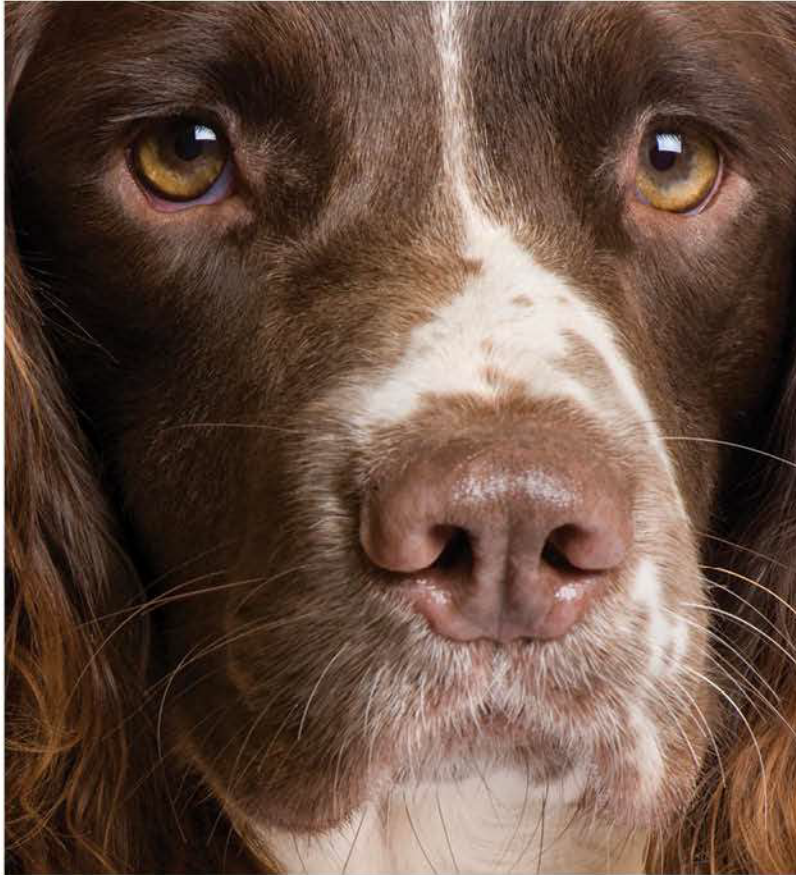


Your English Springer Spaniel

Caring for Your Faithful Companion



TheHappyPetVet.com
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Your English Springer Spaniel

English Springer Spaniels: What a Unique Breed!

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

- Excellent family dog, watchdog, and hunting dog
- Eager to please and responsive to training
- Bouncy, cheerful, loyal, and enthusiastic
- Even temper and gentle disposition
- Energetic, active, and athletic
- Good with children

However, no dog is perfect! You may have also noticed these characteristics:

- Needs a lot of activity and mental stimulation to avoid boredom vices
- Exhibits signs of separation anxiety if left alone too much
- Needs frequent attention from her family
- Can be rambunctious and rowdy, especially as a younger dog
- May have a tendency to bark excessively
- Can have an unstable temperament if not bred properly, including excessive barking, hyperactivity, and aggression

Is it all worth it? Of course! She's full of personality and you love her for it! This exuberant and fun-loving dog has high exercise needs, but also loves to spend time relaxing with the ones who love her best; an ideal companion for an active family.

The English Springer Spaniel originated in England during the early 1800s and was bred as a flushing and retrieving gun dog. This athletic and highly active breed enjoys canine



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General Health Information for your English Springer Spaniel

Dental Disease

Dental disease is the most common chronic problem in pets, affecting 80% of all dogs by age two. Unfortunately, your English Springer Spaniel is more likely than other dogs to have problems with her teeth. Dental disease 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 may lose her teeth and be in danger of damage to her kidneys, liver, heart, and joints. In fact, your Spaniel's life span may even 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.

Infections

English Springer Spaniels are susceptible to bacterial and viral infections—the same ones that all dogs can get—such as **parvo**, **rabies**, and **distemper**. Many of these infections are preventable through vaccination, which we will recommend based on her age, the diseases we see in our area, and other factors.

