

EVERYTHING
YOUR
MALTESE
PUPPY
WISHES YOU KNEW

A LIFETIME OF
LESSONS, LOVE,
AND EXPERT CARE
FROM PUPPYHOOD
TO FOREVER



Daily Priorities

- Puppies
- People
- Purpose
- Prayer
- Preparation
- Progress
- God's Grace



AKC
CHAMPION
BREEDER

FUELED BY
FAITH &
CAFFEINE

SHH...
I'M BUSY
CHANGING
LIVES

Faith
Breeds
Excellence

STORYBOOK
MALTESE

TOP PRIORITIES

1. Healthy Puppies
2. Happy Homes
3. Honor God
4. Protect the Breed
5. Massage (someday)



MESSY BUN
FULL HEART
GOD IS GOOD
& PUPPIES
MAKE IT BETTER



PUPPY APPLICATIONS
(aka Future Best Friends)



Read with
prayer &
purpose



LITTLE
MIRACLES
INCOMING!



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Some Dreams Refuse to Let Go

"If there are angel dogs, this is what they look like."



I was only ten years old when I fell hopelessly in love.

We lived in Monterey, California, and our neighbors owned a beautiful Maltese. She was kept in full coat, her silky white hair flowing almost to the ground. I can still picture her as clearly today as I could then.

She wasn't just beautiful.

She was elegant.

Sweet.

Gentle.

She seemed to float instead of walk.

I remember staring at her and thinking, *If there are angel dogs, this is what they must look like.*

That one little dog changed the course of my life.

From that day forward, I watched every dog show on television. I impatiently suffered through all the other breeds until, for what seemed like only thirty seconds, the Maltese finally entered the ring.

Those thirty seconds were never enough.

I wanted a Maltese with all my heart.

Unfortunately, dreams don't always fit into the family budget.

Even back then, Maltese were expensive, far beyond what my parents could afford. My mother did what loving mothers do. She found the closest thing she could.

For my birthday she gave me a little Lhasa Apso puppy.

We named her Mitzy.

I loved Mitzy every single day of her life.

She wasn't "second best."

She wasn't a disappointment.

She was family.

But she wasn't a Maltese.

She was tan instead of brilliant white.



She had beautiful blue eyes instead of the large, dark eyes that had captured my heart.

She was bigger.

Different.

Wonderful in her own way.

But every time I saw a Maltese, that childhood dream quietly came back to life.

Then life did what life does.

Marriage.

Children.

A career.

Responsibilities.

Four wonderful children grew up in our home, and like so many mothers, I spent years putting everyone else's dreams ahead of my own.

Then one day I realized something.

My youngest child was sixteen.

The house was becoming quieter.

Empty nest syndrome was beginning to creep in.

By then I had worked hard, built a successful real estate career, and for the first time in my life, I could finally afford the puppy I had dreamed about since I was ten years old.

There was just one small problem.

My husband wanted a German Shepherd.

He most definitely did **not** want "some yappy little dog."

After waiting more than thirty years, I wasn't changing my mind.

I'd worked my tail off.

The time for my Maltese had finally come.

So I began searching.

I wrote long, heartfelt letters to every show breeder I could find. I told them about my family, my home, and the life I could offer one of their puppies. I answered every question I imagined I would ask if I were the breeder.

Then I emailed them.

And waited.

Not one breeder answered.

Not one.

I followed up with phone calls and left voicemails.

Still nothing.

Looking back, I think those unanswered letters became one of the defining moments of my life.

I didn't know it then, but years later I would build Storybook Maltese around one simple promise:

No family who genuinely cared about one of my puppies would ever feel ignored the way I did.

Eventually, I found a breeder about two hours away.

Today, with everything I've learned over the years, I recognize that she was almost certainly operating a puppy mill.

At the time, all I knew was that she had an AKC Maltese and was willing to let me bring one home.

That little girl came with a rather unforgettable registered name:

I'm Still a Rock Star Pink.



She was already five and a half months old.

The moment I held her...

The dream I'd carried since childhood had finally come true.

Pink went almost everywhere with me.

She rode to work.

She accompanied me on errands.

She even slipped unnoticed into restaurants in a little carrier that looked like a purse.

Life was perfect...

...until my husband stole my dog.

Remember, this was the same man who didn't want a yappy little dog.

Pink adored him.

She followed him everywhere.

Apparently, she hadn't received the memo that she belonged to me.

Naturally, I did the only logical thing.

I went back and bought another Maltese.

I'd heard that female dogs often bond more closely with men and males often bond more closely with women.

Perfect.



This one would surely be mine.

We just had to name him Blue, to match Pink.

Steve stole him too.

To this day, I still maintain that Pink and Blue had a secret meeting behind my back.

Together they decided, "Let's both pick Steve."

Now, I realize something important.

At the time, I thought I had finally fulfilled a childhood dream.

In reality...

I had only opened the first page of a story that would change my life forever.

The Heart of the Matter

Dreams are wonderful. Preparation is even better.

When I finally brought Pink home, I had wanted a Maltese for more than 30 years.

What I didn't realize was that wanting a Maltese and understanding a Maltese are two completely different things.

Fortunately, Pink was patient with me.

She became my teacher.

Over the coming years, she would teach me lessons no book had ever mentioned.

About the Maltese

People often ask me what makes the Maltese so different from other toy breeds.

The answer isn't simply their beauty.

It's their heart.

A well-bred Maltese doesn't just live in your home.

They become part of your soul.

They are happiest wherever you are.

They don't care whether you're sitting in a mansion or a tiny apartment, driving across the country or watching television in your pajamas.

If they're with you, they're home.

That extraordinary devotion is one of the reasons people who love Maltese often say they'll never own another breed.

I understand exactly what they mean.

I was ten years old when I first met one.

I've been in love ever since.

A Man's Heart Devises His Way...

"A man's heart devises his way: but the LORD directs his steps."

Proverbs 16:9



I thought my story was complete.

I had finally gotten the Maltese I'd dreamed about for more than thirty years.

Actually...

I had two.

Pink and Blue had become the center of our little family.

My husband, who had adamantly declared he did not want "some yappy little dog," had completely betrayed me by stealing both of them.

Life was good.

Simple.

Exactly as I had imagined it.

Then my mother fell in love with them too.

Once she actually spent time with them, she wanted a Maltese, but like so many people, the price of a well-bred puppy was simply beyond her reach.

So, we came up with what seemed like the perfect plan.

We would breed Pink and Blue.

Just once.

Surely there would be at least two puppies.

One would go to my mother.

One would stay with us.

Then Pink would be spayed.

Blue would be neutered.

We'd all have our beloved Maltese...

...and that would be the end of our little breeding adventure.

At least...

That's what we thought.

At the time, I had no idea how perfectly Proverbs 16:9 would one day describe my life.

Pink delivered by C-section.

Instead of the two puppies we had hoped for...

She had one.

Just one tiny, precious little girl.

The moment I saw her, all of our carefully made plans disappeared.

My poor mother never had a chance.

We were completely and hopelessly in love.

We named her Liberty.

She wasn't just our puppy.

She was hope.

She was joy.

She was the beginning of everything we imagined our little family would become.

I fixed up a little nursery for Pink and Liberty in our large laundry room, and every spare moment I had was spent watching them together.

There is something almost sacred about watching a devoted mother with her newborn puppy.

Pink adored her baby.

Liberty was thriving.

Life couldn't have been sweeter.

Then, as often happens in life, ordinary circumstances quietly changed everything.

My youngest daughter and her husband were waiting for their new home to be ready and asked if they could stay with us for a few days.

Of course I said yes.

She also asked if she could do a few loads of laundry. Those 'few' loads of laundry covered the entire laundry room floor, but of course I said yes to that, too.

What I didn't know was that they had been staying with friends whose young son had recently been hospitalized with the H1N1 virus.

None of us had any idea that a pile of laundry could carry something that would forever change my life.

Every time Pink went to nurse Liberty, she had to climb over those piles of laundry.

Two days later, my daughter moved into her new home.

The following morning, I woke to a very sick little puppy.

I raced to my veterinarian, praying all the way there.

I didn't make it in time.

Liberty was gone.

I have lived through some very difficult days in my life.

Nothing prepared me for that one.

I couldn't eat.

I couldn't sleep.

I couldn't stop crying.

But as heartbreaking as losing Liberty was...

Watching Pink search for her baby somehow hurt even more.

That is a picture I will carry with me for the rest of my life.

Later, my veterinarian asked Steve for permission to perform a necropsy.

