

CHEWING

Puppies are **CHEWING** machines!!! The inherited tendency to investigate the surroundings is very strong in the young dog. Your success in preventing chewing problems depends on how effectively you can channel your pup's tendency toward **ACCEPTABLE** chews, rather than unacceptable items. Between the ages of three and six months, your puppy will begin to teethe. Just like babies, puppies chew to relieve some of the discomfort associated with the eruption of the permanent teeth. Puppies also chew to explore their environment as a form of play. It makes little difference to a puppy whether he chews on a toy or on a pair of your favorite shoes. He needs your help and direction in chewing on what is appropriate and what is not.

The two distinct periods when excessive chewing is likely to occur are during the teething period at three months of age, and during the time when the permanent teeth become set in the jaw – between 6-12 months. Regardless of these times, the young puppy will continually attempt to investigate objects with his mouth. It is at this age that he or she must be taught what is acceptable to chew and what is not!

A common **MISTAKE** people make frequently is to provide chewable objects that, in texture, resemble valued objects. The puppy cannot distinguish between rawhide chews, an old shoe, and a good shoe! If he or she learns that chewing **ANY** type leather product is acceptable, **THEN ALL** leather products become fair game.

Another concern often overlooked concerns the pup's ingestion of **HARMFUL** objects. We periodically have to surgically remove needles, bones, and small toys from the stomach of puppies.

Follow These Tips to Help Train Your Puppy Properly:

- 1. Never leave a puppy unattended unless he's RESTRICTED to a damage-proof area.** We highly suggest airline-shipping crates for confinement during the first 4-8 weeks. This also helps greatly with housetraining.
- 2. Purchase NYLA-BONE. NEVER** allow products that can be swallowed or chewed into splinters. **We do NOT recommend rawhide chew toys.**
- 3.** When the puppy begins to chew something he shouldn't, **DON'T** correct him with a raised voice, just remove the object. **IMMEDIATELY** offer him one of his chews, but do not force it into his mouth. Simply place it before him and praise.
- 4. AFTER** he's finished with the acceptable chew, spray the unacceptable item with Bitter Apple, Bitter Lemon or Cayenne, and put it into his mouth. Praise him when he spits it out. Repeat several times.
- 5.** If he doesn't spit it out, generously spray a cotton ball with the product and place it briefly in his mouth. Then follow with the unacceptable item. Give him a soda cracker to help clear up the unpleasant taste.
- 6.** Periodically take him -- **Never call him** – to those unacceptable items, which he previously chewed. Remind him to stay away by very lightly spraying them with the product, then try inserting it into his mouth. Praise lavishly when he avoids it or spits it out.
- 7.** Get into the habit of looking for trouble before it occurs.
- 8.** If your pet chews or eats something, which YOU think could be potentially harmful, call the clinic for advice.

Here are the hotlines to call for antidotes for poisoning:

PITTSBURGH HOTLINE: (412) 681-6669 (free to call)

NATIONAL HOTLINE: 1-888-426-4435 (there is a fee for calling)