Obesity

Obesity can be a significant health problem in English Springer Spaniels. It is a serious disease that may cause or worsen joint problems, metabolic and digestive disorders, back pain, and heart disease. Though it's tempting to give your pal food when she looks at you with those soulful eyes, you can "love her to death" with leftover people food and doggie treats. Instead, give her a hug, brush her fur or teeth, play a game with her, or perhaps take her for a walk. She'll feel better, and so will you!

Parasites

All kinds of worms and bugs can invade your Springer's body, inside and out. Everything from fleas and ticks to ear mites can infest her skin and ears. Hookworms, roundworms, heartworms, and whipworms can get into her system in a number of ways: drinking unclean water, walking on contaminated soil, 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 canine 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 preventive medication as necessary to keep her healthy.

Spay or Neuter

One of the best things you can do for your Springer Spaniel is to have her spayed (neutered for males). In females, this means we surgically remove the ovaries and usually the uterus, and in males, it means we surgically remove the testicles. 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 identify and address some of the diseases your dog is likely to develop. For example, if your pet needs hip X-rays or a puppy tooth extracted, this would be a good time—it's more convenient for you and easier on your friend too. Routine blood testing prior

sports such as agility, flyball, and dock diving. A true diplomat, she'll be friendly with children and pets and even give strangers a chance, too. Springer Spaniels are intelligent, obedient, and extroverted. The English Springer Spaniel is a generally healthy breed with an average lifespan of 12-15 years.

Your English Springer Spaniel's Health

We know that because you care so much about your dog, you want to take good care of her. That is why we have summarized the health concerns we will be discussing with you over the life of your Springer Spaniel. By knowing about health concerns specific to English Springer Spaniels, we can tailor a preventive health plan to watch for and hopefully prevent some predictable risks.

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

This guide contains general health information important to all canines as well as the most important genetic predispositions for English Springer Spaniels. This information helps you and us together plan for your pet's unique medical needs. At the end of the booklet, we have also included a description of what you can do at home to keep your Springer looking and feeling her best. You will know what to watch for, and we will all feel better knowing that we're taking the best possible care of your pal.

to surgery also helps us to identify and take precautions against common problems that increase anesthetic or surgical risk. Don't worry; we'll discuss the specific problems we will be looking for when the time arrives.

Genetic Predispositions for English Springer Spaniels

Eye Problems

Not many things have as dramatic an impact on your dog's quality of life as the proper functioning of his eyes. Unfortunately, English Springer Spaniels can inherit or develop a number of different eye conditions, some of which may cause blindness if not treated right away, and most of which can be extremely painful! We will evaluate his eyes at every examination to look for any signs for concern.

- **Glaucoma**, an eye condition that affects English Springer Spaniels and people too, is an extremely painful disease that rapidly leads to blindness if left untreated. Symptoms include squinting, watery eyes, bluing of the cornea (the clear front part of the eye), and redness in the whites of the eyes. Pain is rarely noticed by pet owners though it is frequently there and can be severe. People who have certain types of glaucoma often report it feels like being stabbed in the eye with an ice pick! Yikes! In advanced cases, the eye may look enlarged or swollen like it's bulging. We'll perform an annual glaucoma screening to diagnose and start treatment as early as possible. Glaucoma is a medical emergency. If you see symptoms, don't wait to call us, go to an emergency clinic!
- **Cataracts** are a common cause of blindness in older Springer Spaniels. We'll watch for the lenses of his eyes to become more opaque—meaning they look cloudy instead of clear—when we examine him. Many dogs adjust well to losing their vision and get along just fine. Surgery to remove cataracts and restore sight may also be an option.
- **Progressive retinal atrophy (PRA)** is an inherited disease in which the eyes are genetically programmed to go blind. Unfortunately, English Springer Spaniels are a bit more likely than other dogs to have this condition. PRA is not painful, but also not curable. In dogs with this gene, early symptoms such as night blindness or dilated pupils generally begin around three to five years of age. A genetic test is available for this condition.

Heart Disease

Some breeds, like your Springer Spaniel, can be born with a variety of heart defects. Most affect the structure of the heart's dividing wall or the vessels of the heart. Defects can also cause problems with heart valve function or the electrical signals that control the heartbeat. Because of the significant risk of heart disease in this breed, we'll pay special attention to his heart during each examination. Special testing will be recommended if we hear a heart murmur or if you notice any unusual symptoms such as tiring easily, coughing, a swollen belly, or fainting.