He had a suspicion.

He was right.

Liberty had died from the human H1N1 virus.

The virus had unknowingly been brought into our home.

It wasn't anyone's fault.

It was simply something I didn't know.

But that distinction offered me very little comfort.

All I could think was...

"If I had only known..."

The guilt was overwhelming.

In time, I came to realize Liberty taught me a lesson I have never forgotten.

Knowledge matters.

Sometimes it matters more than we can possibly imagine.

From that day forward, I became almost obsessive about learning.

I asked questions.

I read everything I could find.

I sought out mentors.

I questioned long-held beliefs.

I never again wanted ignorance to cost a puppy its life.

Some people think I'm overly cautious.

They're probably right.

But caution born from experience is very different from irrational fear.

Every protocol I have today...

Every question I ask...

Every precaution I take...

Can be traced back to one tiny puppy named Liberty.

Finally, through tears, I looked at Steve and said, "I can't do this again."

We agreed.

Pink would be spayed.

Blue would be neutered.

There would be no more litters.

Our brief adventure into breeding Maltese was over.

Or so we thought...

I believed that chapter of my life was over.

There would be no more litters.

No more tiny puppies.

No more risking that kind of heartbreak.

Pink and Blue would simply spend the rest of their lives doing what they did best, loving us.

Oddly enough, making that decision brought me a sense of peace.

The decision had been made.

I thought my future was settled.

But while I was making my plans...

The Lord was quietly making His.

During Liberty's short little life, I had become friends with a Maltese breeder in Pennsylvania. Like so many others, she had followed Liberty's journey through photographs from the day she was born. She celebrated with me as Liberty grew, and she grieved with me when she died.

The silence that follows losing a puppy is almost unbearable.

The nursery is still there.

The toys are still there.

The little blanket is still there.

But the puppy isn't.

The emptiness is overwhelming.

One day, still grieving, I emailed my friend.

I asked if she happened to have a little girl available.

I wasn't looking for another breeding prospect.

I wasn't looking for a show dog.

I was simply trying to fill a hole in my heart.

She didn't have a little girl.

But she did have a tiny little boy.

I didn't hesitate.

I needed him.

When he arrived, he was everything a grieving heart could have hoped for.

He was unbelievably gentle.

Sweet beyond words.

The kind of puppy who seemed to know exactly when someone needed comforting.

The first time I held him, he climbed up onto my shoulder, tucked himself into my neck, and snuggled as close as he possibly could.



I smiled through my tears and whispered,

"Well... aren't you just a little heart throb."

The name stuck.

His registered name became **Storybook's Little Heart Throb**.

Around our house...

He was simply "Little."

He weighed barely four pounds, but somehow, he managed to fill a hole in my heart that felt far bigger than that.

Little wasn't a replacement for Liberty.

No puppy ever could have been.

He was God's gentle reminder that joy can quietly return, even after unimaginable loss.

At the time, I believed Little had come into my life simply because I needed him.

I had no idea...

He had come because God wasn't finished writing my story.

I truly believed that chapter of my life was over.

Pink had been spayed.

Blue had been neutered.

I had made up my mind.

Looking back now, I smile because that seems to be a recurring theme in my life.

I make my plans.

Then the Lord gently redirects my steps.

I had no idea that God was quietly preparing me for the next chapter of my life.

At the time, I was working as a real estate broker during the height of the bank foreclosure crisis. Every day I was driving from one foreclosed property to another, checking occupancy and preparing homes to be listed for the banks.

I rotated my dogs so each one got a turn going to work with me.

That day...

It was Little's turn.

By lunchtime I was starving, so I pulled into a fast-food drive-through, grabbed something to eat, and parked to enjoy a few quiet minutes before heading to my next property.

I just happened to park beside another car.

A car filled with Maltese. Not one, or two. A whole car load of Maltese in full coat.

Now that's not something you see every day.

I laughed to myself and thought, "Well, I have to meet this person."

I walked over, introduced myself, and before long we were talking as though we'd known each other for years.

She told me she was on her way to a dog show.

She lived not far from me.

We exchanged phone numbers and quickly became friends.

Then she looked at Little.

Really looked at him.

Finally, she smiled and said,

"That's a very nice little dog."

I thanked her, assuming she was simply being polite.

Then she said something that had never crossed my mind.

"You ought to show him."

I actually laughed.

I didn't know the first thing about showing dogs.

I knew nothing about grooming a show coat.

Nothing about presentation.

Nothing about handling.

Nothing about the show world.

She smiled.

"I'll teach you."

And she did.

She taught me about coat care.

Conditioning.

Presentation.

Ring etiquette.

Everything.

In hindsight, I realize that if I had parked three spaces farther away...

Or if I'd decided to eat somewhere else...

Or if Little hadn't been with me that day...

Our paths might never have crossed.

But they did.

And once again...

The Lord was quietly directing my steps.

Sometimes God Chooses the Parking Spot



Looking back, I don't believe in accidents.
Coincidences? Maybe, but probably not.

But there are moments in life that seem too
perfectly timed to be explained away.

Meeting my new friend in that parking lot was one
of them.

True to her word, she patiently taught me everything I didn't know.

And trust me...

That was a long list.

She taught me how to bathe and wrap a show coat.

How to protect the coat between baths.

How to prepare for a show.

How to present a dog.

How to walk into the ring with confidence, even when I didn't feel confident.

Most importantly...

She taught me that showing a dog wasn't just about ribbons.

It was about preserving a breed.

That was an entirely new way of thinking for me.

Before long, Little and I entered our first dog show.

I was nervous.

Actually...

"Nervous" doesn't begin to describe it.

I had no idea what I was doing.

I was certain everyone there knew it.

The experienced exhibitors looked so polished.

Their dogs were immaculate.

They moved around the ring as though they had been doing it all their lives.

I was just hoping not to embarrass myself.

Little, on the other hand, seemed completely unfazed.

He walked into the ring as though he owned it.

He loved every minute.

And somehow...So did I.

There is something incredibly addictive about showing a beautiful dog you've poured your heart into preparing.

Not because of the competition.

But because, for just a few minutes, nothing else in the world matters.

It's simply you...And your dog.

Show after show, Little continued to improve.

Actually...We both did.

Every show became another opportunity to learn.

Another chance to become a little better than we had been the show before.



Then one weekend, something happened that I never could have imagined.

Little defeated the Number One Maltese in the United States.

I was stunned. Surely it was a fluke.

Then he did it again.

Now I was hooked.

Not because I loved winning, although I'll be honest...Winning is a whole lot of fun. I was hooked because I had discovered something about myself that had followed me my entire life.

Whenever I become passionate about something...

I want to learn everything there is to know about it.

I had done the same thing in real estate.

As a brand-new agent, I would quietly listen to experienced agents talking with their clients.

I analyzed what they did well.

I analyzed what I thought I could do better.

By the end of my first year, I had become one of the top ten agents in our Multiple Listing Service.

Dogs were no different.

I wanted to understand pedigrees.

Movement.

Structure.

Temperament.

Genetics.

Health.

Everything.

Around that same time, I heard a phrase that would become one of the guiding principles of my breeding program.

Kennel blindness.

The idea that breeders sometimes become so enamored with their own dogs that they lose the ability to honestly evaluate them.

I remember thinking to myself...

“That must never be me.”

If I was ever going to breed Maltese, I wanted to be brutally honest about my own dogs.

Not because I loved them less...

But because I loved the breed more.

That simple decision would shape every breeding choice I made for the next twenty years.

It would also lead me to one of the hardest decisions I would ever make.

Never Fall in Love with Your Own Opinion



Winning was exciting.

Learning was even better.

The more I learned about structure, movement, pedigrees, and breed type, the more honestly I began looking at my own dogs.

I loved Pink. I loved Blue.

That had never changed.

But I had also made a promise to myself.

I would never become kennel blind.

I would never convince myself that a dog should be bred simply because I happened to own and love it.

If I was going to breed Maltese, every dog would have to earn that privilege.

That wasn't always easy.

Love has a way of overlooking faults.

A preservation breeder can't afford to.

Every breeding decision should answer one simple question:

Will this improve the breed?

If the answer is no...

No matter how much it hurts...

The answer has to remain no.

As my education continued, I realized that Pink and Blue were exactly what they had always been.

Wonderful pets.

Faithful companions.

Beloved members of our family.

But I could clearly see that they were not the foundation I wanted to build a breeding program upon and spay and neuter had been exactly the right choice.

It would have been easy to convince myself otherwise.

After all, they were mine.

I loved them.

No one would have questioned my breeding them.

But I would have known.

So I kept my promise.

And because another promise I made was that I'd never have more dogs than could live like beloved pets instead of kennel dogs, Pink was placed in a wonderful forever home where she became the center of someone else's world.

Blue stayed with us because Steve loved him far too much to ever let him go and he adorned Steve's lap until the day he crossed the Rainbow Bridge.

Some people measure success by the number of puppies they produce.

I've never believed that's the right measure.

I believe success is measured just as much by the puppies you choose **not** to produce.

That decision changed the direction of my breeding program before it had really even begun.

If Little deserved the very best opportunity to contribute to the future of the breed...

Then I needed to find females who were worthy of him.

Not simply available.

Not simply pretty.

Exceptional.

That search would take me farther than I ever imagined.

It would introduce me to breeders I admired...

Bloodlines I had only read about...

And a level of excellence that completely changed the way I looked at the Maltese breed.

For the first time, I wasn't simply looking for another dog.

I was searching for the future of Storybook Maltese.

Excellence Is Never an Accident



Once I made the decision that Pink and Blue would not become the foundation of my breeding program, my search began in earnest.

I wasn't simply looking for another female.

I was looking for the right female.

There is a tremendous difference.

The more I learned about the Maltese breed, the more I realized that excellence is rarely accidental.

It is planned.

Studied.

Protected.

Generation after generation.

I became a student.

Pedigrees fascinated me.

I would spend hours studying them, looking for patterns, strengths, and weaknesses. I wanted to know not only what a dog looked like, but what it consistently produced. Which bloodlines passed on beautiful heads? Which ones produced exceptional movement? Which ones were known for wonderful temperaments? Which breeders had quietly spent decades improving the breed without compromising their standards? How could I help improve the teeth? The knees?

The more I learned, the more I realized how much I didn't know.

Oddly enough, that was exciting.

Every answer led to another question.

Every question led to another late night spent reading, researching, and learning.

Some people collect antiques.
Some collect artwork.
I collected knowledge.
I wasn't trying to become famous.
I wasn't trying to become the winningest breeder.
I simply wanted every generation to be a little better than the one before it.
Not because perfection can ever truly be achieved...
But because it should always be pursued.
Along the way, I discovered another truth.
Every breeder has opinions.
Some are based on decades of experience.
Others are based on tradition.
Some are based on science.
The challenge is learning the difference.
I learned to ask questions.
Lots of questions.
I listened far more than I talked.
Some mentors taught me what to do.
Others taught me what never to do.
Both were equally valuable.
One lesson became clearer with every passing year.
No breeder ever knows it all.
The moment we believe we've learned everything...
We've stopped growing.

That realization kept me humble.

It also kept me curious.

To this day, I still read.

I still ask questions.

I still attend seminars.

I still study new research.

And every now and then...

I discover something I believed for years that simply wasn't true.

When that happens, I don't defend my old opinion.

I change it.

Because my loyalty has never been to my own ego.

My loyalty is to the Maltese Breed.

That philosophy became the cornerstone of Storybook Maltese.

Not winning. (Though I do enjoy winning...and yes, I've beaten every one of the very show breeders who never bothered to return my emails or phone calls on multiple occasions. I won't pretend that wasn't deeply satisfying.)

Not ribbons. (Though I've collected more ribbons than I could ever count, or display.)

Not rankings. (Though I've earned some very high rankings, including, at the time of this writing, a record that still stands, my fastest Championship from first time in the show ring to Bronze Grand Champion in just 71 days.)

Learning.

Improving.

And never becoming so proud that I stop listening.

Looking back now, I realize I wasn't just building a breeding program.

I was building a philosophy.

One that would shape every puppy, every family, and every decision for decades to come.

The Puppy Is Never the Goal



Somewhere along the way, I realized something that completely changed the way I looked at breeding.

The puppy is never the goal.

I know that probably sounds strange coming from someone who has devoted her life to raising puppies. But it's true.

A beautiful puppy is simply the result of hundreds of decisions that were made long before that puppy was ever conceived.

Every breeding begins with questions.

Is this the right sire?

Is this the right dam?

Will each one strengthen the other?

Will this breeding move the breed forward...

...or simply produce puppies?

Those are very different goals.

I made a decision early on that I would never breed simply because two dogs were available.

Every breeding had to have a purpose.

Every litter needed a reason.

Sometimes that meant waiting.

Sometimes it meant passing on a breeding that would have produced perfectly lovely puppies because I didn't believe it would meet my particular goals to improve the breed.

Patience has probably been one of the greatest gifts dogs have ever taught me.

We live in a world that wants everything now.

Now puppies.

Now championships.

Now success.

Dogs don't work that way.

Neither does excellence.

You cannot rush generations.

You cannot hurry maturity.

And you certainly cannot shortcut quality.

The best breeders I have known all shared one characteristic.

They were willing to wait.

Wait for the right dog.

Wait for the right breeding.

Wait for the right puppy.

Sometimes they waited years.

I learned to do the same.

There were times I desperately wanted to keep a puppy.

There were other times I desperately wanted a particular breeding to work.

Nature doesn't always cooperate.

Looking back, I'm grateful for many of the disappointments.

Some breedings never happened.

Some puppies weren't born.

Some dogs I thought I absolutely had to own went to someone else.

At the time, each one felt like a setback.

Years later, I could see they had quietly protected me from making decisions that weren't the right ones.

One of the greatest lessons I've learned is that "no" is not always rejection.

Sometimes it's redirection.

That lesson applies to far more than breeding dogs.

It applies to life.

I've learned not to force doors open.

If the right puppy comes along, wonderful.

If the right breeding presents itself, wonderful.

If not...

I wait.

Because over the years, I've discovered something remarkable.

The right dog has an uncanny way of arriving at exactly the right time.

Not always when I wanted.

Almost always when I needed.

Perhaps that's another way the Lord directs our steps.

We simply have to trust Him enough not to outrun them.

Every Puppy Deserves to Be Born on Purpose



Over the years, I've often heard people say,
"It's just a dog."

I've never been able to think that way.

Every puppy I have ever brought into this world
represents a lifetime of responsibility.

These puppies didn't ask to be born.

I made that decision for them.

The least I can do is spend every day trying to give them the healthiest, happiest,
and longest life possible.

That responsibility doesn't begin when they're born.

It begins months...

Sometimes years...

Before they're ever conceived.

It begins with selecting the right parents.

Studying generations of pedigrees.

Researching health histories.

Evaluating structure.

Temperament.

Movement.

And then having the discipline to walk away when something isn't right.

I've often been asked how many litters I have each year.

The honest answer is...

As many as I believe I should.

Sometimes that's more.

Sometimes it's fewer.

The calendar has never made my breeding decisions.

The dogs do.

There have been years when people wanted puppies I simply didn't have.

That was disappointing.

Not nearly as disappointing as compromising my standards would have been.

One of the hardest lessons for any breeder to learn is that every "yes" carries consequences.

So does every "no."

Every breeding changes the future of your kennel.

Every puppy changes the future of a family.

That's an enormous responsibility.

I have never wanted to become the biggest breeder.

I have wanted to become the breeder I wished I had found all those years ago when I was searching for my first Maltese.

The one who answered the email, text, or returned a phone call.

The one who patiently answered questions.

The one who celebrated with families when things were going well and cried with them when they weren't.

The one who never disappeared after the puppy went home.

That promise has shaped Storybook Maltese from the very beginning.

Many people think my job ends when a puppy leaves my home.

I don't.

I tell every family that they're welcome to call me for the rest of that puppy's life.

And I mean it.

I've celebrated birthdays.

Talked families through illnesses.

Helped them make heartbreaking decisions.

Cried with them when they lost one of my babies years later.

Once a Storybook puppy becomes part of your family...

You become part of mine.

Perhaps that's why saying goodbye never gets easier.

People often ask if, after all these years, I've become used to watching puppies leave.

The answer is no.

I still cry.

Every single litter.

Every single time.

Not because I'm losing a puppy.

Because a little piece of my heart leaves with each one.

And somehow...

That's exactly the way I think it should be.

If the day ever comes that saying goodbye becomes easy...

That will be the day I know it's time to stop breeding.

The Best Dogs Aren't Always the Ones You Keep



One of the biggest surprises in my journey as a breeder was discovering that breeding isn't really about dogs.

It's about decisions.

Hundreds...

Perhaps thousands...Of little decisions.

Every puppy teaches you something if you're willing to pay attention.

Some teach you about structure.