- Springer Spaniels are susceptible to a condition called **patent ductus arteriosus**, or PDA, in which a small vessel that carries blood between two parts of the heart does not close as it should shortly after birth. This results in too much blood being carried to the lungs, causing fluid build-up and strain on the heart. Outward signs may be mild or severe, including coughing, fatigue during exercise, weight loss, shortness of breath, and weakness in the hind limbs. We listen for a specific type of heart murmur to diagnose this problem during your pet's examinations. If your pal has this condition, we may recommend surgery to close the problematic vessel.

Diabetes

Diabetes mellitus is a fairly common disease in dogs. Any breed can be affected, but Springers have an above average incidence. Dogs with diabetes are unable to regulate the metabolism of sugars in their bodies and require daily insulin injections. Diabetes 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 conduct lab tests to determine if he has this condition and discuss treatment options with you. Treatment requires a serious commitment of time and resources. Well-regulated diabetic dogs today have the same life expectancy as other canines.

Ear Infections

Allergies, swimming, overgrowth of hair in the ear canals, and accumulation of earwax can all predispose your dog to ear infections, which are painful and annoying. Goldens are very often afflicted by allergies, which can cause itching and inflammation in the ears and elsewhere. The earlier we diagnose and treat these ailments, the less discomfort and pain your pet will suffer. Be sure to call us if you notice him scratching or shaking his head, a foul odor from the ears, or if his ears seem painful to the touch. By monitoring for ear infections and treating them early, we also reduce the likelihood of eardrum damage that can lead to deafness. Most ear infections tend to recur until we work together to control the underlying cause.

Bleeding Disorders

There are several types of inherited bleeding disorders that occur in dogs. They range in severity from very mild to very severe. Many times a pet seems normal until a serious injury occurs or surgery is performed, and then severe bleeding can result. English Springer Spaniels are particularly prone to some relatively rare diseases of the blood.

- **Hemolytic anemia** and **thrombocytopenia** occur when the immune system goes haywire and starts attacking the pet's own red blood cells or platelets. If the immune system destroys red blood cells, your dog quickly becomes anemic, weak, and lethargic. His gums will look whitish or yellow instead of a normal bright pink color. If the immune system destroys platelets, his blood won't clot properly and he'll have bruises or abnormal bleeding. We'll perform diagnostic testing for blood clotting to

check for these problems before we perform any surgeries. To slow or stop the immune system's destruction of cells, we'll prescribe steroids and other immune-suppressive drugs. Sometimes an emergency transfusion of red blood cells or platelets is needed.

- **Von Willebrand's disease** is a blood clotting disorder frequently found in English Springer Spaniels. We'll conduct diagnostic testing for blood clotting times or a specific DNA blood test for Von Willebrand's disease and other similar disorders to check for this problem before we perform surgery.

PFK Deficiency

Phosphofructokinase (PFK) Deficiency, also known as Tauri disease or glycogen storage disease, is a genetic defect that affects the body's metabolism of glucose. Symptoms appear anywhere from 2-3 months to several years of age, and include exercise intolerance, anemia, fever, and muscle disease. Fortunately, a DNA test is available to help diagnose this life-limiting disease. Because your English Springer Spaniel is at risk for PFK Deficiency, we will keep a watchful eye on him during his early years.

Cancer

Cancer is a leading cause of death among dogs in their golden years. Your English Springer Spaniel is a bit more prone to certain kinds of cancer starting at a younger age. Many cancers are curable by surgical removal, and some types are treatable with chemotherapy. Early detection is critical! We'll do periodic blood tests and look for lumps and bumps at each exam.

Neurologic Problems

Several neurologic diseases can afflict English Springer Spaniels. Symptoms of neurological problems can include seizures, imbalance, tremors, weakness, or excessive sleeping. If you notice any of these symptoms, please seek immediate veterinary care.