Some teach you about temperament.

Some teach you patience.

Some teach you humility.

And every once in a while...

One teaches you that you were wrong.

Those are usually the most valuable lessons of all.

People often assume that breeders keep every puppy they fall in love with.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

Sometimes the puppy that steals your heart simply isn't the puppy that will move your breeding program forward. Or, they're perfect in every way but only matured to 4 lbs and I will not put my girls through C-Sections. That's another personal choice.

Sometimes the puppy you almost overlooked grows into something extraordinary.

Experience teaches you to wait.

To watch.

To evaluate.

To resist making emotional decisions before the puppy has had a chance to tell you who it is.

Puppies have a way of unfolding.

Week after week they change.

A beautiful eight-week-old puppy may not be nearly as impressive at six months.

An awkward little puppy that nobody notices may blossom into a magnificent adult.

They deserve the time to become who they were created to be.

That lesson has served me well in more than breeding.

It's served me well in life.

People unfold, too.

Not everyone reaches their potential at the same time.

Some simply need a little longer.

That realization has made me a more patient breeder.

A more patient teacher.

And, I hope, a better person.

As the years passed, my eye became more educated.

I began seeing things I never would have noticed when I first started.

The angle of a shoulder.

The length of a neck.

The shape of an eye.

The way a puppy carried itself across the room.

Little details.

Tiny details.

Details that, when added together over generations, become excellence.

People sometimes ask me how I can look at a litter and already have an opinion about which puppy may become a show dog.

The answer is simple.

I don't just see the puppy standing in front of me.

I see thousands of hours spent studying the puppies that came before.

Experience is a remarkable teacher.

It doesn't make us perfect.

But if we're paying attention...

It helps us make better decisions tomorrow than we made yesterday.

That has always been my goal.

Not perfection.

Progress.

One generation...

One litter...

One puppy at a time.

The Legacy We Leave Behind

When I first brought Pink home, I thought I was buying a puppy.

I had no idea I was beginning a journey that would span decades.

I certainly never imagined that one little white dog would introduce me to people from all over the country...

Or that hundreds of families would someday trust me with one of the most important decisions they could make.

A puppy is never just a puppy.

Not if you do this the right way.

Every puppy becomes part of someone's story.

I've received letters from families whose Storybook Maltese carried them through cancer treatments.

Through the loss of a spouse.

Through military deployments.

Through loneliness.

Through depression.

Through some of the happiest and hardest days of their lives.

I've watched children grow up with puppies that eventually became old, gray-faced companions.

I've cried with families when those beloved friends crossed the Rainbow Bridge.

I've rejoiced as grandchildren welcomed another Storybook puppy into the family, continuing a tradition that began years before.

Those moments have taught me something remarkable.

I may have bred the puppy...

But the family writes the story.

That is why I have never believed my responsibility ends when a puppy goes home.

In many ways...

It's only beginning.

Every email.

Every phone call.

Every late-night text from a worried new puppy owner.

Every celebration.

Every heartbreak.

They're all part of the promise I made years ago.

To become the breeder I had searched for but could never find.

Looking back now, I can clearly see the path the Lord laid before me.

A little girl standing in a neighbor's yard, mesmerized by a beautiful Maltese.

A dream that waited more than thirty years.

Pink.

Blue.

Liberty.

Little.

A chance meeting in a parking lot.

A lifetime devoted to learning.

None of it happened the way I planned.

Every bit of it happened exactly the way I needed it to.

If you've read this far, you now know my story.

But this book was never meant to be only about me.

It was written for you.

For the family who has just welcomed home a Storybook Maltese, or the family trying to make a decision whether they should.

For the person who wants to raise that puppy with confidence instead of confusion.

For the questions you'll ask.

For the mistakes I hope you'll never have to make because I've already made many of them for you.

Everything you've read so far explains why I believe what I believe.

Everything that follows will show you how I put those beliefs into practice every single day.

So...

Let's go raise your puppy.

Part Two

Now Let's Go Raise Your Puppy



At this point, you know my story.

You know why I breed the way I do.

You know why I sometimes seem overly cautious.

You know why every recommendation in this book has a story behind it.

Now...

Let's get your puppy ready to come home.

Bringing home a Maltese puppy is one of life's greatest joys.

It can also be one of the most overwhelming.

Walk into any pet store and you'll find aisle after aisle of products all claiming to be "must haves."

Most aren't.

Your puppy doesn't care whether his bed cost \$25 or \$250.

He doesn't care whether his bowls match your kitchen.

He doesn't care whether his toys are the newest thing on the market.

Your puppy cares about only a few very simple things.

Am I safe?

Am I warm?

Do I know where my family is?

Do I have food?

Do I have water?

Can I find my potty spot?

Do the people around me love me?

Everything else is simply for our benefit.

One of the biggest mistakes new puppy owners make is spending weeks preparing their house...

While forgetting to prepare themselves.

Your puppy isn't coming home to a museum.

He's coming home to a family.

He doesn't expect perfection.

He needs patience.

He needs consistency.

Most of all...

He needs someone who understands that, for the first time in his entire life, everything familiar is gone.

Imagine waking up tomorrow.

You're taken away from your mother.

Your brothers and sisters.

Everything you've ever smelled.

Everything you've ever known.

Even your food tastes different.

The voices are different.

The sounds are different.

The smells are different.

That's what your puppy experiences the day he comes home.

When you see your puppy through those eyes...

Patience comes much more naturally.

Throughout the rest of this book, I'll tell you exactly what I do with every Storybook puppy from the day they're born until the day they leave my home.

More importantly...

I'll explain why.

This book follows your Maltese from that very first day home through every stage of life that comes after — because my responsibility to you and your dog has never ended at the front door, and neither does this book.

You'll notice that many of my recommendations are different from what you'll hear online.

That's okay.

I don't expect everyone to agree with me.

These are simply the practices that have evolved over decades of breeding, raising, showing, and loving Maltese.

Some lessons I learned through wonderful successes.

Others...

I learned through heartbreaking mistakes.

If reading this book allows you to avoid even one of those mistakes...

Then every page will have been worth writing.

So before we start buying supplies...

Before we talk about food...

Before we discuss sleeping arrangements...

Let's begin with the single most important thing you can bring home for your new puppy.

The right expectations.

Because no toy...

No bed...

No training method...

Will ever matter as much as understanding the tiny little heart that's about to trust you with its entire world.

Let's Go Shopping

Congratulations!

By now you've reserved your puppy, and reality is starting to sink in.

Soon there will be a tiny little white puppy racing around your house.

Naturally, the first thing most families want to do is shop.

I understand.

It's fun.

It's exciting.

It's also very easy to waste a lot of money.

Pet stores are masters at convincing us your puppy needs fifty different gadgets.

The truth?

Your puppy's needs are actually very simple.

I'd rather see you spend your money on a few quality items than fill a shopping cart with things your puppy will never use.

Let's start with what I consider the essentials.

A Safe Place

Every puppy needs a place that belongs only to them.

Notice I didn't say a crate. I actually hate crates. Imagine leaving your puppy in a crate while you go to the store and on the way home, you're involved in a serious accident. How long will that puppy be stuck in that crate with no food, water, or place to potty. Unthinkable! There is a better way!

I said a safe place.

At Storybook Maltese, my puppies graduate from sleeping with their mother and littermates to sleeping independently in a small exercise pen beside my bed for at least a week before they ever leave for their new homes.

That transition is intentional.

By the time your puppy comes home, sleeping independently isn't frightening.
It's familiar.

Inside the pen they have everything they need:

- A comfortable bed
- Fresh water
- Dry kibble available at all times
- A potty pad

If they wake up during the night, they can have a drink, nibble a little food if they're hungry, use their potty pad, and quietly go back to sleep without waking me.

Most importantly...

They know I'm nearby.

That is why most Storybook puppies do not cry their first night home.

They've already learned the routine.

Your job is simply to continue it.

Place the pen beside your bed.

Not down the hall.

Not in the laundry room.

Not in another bedroom.

Beside you.

Your puppy doesn't need constant attention.

They simply need the comfort of knowing they aren't alone.

Now and then, a puppy may wake up and quietly ask for reassurance.

If that happens, simply reach down, give your puppy a gentle pat, let them know you're nearby...

Then go right back to sleep.

Don't turn on the lights.

Don't start talking.

Don't pick your puppy up.

They're simply asking,

"Are you still there?"

A gentle touch answers that question beautifully.

Then ignore any additional fussing.

Within a night or two, almost every puppy settles right back into the routine they've already learned.

Please resist the temptation to "rescue" your puppy.

I know it's hard.

You feel sorry for them.

You miss them.

They're adorable.

But the very first night is not the time to change the rules.

Please don't climb into the pen with your puppy.

Don't sleep on the couch with your puppy.

Don't sleep in a recliner holding your puppy.

And don't bring your puppy into your bed because you feel guilty.

I promise...

You will undo an entire week of careful preparation in a single night.

Even worse, you'll accidentally teach your puppy that crying is the way to get exactly what they want.

Congratulations...

You've just created a tiny little monster.

Your puppy isn't being manipulative.

They're being a baby.

Babies simply repeat whatever works.

If crying gets them into your bed tonight, they'll naturally expect it again tomorrow night.

Consistency is one of the greatest gifts you can give your puppy.

Be kind.

Be reassuring.

But don't change the routine.

You'll be amazed how quickly your puppy settles in.

Food and Water Bowls

Keep them simple.

Choose bowls that are sturdy and shallow enough for a tiny puppy to reach comfortably. A bottle doesn't spill and they're used to it. They also make anti-tip or splash bowls that are also a good option.

Fresh water should always be available.

Always.

Maltese are grazers.

They nibble throughout the day rather than eating one or two large meals.

That means food and water should never be treated as something that's only available at certain times.

Food

Your puppy will already be eating the same food every day before coming home.

Please don't decide that the first day is the perfect time to introduce a new brand.

Your puppy is already adjusting to:

A new home.

New people.

New smells.

New sounds.

A completely different routine.

Please don't ask their digestive system to make major adjustments at the same time.

If you eventually decide to change foods, do it gradually over several days.

Slow transitions help prevent digestive upset.

A Harness



One of the first things many new owners buy is a tiny collar.

Please don't.

A Maltese puppy's neck is delicate.

Even a puppy pulling against its own collar can injure the trachea.

Your puppy will come home wearing a properly fitted harness.

Use it.

It distributes pressure across the chest instead of the neck and is much safer for a toy breed.

An Exercise Pen

PUPPY PEN OPTIONS

Safe, Secure & Beautiful Spaces for Your Maltese Puppy

RICHELL PET GATE / PEN	PLEXIGLASS PEN	IRIS PET PEN	SEABREEZE PETITE PEN
Sturdy • Adjustable • Versatile	Sleek • Modern • Climb-Proof	Lightweight • Easy • Practical	Ultra Portable • Travel Friendly
			
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Sturdy wood frame with wire panelsAdjustable panels for multiple shapesSecure locking doorGreat airflow & visibilityUse as a playpen or room dividerBeautiful furniture-style design	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Crystal-clear visibility from all sidesSmooth, non-porous & easy to cleanGreat for puppies who climbKeeps drafts out while staying visibleSleek, modern lookIdeal for photos & videos	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Lightweight & portableQuick setup & take downCompact for storageBuilt-in door for easy accessAffordable & durableAvailable in multiple sizes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Very lightweight & ultra portableFolds flat for storage under a bedFits in a suitcase for travelNo tools required – pop up in secondsGreat airflow & visibilityPerfect for travel, hotels, visits & small spaces
BEST FOR: Long-term use at home, room division, and growing puppies.	BEST FOR: Climbers, escape artists, and when you want maximum visibility.	BEST FOR: Everyday use, small spaces, and easy setup anywhere.	BEST FOR: Travel, small living spaces, on-the-go families, and maximum convenience.

Happy Puppy. Happy Home.

CHOOSE THE PEN THAT FITS YOUR SPACE, YOUR LIFESTYLE & YOUR PUPPY'S NEEDS.

If I could recommend only one purchase, it would be a quality exercise pen.

Not because your puppy should spend all day in it.

But because life happens.

You have to answer the door.

Take a shower.

Carry in groceries.

Cook dinner.

There will be moments when you simply can't watch your puppy every second.

An exercise pen provides a safe place where your puppy has everything they need while you handle life's little interruptions.

Freedom should come gradually.

Safety comes first.

This pen will earn its keep again once your puppy has settled in — it becomes one of the best tools you have for teaching your puppy to feel safe and confident spending a little time alone. More on that when we get to independence.

Potty Pads



Your puppy already understands how to use potty pads before coming home.

Set your puppy up for success.

Place the potty pad where it's easy to find. Don't expect a ten-week-old puppy to search an entire house looking for the bathroom.

Once your puppy settles into the routine, we'll walk through exactly how and when to start moving that pad — including how to transition to going outside, if that's your long-term goal. That's coming up in the house-training chapter.

Toys

Your puppy doesn't need dozens of toys.

They need a variety of safe toys that encourage exploration and confidence.

Rotate toys every week or two.

A toy that's been put away suddenly becomes exciting all over again. If they're particularly attached to a certain toy please don't take that toy away.

Things You Don't Need

Here's where I may save you some money.

You don't need an expensive designer bed.

You don't need a closet full of outfits.

You don't need fifty different treats. (REALLY bad idea for tender tummies)

And you certainly don't need every gadget the pet store tries to convince you is essential.

Your puppy would rather spend fifteen minutes playing with you than receive another expensive toy.

Never forget that.

At the end of the day, your puppy isn't coming home because your house is perfect.

Your puppy is coming home because you are about to become their whole world.

And if you provide love...

Patience...

Consistency...

Safety...

Food...

Water...

And your time...

You'll already have given your puppy the things that matter most.

The Heart of the Matter:

The best thing you can bring home for your puppy isn't another gadget.

It's consistency.

Your Home Through Puppy Eyes



By now your shopping is probably finished.

The pen is assembled.

The toys are waiting.

The food is in the pantry.

You think you're ready.

There's just one more thing I'd like you to do before your puppy comes home.

Get down on your hands and knees.

I'm serious.

Crawl through your house at puppy level.

You'll be amazed what suddenly becomes visible.

Electrical cords.

Dropped pills.

Coins.

Rubber bands.

Paper clips.

Tiny toys.

Table legs.

Loose strings.

Things you've never noticed before suddenly become fascinating.

Because that's exactly how your puppy sees the world.

Everything is an adventure.

Everything is worth investigating.

Everything is worth tasting.

One of the hardest parts of owning a Maltese puppy is remembering just how tiny they really are.

Your puppy doesn't weigh twenty pounds.

They may weigh barely two pounds.

That changes everything.

Things that wouldn't even inconvenience a Labrador can be life-threatening to a Maltese puppy.

Over the years, I've heard heartbreaking stories that almost always begin with the same words...

"It happened so fast."

And they're right.

It does.

One moment everything is fine.

The next...

Your entire world has changed.

Many of those accidents are preventable.

Let's talk about them.

The Biggest Danger Is Complacency

People often ask me what scares me the most.

It's not snakes.

It's not coyotes.

It's not even disease.

It's complacency.

The moment we begin thinking,

"It'll never happen to me..."

We're often one distraction away from tragedy.

Never assume someone else is watching your puppy.

Know who is watching.

If the answer is "nobody"...

Your puppy belongs in the exercise pen.

Furniture Isn't Just Furniture

I've heard too many stories of puppies jumping from beds, couches, and recliners.

Please don't assume your puppy knows how far is too far.

They don't.

Tiny puppies don't understand gravity.

They simply see you.

And if you're getting off the couch...

They may decide to follow.

The injuries from those falls can be devastating.

Broken legs.

Broken jaws.

Head injuries.

Sometimes worse.

If your puppy is on furniture, your hands should be on your puppy.

Always.

Recliners

If I could remove one piece of furniture from every puppy owner's home for the first few months...

It would be the recliner.

Puppies love to crawl underneath them.

People don't realize they're there.

The results can be tragic.

Before you close a recliner...

Look.

Every.

Single.

Time.

Doors

Tiny puppies are astonishingly quiet.

They can appear behind you without making a sound.

Before closing any door...

Look behind you.

Then look again.

The Kitchen

Dropped grapes.

Chocolate.

Onions.

Cooked bones.

Artificial sweeteners.

A tiny puppy can swallow something dangerous long before you even realize it hit the floor.

Make it a habit to clean up immediately.

Medications

One dropped pill can become a veterinary emergency.

Always assume your puppy will find it before you do.

If you drop medication...

Stop everything until you find it.

Other Pets

Even the sweetest dog can accidentally injure a tiny Maltese puppy.

Good intentions don't prevent accidents.

Supervision does.

Introductions should be calm.

Slow.

Controlled.

Never assume.

Children

Children and puppies can become wonderful friends.