Epilepsy

There are three types of **seizures** in dogs: reactive, secondary, and primary. Reactive seizures are caused by the brain's reaction to a metabolic problem like low blood sugar, organ failure, or a toxin. Secondary seizures are the result of a brain tumor, stroke, or trauma. If no other cause can be found, the disease is called primary or idiopathic epilepsy. This problem is often an inherited condition, and English Springer Spaniels are commonly afflicted. If your friend is prone to seizures, episodes will usually begin between six months and three years of age. An initial diagnostic workup may help find the cause. Lifelong medication is usually necessary to help keep seizures under control with periodic blood testing required to monitor side effects and efficacy. If your dog has a seizure, carefully prevent him from injuring himself, but don't try to control his mouth or tongue. It won't help him, and he may bite you accidentally! Note the length of the seizure, and call us or an emergency hospital.

Rage Syndrome

Rage syndrome, also called Springer Rage, is a dangerous form of dominance aggression that is thought to be a form of

epilepsy. English Springer Spaniels with this condition have episodes of extreme aggression, often attacking their owners. Affected dogs may respond positively to anti-seizure medications, but they should never be used for breeding!

Hip and Elbow Dysplasia

Both hips and elbows are at risk for **dysplasia**, an inherited disease that causes the joints to develop improperly and results in arthritis. Stiffness in your Springer Spaniel's elbows or hips may become a problem for him, especially as he matures. You may notice that he begins to show lameness in his legs or has difficulty getting up from lying down. We can treat the arthritis—the sooner the better—to minimize discomfort and pain. We'll take X-rays of your dog's bones to identify issues as early as possible. Surgery is also sometimes a good option in severe and life-limiting cases. And keep in mind that overweight dogs may develop arthritis years earlier than those of normal weight, causing undue pain and suffering!

Bone Pain

Growing Springer Spaniels can suffer from a painful inflammation of the long bones in the legs called **eosinophilic panosteitis**, or pano or eo-pan for short. It usually starts around six to ten months of age and shifts from leg to leg. We'll look for this condition upon examination; if your pal exhibits pain when the area is squeezed or palpated, we'll take X-rays to diagnose the problem. Panosteitis usually causes no permanent damage, but requires pain medication. If your dog has this condition and develops an abnormal gait to compensate for the sore leg(s), rehabilitation exercises may be required.

Skin Disease

Seborrhea is a common skin disease that can cause dry, flaky skin, called **seborrhea sicca**, or greasy, oily skin, called seborrhea oleosa. Both forms can make your pet itchy and uncomfortable, and skin infections are more likely to occur. Seborrhea is among the most annoying of diseases to Springer Spaniel owners because it often makes affected pets smelly and unattractive. **Hypothyroidism** (low thyroid hormone levels) can



lead to seborrhea, as can allergies, Cushing's disease, and other problems.

Autoimmune Skin Disease

Pemphigus foliaceus is a superficial skin disease that is more common in English Springer Spaniels. It often starts around four years of age and causes crusts and hair loss, usually on top of the nose and inside the ear flaps. Some dogs get it on their footpads and toenails as well. Bacteria easily invade the damaged areas, so secondary skin infections are common. Skin crusts typically wax and wane; there is no cure, but there are a variety of effective treatments. Sunlight makes it worse, so applying zinc-free sunscreen to sensitive parts before heading outdoors can help.

Taking Care of Your English Springer Spaniel 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 her diet, make sure she gets plenty of exercise, regularly brush her 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 her. This is when we'll give her the necessary "check-ups" and test for diseases and conditions that are common in Springer Spaniels. Another very important step in caring for your pet is signing up for pet health insurance. There will certainly be medical tests and procedures she will need throughout her 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 Springer live longer, stay healthier, and be happier during her lifetime. We cannot overemphasize the importance of a proper diet and exercise routine.

- ✓ Supervise your pet as you would a toddler. Keep doors closed, pick up after yourself, and block off rooms as necessary. This will keep her out of trouble and away from objects she shouldn't put in her mouth.
- ✓ Daily brushing and regular trimming is recommended to prevent mats and keep her long coat beautiful.
- ✓ English Springer Spaniels generally have good teeth, and you can keep them perfect by brushing them at least twice a week!
- ✓ Clean her ears weekly, even as a puppy. Make sure to keep her floppy ears dry. Don't worry—we'll show you how!
- ✓ She is a highly active dog that excels at dog sports like flyball, agility, dock diving, and field trials, so keep her exercised!
- ✓ She is a high-energy hunting dog, so a fenced yard and leashed walks are a must.
- ✓ She loves the water! And swimming is a great form of exercise for your English Springer Spaniel.
- ✓ 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, but don't overdo it at first.