But children should never be expected to supervise puppies.

Adults supervise both.

Always.

Teach children to sit on the floor before holding a puppy.

Never allow running while carrying one.

And never assume a child understands how fragile a two-pound puppy really is.

Outside

The outdoors is wonderful.

It's also full of risks.

Birds of prey.

Snakes.

Coyotes.

Loose dogs.

Bee stings.

Cars.

Fertilizers.

Even a tiny gap in a fence can become an escape route.

Until your puppy is bigger and fully vaccinated, every trip outside should be intentional and supervised.

No exceptions.

The goal isn't to make you afraid.

It's to help you become aware.

Awareness prevents accidents.

Fear doesn't.

After more than 20 years with Maltese, I've learned one simple truth.

Most tragedies aren't caused by bad people.

They're caused by ordinary people having an ordinary day...

Who simply never imagined something could happen.

I want you to imagine it. Because then you'll prevent it.

And your puppy will never know the danger that almost existed.

That's exactly the way I want it.

Cold Weather

Maltese have hair, not fur.

That's not just a grooming detail.

It means they don't have the insulating undercoat that helps many other breeds shrug off the cold.

A Maltese gets cold fast. Faster than you'd expect from a dog wearing that much hair.

These are indoor companion dogs.

Not outdoor dogs.

That's not an opinion. It's biology.

During extremely cold weather, I consider indoor potty pads or a protected garage potty area perfectly acceptable for my puppies.

I'd rather you keep a potty pad by the door all winter than risk a shivering, miserable puppy just to prove a point about being fully potty trained outside.

Their safety will always matter more to me than forcing an outdoor potty trip in dangerous weather.

Bundle them up if you must go out.

But when the temperature turns dangerous, bring the bathroom inside.

The Heart of the Matter

Tiny puppies don't need perfect homes. They need attentive families.

Most accidents don't happen because someone didn't love their puppy.

They happen because someone looked away for "just a second."

With a Maltese puppy...Those few seconds matter.

Protect them.

They're counting on you.

The First 48 Hours

If I could ask one thing of every new Storybook family, it would be this:

For the first forty-eight hours...

Slow down.

I know you've waited weeks...

Sometimes months...

For this day.

You have family members who want to visit.

Friends who can't wait to meet your puppy.

Everyone wants to hold the new baby.

Please don't.

Your puppy has already had the biggest day of his or her life.

Everything has changed.

The sights.

The sounds.

The smells.

The people.

Even the air smells different.

Imagine being dropped into a foreign country where no one speaks your language.

That's what coming home feels like to your puppy.

During those first forty-eight hours, I don't care whether your puppy learns to sit.

I don't care whether they sleep through the night.

I don't care if they have an accident and miss the potty pad.

Those things can all wait.

For the first two days, I care about only four things.

Is your puppy eating?

Is your puppy drinking?

Is your puppy peeing?

Is your puppy pooping?

That's it.

Those four things tell me more about how your puppy is adjusting than almost anything else.

Everything else is secondary.

Keep Things Familiar

One reason I send home a bag of the food your puppy has been eating is because now is not the time for sudden changes.

I also send along favorite treats and recommend feeding **Freshpet® Select Small Breed Dog Food** in the refrigerated section of most Walmart and Target stores, morning and evening during the adjustment period.

Your puppy is already under enough stress.

Fresh, soft food is comforting, easy to eat, and encourages puppies who may otherwise be too distracted or overwhelmed to finish a meal.

Later, once your puppy is completely settled into your home, those same little bites of Freshpet make wonderful training treats.

One product.

Two purposes.

Free Choice Feeding

Your puppy should always have access to fresh kibble and clean water.

Always.

Tiny Maltese puppies are grazers.

They don't usually eat one large meal and call it a day.

They nibble.

Play.

Take a nap.

Nibble again.

That pattern is perfectly normal.

Don't mistake grazing for poor appetite.

Hypoglycemia. Imagine this.

You've had your beautiful Storybook puppy home for about twenty-four hours.

Everything has gone wonderfully.

He's explored the house, played a little, met the family, taken a nap in your lap, and you couldn't possibly love him more.

Then suddenly...

Something isn't right.

He doesn't come running when you call.

He isn't interested in breakfast.

He seems quieter than usual.

Maybe he's a little sleepy.

Maybe he's a little shaky.

Maybe he just doesn't seem like himself.

Your first thought might be,

"He's probably just tired."

Don't make that assumption.

The biggest danger during those first few days isn't that your puppy is being stubborn.

It's low blood sugar.

Tiny puppies simply don't carry the energy reserves that larger dogs do. Sometimes all it takes is the excitement and stress of leaving everything they've ever known to make them skip a meal.

That can quickly become an emergency.

That's exactly why every Storybook puppy goes home with a syringe of Nutri-Cal already packed in their bag.

I hope you never need it.

But if you do, I want you to know exactly what to do.

If that happens, act immediately.

Place a pea-sized dab of Nutri-Cal between the molars and canines — never down the throat — and check those gums. They should be a healthy pink, never pale, white, blue, or gray.

The complete emergency protocol, including exactly what to do if your puppy doesn't respond right away, is laid out step by step in the Hypoglycemia chapter later in this book. Read it now if you'd like the full picture, but for these first two days, just know that help is only a syringe away.

Never assume your puppy will "sleep it off." Following a significant sugar crash it can take a full 24 hours to bounce back.

When it comes to hypoglycemia, acting quickly can save your puppy's life.

Don't Panic Over Every Little Thing

Your puppy may skip part of a meal.

That's okay.

Your puppy may nap more than usual.

That's okay too.

Remember...

Travel is exhausting.

Meeting an entirely new family is exhausting.

Learning a new home is exhausting.

Your puppy has earned a nap.

What I don't want to see is a puppy who refuses food entirely...

Won't drink...

Seems weak...

Or becomes increasingly lethargic.

Trust your instincts.

If something doesn't feel right...

Call me or head to the vet or do both.

I'd rather answer a hundred unnecessary questions than have one family hesitate because they were afraid of bothering me.

You are never bothering me.

Not when it comes to one of my babies.

The Heart of the Matter

The first forty-eight hours are not about training.

They're not about showing off your puppy to everyone you know.

They're about helping a tiny little soul feel safe in a brand-new world.

Watch the important things.

Eating. Drinking. Peeing. Pooping.

If those four things are happening...

You're almost certainly headed in the right direction.

Your Puppy Already Knows More Than You Think



One of the happiest surprises for many Storybook families is discovering that their puppy doesn't arrive as a blank slate.

Your puppy has already been learning every single day.

By the time your puppy comes home, he or she has learned routines.

Where to sleep.

Where to eat.

How to play.

How to be groomed.

How to have nails trimmed.

How to ride in a carrier.

How to sleep away from Mom.

And yes...

Where to go potty.

That doesn't mean your puppy is completely housebroken.

It does mean we're not starting from scratch.

We're simply teaching your puppy where the bathroom is in a different house.

Believe it or not...

That's a much easier lesson.

Make Success Easy

One of the biggest mistakes new owners make is expecting far too much, far too soon.

Imagine someone dropped you into a hotel you'd never seen before and expected you to instantly know where every bathroom was.

That's exactly what we ask puppies to do.

Please don't.

Instead...

Set your puppy up to succeed.

Place the potty pad close to or inside the exercise pen with the door open.

Some families eventually want the potty pad in the laundry room.

Others prefer a bathroom.

Some have a dedicated puppy room.

That's perfectly fine.

Just don't expect your puppy to navigate an unfamiliar house on Day One.

For the first few days, convenience is more important than location.

Once your puppy understands the routine, simply move the potty pad a foot or two every day until it reaches its permanent home.

If your long-term goal is for your puppy to potty outside, this is where that transition begins. Even before all of your puppy's vaccinations are complete and it's safe to venture into the yard, you can gradually move the potty pad to the door and then place a potty pad just outside the door and simply take one step outside together. By the time all three puppy shots are on board and it's safe to begin using the yard, you've already established the routine of heading to the door first — making the transition outdoors much easier.

Your puppy will happily follow it.

Small changes. Big success.

Learn Your Puppy's Schedule

Puppies are wonderfully predictable.

Most need to potty:

After waking up.

After eating.

After a vigorous play session.

Before settling down for a nap.

If you quietly place your puppy on the potty pad during those times, you'll look like a training genius.

Actually...

You're simply paying attention.

Celebrate Success

When your puppy uses the potty pad correctly, celebrate.

You don't need a party.

A happy voice.

A gentle pet.

A tiny reward.

That's enough.

Your puppy wants to make you happy.

Help them understand when they've succeeded.

And never underestimate how quickly they can figure out the system.

I've had more than one owner tell me their puppy was so smart that it quickly learned one very important fact:

Potty on the pad. Get a treat. Simple enough.

Except some of these little opportunists apparently decided nobody had specified how much potty was required.

They would march over to the pad, deposit approximately three drops of pee, then turn around and dance in circles expectantly.

I did the thing.

Where's my treat?

Honestly, you almost have to admire the efficiency.

Then there were the two brothers.

One family brought home their first Storybook puppy and taught him to ring a bell when he needed to go outside to potty.

About six months later, his baby brother joined the family.

Baby brother had been trained to use a potty pad.

Older brother was appalled.

Whenever the baby started to potty on the pad, his older brother would race frantically to the bell and ring it.

And ring it.

And ring it.

Apparently the message was quite clear.

Mother!

The baby is peeing in the house again!

I am reporting a crime!

Puppies are always learning.

Sometimes they're learning exactly what we intended.

And sometimes...

They're learning how to work the system.

Accidents Will Happen

Let me save you some frustration.

Your puppy is going to have an accident.

Probably more than one.

That doesn't mean your puppy is stubborn.

It doesn't mean they forgot.

It doesn't mean they're trying to make you angry.

It means they're a baby.

If you discover an accident after the fact...

Simply clean it up.

Don't scold.

Don't rub their nose in it.

Don't lecture them.

By then your puppy has no idea why you're upset.

You've only succeeded in making them afraid of you.

Instead...

Ask yourself one simple question.

"What could I have done differently?"

Should I have watched more closely?

Should I have placed the potty pad closer?

Did I wait too long after a meal?

Every accident is information.

Use it.

Patience Wins

People often ask me,

"How long until my puppy is completely housebroken?"

My answer is always the same.

That depends far more on the humans than it does on the puppy.

Consistency beats intensity.

Every single time.

Your puppy doesn't need perfection from you.

They need predictability.

If you consistently help them succeed...

They will.

If you constantly change the rules...

They'll become confused.

Training isn't about teaching your puppy once.

It's about teaching the same lesson kindly enough and consistently enough that your puppy eventually says,

"Oh...

This is how we do things here."

And one day...

Without even realizing when it happened...

You'll discover you haven't cleaned up an accident in weeks.

That's when you'll smile and realize...

Your little baby has quietly grown up.

The Heart of the Matter

Your puppy isn't trying to be difficult.

They're trying to learn. Make success easy.

Celebrate the victories. Forget yesterday's accidents.

And remember...

Patience and reward teach faster than punishment ever will.

Love Your Puppy Enough to Teach Independence

There is probably no creature on earth more devoted than a Maltese. We refer to them as 'Velcro' dogs for good reason.

If you're sitting...

They want to sit with you.

If you're cooking...

They're in the kitchen.

If you're folding laundry...

They're helping. Well... at least they think they are.

If you go to the bathroom...

Don't expect to go alone ever again.

One of the greatest joys of owning a Maltese is their incredible devotion to their people.

It can also become very stressful for both you and your puppy if we're not careful.

Many people unknowingly teach their puppy that being alone is frightening.

Then months later they wonder why their puppy cries every time they leave the house.

The truth is...they must learn from a young age that spending time alone is a normal part of life. Initially, in a pen where they're safe and have everything they need. Ultimately, they can just be free in the house to enjoy being home when you need to be away.

Independence Is a Gift

One of the greatest gifts you can give your puppy isn't constant attention.

It's confidence.

A confident puppy doesn't panic because you walked into another room.

A confident puppy knows,

"My family always comes back."

That confidence doesn't happen by accident, nor does it happen overnight.

It's built one little success at a time.

Love Your Puppy...Without Creating Separation Anxiety

I know it's tempting.

You've waited so long for this puppy.

You want to hold them every minute.

You want them in your lap.

On your shoulder.

In your bed.

Beside you on the couch.

And believe me...

I understand.

I adore Maltese.

But if your puppy never spends time entertaining themselves...

They never learn that they can.

Several times each day, place your puppy safely in the exercise pen with a favorite toy and simply walk away.

Start small — about fifteen minutes, twice a day.

When you come back, don't make a big production out of it. Simply go on with your day.

Gradually increase the time. Thirty minutes. Then an hour. Eventually a couple of hours, as your puppy becomes comfortable.

Fold laundry.

Answer email.

Cook dinner.

Let your puppy discover that being alone for a little while isn't scary.

It's simply part of life.

Your goal is for your puppy to learn one very important lesson: when you leave, you always come back. That confidence will help prevent separation anxiety and create a happier, more secure companion for years to come.

Don't Make Departures Dramatic

One of the funniest things humans do is announce every departure.

"Mommy will be right back!"

"Be a good puppy!"

"I'll miss you!"

Then we give hugs...

Kisses...

Another hug...

One more kiss...

And finally leave.

Guess what your puppy just learned?

Leaving must be a really big deal.

Instead...

Simply leave.

Calmly.

Quietly.

Matter-of-factly.

Do the same thing when you come home.

Of course you're happy to see your puppy.

They're thrilled to see you too.

But wait a minute or two before turning your return into a celebration.

Calm greetings create calm dogs.

A Little Boredom Is Healthy

This may surprise you.

Your puppy doesn't need to be entertained every waking minute.

In fact...

A little boredom encourages creativity.

It teaches puppies to chew an appropriate toy.

To explore.

To nap.

To become comfortable in their own company.

Life isn't one long play session.

Puppies need quiet time just as much as they need playtime.

Remember...

Your goal isn't to make your puppy dependent on you.

Your goal is to make your puppy secure enough that they don't have to be.

Ironically...

Those are the puppies that become the closest companions.

Because they're with you by choice...

Not because they're afraid to be anywhere else.

One day you'll leave the house.

Your puppy will watch you walk out the door...

Stretch...

Yawn...

Find their favorite bed...

And take a nap until you come home.

When that happens...

Smile.

You didn't teach your puppy not to love you.

You taught them to trust you.

That's one of the greatest gifts you'll ever give each other.

Confession time...I'm usually more worried about my puppies than they are about me. If you find yourself wondering every five minutes what your puppy is doing, do yourself a favor and buy a camera. Chances are you'll find your puppy sound asleep while you're the one pacing the floor.

One day I decided to conduct a little experiment.

While I was driving home from shopping, I pulled up my puppy cameras to see exactly when my dogs realized I was coming home.

Four blocks away...they were all sound asleep.

Three blocks away...heads started popping up.

Two blocks away...everyone was on their feet.

One block away...they were dancing in circles, tails wagging, waiting for me to walk through the door.

To this day, I have no idea how they knew I was coming home before I ever turned into the driveway. Maybe they heard my car. Maybe they recognized a familiar sound. Maybe they have senses we'll never completely understand.

Whatever the reason, I found it fascinating that my homecoming was already on their radar long before I reached the house.

One thing was obvious...they missed me a whole lot more during that last block than they had during the first four.

The Heart of the Matter

A puppy who can spend a little time alone without fear is not a lonely puppy.

They're a confident puppy.

Teach independence while they're young.

Your future self...And your puppy...Will both thank you.

Grooming Begins on Day One



One of the compliments I hear most often is, "I can't believe how good my puppy is for grooming!"

That always makes me smile.

Because your puppy didn't become comfortable with grooming by accident.

It didn't begin the week before you brought them home.

It began the day they were born.

One of my goals has always been to raise puppies that greet new experiences with curiosity instead of fear.

That confidence isn't created in one day.

It's built one tiny lesson at a time.

From the very beginning.

The First Lessons

Beginning on the very first day of life, each puppy receives **Early Neurological Stimulation**, often called ENS.



These are a series of gentle exercises performed during a very short developmental window.

They're quick.

Gentle.

Carefully controlled.

The goal isn't to stress the puppy.

The goal is to gently introduce tiny challenges that help build resilience and confidence later in life.

It's one small piece of a much larger picture.

The World Begins to Get Bigger

As the puppies grow, so do their experiences.

One of the first things they hear in their warming box is a little **Blinky Babble Ball**.



At first it's simply background noise and flashing lights.

Before long...

It's just another normal part of life and something interesting to interact with, even chase.

Every new sound becomes another opportunity to learn that unfamiliar doesn't mean frightening.

That philosophy continues throughout puppyhood as we introduce more and more interactive toys that may actually be obnoxious to us at times, but are essential for building confidence.