What to Watch For

Any abnormal symptom could be a sign of serious disease or it could just be a minor or temporary problem. The important thing is to be able to tell when to seek veterinary help and how urgently. Many diseases cause dogs to have a characteristic combination of symptoms, which together can be a clear signal that your English Springer Spaniel needs help.

Office calls

Give us a call for an appointment if you notice any of these types of signs:

- ✓ Change in appetite or water consumption
- ✓ Tartar build-up, bad breath, red gums, or broken teeth
- ✓ Itchy skin (scratching, chewing, or licking); hair loss
- ✓ Lethargy, mental dullness, or excessive sleeping
- ✓ Fearfulness, aggression, or other behavioral changes
- ✓ Increased hunger and thirst, weight loss
- ✓ Sudden aggressive episodes with no apparent cause

Emergencies

Seek medical care immediately if you notice any of these types of signs:

- ✓ Scratching or shaking the head, tender ears, or ear discharge
- ✓ Inability or straining to urinate; discolored urine
- ✓ Cloudiness, redness, itching, or any other abnormality involving the eyes
- ✓ Fatigue during exercise, coughing, or shortness of breath
- ✓ Gums that are a color other than bright pink
- ✓ Tiring easily, coughing, a swollen belly or fainting/collapse
- ✓ General reluctance to run or play
- ✓ Any abnormal shaking, trembling, or excessive involuntary tremors



providing the very best care of your friend's unique and individual needs throughout her life!

For more information about genetic testing, visit <http://embarkvet.com>

Your English Springer Spaniel counts on you to take good care of her, and we look forward to working with you to ensure that she lives a long and healthy life. Our goal is to provide the best health care possible: health care that's based on her breed, lifestyle, and age. Please contact us when you have questions or concerns:

The Happy Pet Vet
541-262-4133
www.TheHappyPetVet.com
contact@TheHappyPetVet.com

Genetic/DNA Testing

DNA analysis is a rapidly advancing field in healthcare for people and pets. Luckily, technologies exist to screen for hundreds of inherited diseases in pets, just like in people. By screening each pet for as many genetic diseases as possible, we will be better prepared to care for your pet throughout life. This is an important step in caring for your pet because it's always better to know your pal is at risk for a genetic disease before the problem is untreatable.

In an effort to screen for as many genetically linked diseases as possible, we may recommend the **Embark Health Genetic Screen** to screen for more than 150 genetic mutations that cause disease.

Each **Embark Health Genetic Screen** Screens for

- ✓ Over 30 Musculoskeletal Problems
- ✓ Over 30 Metabolic Conditions
- ✓ Over 30 Eye Conditions
- ✓ Over 25 Blood and Clotting Disorders
- ✓ Over 10 Immune System Diseases
- ✓ Over 10 Urinary Tract Problems
- ✓ 10 Skin and Hair Conditions
- ✓ Cancer
- ✓ Dental Disease
- ✓ Drug Metabolism
- ✓ Heart Problems
- ✓ Hormonal Conditions
- ✓ Liver/Gastrointestinal Diseases
- ✓ Midline Defect
- ✓ Neuromuscular Diseases
- ✓ Reproduction Problems
- ✓ Respiratory Conditions

This one-time test is one of the best decisions you can make for your Spaniel's medical care. With less than a few drops of blood, we'll have a lifetime of information to assist us in

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Puppy to Adolescent Health Care Recommendations

How We'll Keep Your English Springer Spaniel	Puppy to Adolescent: Infant to 17 in People Years			
	(✓)	Age	Services We'll Provide	English Springer Spaniel-Specific Problems We're Looking For
	○	6–9 weeks	Head-to-tail physical examination Heart health check Skin and coat exam Endocrine screening Neurological assessment Blood disorder evaluation Parasite detection/prevention Vaccinations Discuss socialization and at-home puppy care	Breed-specific physical abnormalities plus Dental alignment, heart murmur, hernia Ventricular septal defect and Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) Ear infections and Seborrhea Phosphofructokinase (PFK) deficiency Myasthenia gravis von Willebrand's disease (vWD)
	○	10–13 weeks	Head-to-tail physical examination Heart health check Skin and coat exam Endocrine screening Neurological assessment Blood disorder evaluation Parasite detection/prevention Vaccinations Discuss caring for your dog's teeth and ears at home	Breed-specific physical abnormalities plus Ventricular septal defect and Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) Ear infections and Seborrhea Phosphofructokinase (PFK) deficiency Myasthenia gravis von Willebrand's disease (vWD)
	○	14–16 weeks	Head-to-tail physical examination Heart health check Skin and coat exam Endocrine screening Neurological assessment Blood disorder evaluation Parasite prevention Vaccinations Discuss obedience and grooming	Breed-specific physical abnormalities plus Ventricular septal defect and Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) Ear infections and Seborrhea Phosphofructokinase (PFK) deficiency Myasthenia gravis von Willebrand's disease (vWD)
	○	4–6 months	Head-to-tail physical examination Heart health check Skin and coat exam Endocrine screening Bone and joint exam Neurological assessment Blood disorder evaluation Pre-surgical diagnostics Discuss microchipping	Breed-specific physical abnormalities plus Ventricular septal defect and Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) Ear infections and Seborrhea Phosphofructokinase (PFK) deficiency Hip dysplasia Myasthenia gravis von Willebrand's disease (vWD)
	○	6 months to 1 year	Head-to-tail physical examination Eye disease screen Heart health check Skin and coat exam Endocrine screening Bone and joint exam Neurological assessment Blood disorder evaluation Parasite prevention Vaccinations Discuss lifetime genetic considerations	Breed-specific physical abnormalities plus Glaucoma and Cataracts Ventricular septal defect and Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) Ear infections, Seborrhea, and Pemphigus foliaceus Phosphofructokinase (PFK) deficiency Hip dysplasia, Elbow dysplasia, and Panosteitis Myasthenia gravis and Epilepsy von Willebrand's disease (vWD) All major diseases important in the breed with diagnostic plan

Adult to Golden Years Health Care Recommendations

How We'll Keep Your English Springer Spaniel						English Springer Spaniel-Specific Problems We're Looking For
	(✓)	Age	Services We'll Provide			
	○	1 years through 8 years	Head-to-tail physical examination Eye disease screen Heart health check Skin and coat exam Endocrine screening Bone and joint exam Neurological assessment Cancer screen Blood disorder evaluation Parasite prevention Vaccinations Discuss behavior and nutrition Schedule spay/neuter after 1 year			Breed-specific physical abnormalities plus Glaucoma, Cataracts, and Progressive retinal atrophy (PRA) Patent ductus arteriosus (PDA) Ear infections, Seborrhea, and Pemphigus foliaceus Phosphofructokinase (PFK) deficiency Hip dysplasia and Elbow dysplasia Myasthenia gravis, Epilepsy, and Rage syndrome Mammary tumors von Willebrand's disease (vWD) and Immune-mediated hemolytic anemia (IMHA) and immune-mediated thrombocytopenia (ITP)
	○	9 years through 10 years	Head-to-tail physical examination Eye disease screen Skin and coat exam Endocrine screening Bone and joint exam Neurological assessment Cancer screen Blood disorder evaluation Parasite prevention Vaccinations Discuss mental and physical well-being			Breed-specific physical abnormalities plus Glaucoma, Cataracts, and Progressive retinal atrophy (PRA) Ear infections, Seborrhea, and Pemphigus foliaceus Phosphofructokinase (PFK) deficiency and Diabetes mellitus Hip dysplasia and Elbow dysplasia Myasthenia gravis, Epilepsy, and Rage syndrome Mammary tumors Immune-mediated hemolytic anemia (IMHA) and immune-mediated thrombocytopenia (ITP)
	○	11+ years and older	Head-to-tail physical examination Eye disease screen Skin and coat exam Endocrine screening Bone and joint exam Neurological assessment Cancer screen Blood disorder evaluation Parasite prevention Vaccinations Discuss mental and physical well-being			Breed-specific physical abnormalities plus Glaucoma, Cataracts, and Progressive retinal atrophy (PRA) Ear infections, Seborrhea, and Pemphigus foliaceus Phosphofructokinase (PFK) deficiency and Diabetes mellitus Hip dysplasia and Elbow dysplasia Myasthenia gravis, Epilepsy, and Rage syndrome Mammary tumors Immune-mediated hemolytic anemia (IMHA) and immune-mediated thrombocytopenia (ITP)

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.