Gentle Hands Build Confident Puppies

Long before your puppy has enough coat to actually groom, they're learning that being handled is a wonderful thing.

Tiny nails are trimmed regularly.

Little faces are gently washed.

Eyes are cleaned.

Feet are handled.

Ears are touched.

Their mouths are gently examined.

At first these sessions last only moments.

Always...

Always...

Always ending with praise and a treat.

As soon as there's enough coat to justify it, I begin gently combing them.
Not because they desperately need brushing.
Because I want brushing to become one of the happiest parts of their day.
The brush never arrives after painful mats have formed.
The brush arrives long before it's needed.
That's an important difference.
Every grooming session is calm.
Gentle.
Unhurried.
Your puppy learns that human hands bring comfort.
Not fear.

Every Lesson Deserves a Reward

One of the things you'll quickly notice throughout this book is that I love rewarding puppies.
Every grooming session ends with something wonderful.
As older puppies, that may be a favorite treat.
But their very first reward comes much earlier than that.
When they've only recently opened their eyes...
Long before they have teeth...
They receive the tiniest taste of Nutri-Cal.
Most people think of Nutri-Cal as an emergency product.
I think of it as something else too.
A positive experience.
By the time your puppy comes home, they already recognize both the smell and the taste.

If the day ever comes when I ask you to reach for the Nutri-Cal because your puppy needs it...

I don't want that moment to become another battle.

I want your puppy to think,

"Oh...

I know this."

Sometimes the smallest preparations make the biggest difference.

Grooming Is About More Than Looking Beautiful

People often think grooming is about keeping a Maltese pretty.

Of course that's part of it.

But grooming is also one of the best health examinations you'll ever perform.

As your hands move through the coat, you'll notice things.

A tiny mat.

A little burr.

A flea.

A tick.

A scratch.

A sore spot.

An ear that's beginning to look irritated.

The earlier you notice little things...

The less likely they are to become big things.

Daily grooming is really daily observation.

Your puppy benefits from both.

Continue the Conversation

When your puppy comes home, I don't want you to think you're introducing grooming.

You're simply continuing a conversation we've been having since the day your puppy entered the world.

Keep your sessions short and if possible, at the same time each day. Perhaps as you're having your morning coffee, or in the evening watching your favorite show. They thrive on consistency.

Keep them gentle.

Keep them positive.

Always praise.

Always reward.

Your puppy should finish every grooming session believing they just spent a few wonderful minutes with their favorite person.

Because if you do...

Years from now, people will say exactly what they say to me today.

"I can't believe how good your dog is for grooming."

And you'll smile...

Because you'll know the secret.

Confidence isn't created in one lesson.

It's created in hundreds of tiny moments, each one building quietly upon the last.

The Heart of the Matter

Never wait until grooming becomes necessary before making it enjoyable.

A puppy who learns from the very beginning that handling, brushing, nail trims, and face washing are followed by praise and a reward won't merely tolerate grooming...

They'll look forward to it.

And that's one of the best things you'll ever do for a Maltese.

Coat Transition



Somewhere between 3 and 6 months every Maltese puppy goes through something that catches new owners completely off guard.

Their puppy coat begins turning into their adult coat. Though they are a non-shedding breed, they DO shed their puppy coat.

This is exactly the point where grooming stops being optional and becomes essential.

For a while, the puppy coat and the incoming adult coat occupy the same space at the same time, and they tangle around each other like they were designed to test your patience.

A coat that brushed out easily last month can turn into a solid mat overnight.

Daily brushing, all the way to the skin, matters more during this stretch than at almost any other point in your Maltese's life.

Skip a few days and you may be reaching for scissors instead of a comb.

Here's something I've learned that surprises almost everyone.

Many people who go looking for a "hypoallergenic" breed and land on the Maltese discover they still react — to the puppy coat.

I know this better than almost anyone.

I'm allergic to Maltese puppy coat myself.

Every time I have a full litter growing up in my house, I spend months sneezing and itching right along with them.

You'd think, after all these years, I'd have learned my lesson.

I haven't.

And I never will.

Because as that puppy coat transitions into the adult coat, those allergic reactions almost always fade away, and I'd sneeze through a hundred more litters for what comes after.

If you or someone in your family reacts to your puppy's coat early on, don't panic and don't assume you made a mistake.

Give it time.

The adult coat is usually a completely different experience.

Your Puppy's Health, My Philosophy

"The greatest gift you can give your puppy is not simply love... it is becoming an educated advocate for their health."

One of the questions I'm asked most often is,

"Barbara... when should I take my puppy to the veterinarian?"

My answer usually surprises people.

Before your puppy ever needs one.

Don't wait until your puppy is sick to begin looking for a veterinarian.

That decision deserves just as much thought as choosing your breeder.

Perhaps more.

Your veterinarian will become one of the most important people in your puppy's life.

Choose carefully.

Over the past twenty years, I've worked with many veterinarians.

Some have become trusted friends.

Some have taught me things I'll never forget.

Others have challenged my thinking and encouraged me to continue learning.

I've also experienced heartbreaking losses that forever changed the way I approach veterinary medicine.

Those experiences have shaped every recommendation you'll read in this chapter.

Please understand something before we go any further.

I am not a veterinarian.

I don't pretend to be.

What I am is someone who has devoted more than twenty years to breeding, raising, showing, studying, and loving Maltese.

I've watched generations of puppies grow from their first breath until old age.

I've celebrated wonderful successes.

I've made painful mistakes.

I've buried dogs I loved with all my heart.

Every recommendation in this chapter comes from those experiences.

Sometimes my recommendations agree completely with conventional veterinary medicine.

Sometimes they don't.

When they don't, it isn't because I enjoy being different.

It's because decades of experience have led me to different conclusions.

I encourage every puppy family to find a veterinarian who welcomes thoughtful conversation.

Not one who is offended by questions.

Not one who expects blind obedience.

And certainly not one who dismisses your concerns because you're "only" the owner.

You know your puppy better than anyone else.

A good veterinarian brings medical knowledge.

You bring daily observation.

When those two things come together with mutual respect...

Wonderful things happen.

If you're fortunate enough to find a veterinarian who also appreciates nutrition, preventative care, minimizing unnecessary medications, and incorporating holistic medicine whenever appropriate...

Huge score.

Hold onto that veterinarian.

They're worth their weight in gold.

Throughout this chapter I'm going to explain the protocol I've developed over many years.

It is exactly that...

My protocol.

I'm not asking you to blindly accept it.

I'm asking you to understand why I've come to these conclusions.

Read.

Learn.

Ask questions.

Have thoughtful discussions with your veterinarian.

Become your puppy's advocate.

No one has a greater responsibility for your puppy's future than you do.

Tiny Dogs Are Different

One of the greatest frustrations I've experienced over the years is watching toy breeds treated as though they're simply large dogs in miniature.

They aren't.

A two-pound Maltese puppy is not simply a seventy-pound Labrador scaled down.

Their metabolism is different.

Their nutritional needs are different.

Their anesthetic requirements are different.

Even their margin for error is dramatically different.

What a large dog may shrug off can become a medical emergency in a toy breed.

That reality influences every recommendation I make.

Sometimes I Learned I Could Do It Better

One thing you'll discover about me is that I'm always asking one question.

"Can this be done better?"

Sometimes the answer is no.

Sometimes the answer is absolutely.

One of those moments came when Little was just a puppy.

Like every new puppy owner, I took him to the veterinarian for his puppy vaccinations.

Everything seemed routine.

Until we got home.

For the next three days, Little wouldn't walk.



Every time I picked him up, he cried.

It broke my heart.

I carried him to go potty.

Hand-fed him.

Encouraged him to drink.

The hardest part wasn't caring for him.

It was realizing that he thought I was the one hurting him.

To this day I don't know exactly what happened.

Perhaps the injection irritated a nerve.

Perhaps it was simply one of those unfortunate things that occasionally happens.

But I remember thinking,

"There has to be a gentler way."

Fortunately, I wasn't starting from scratch.

Before real estate...

Before Maltese...

I had raised both beef and dairy cattle.

I'd given countless injections over the years. But there is an enormous difference between cattle and tiny puppies.

So I studied.

I read.

I watched.

I learned proper techniques specifically for tiny dogs.

When it came time for Little's next vaccination...

I gave it myself.

He never reacted that way again.

Neither did any puppy after him. Every puppy since then, I've given their shots myself. I also feel better taking them to the vet after they've already had at least one vaccine, rather than sitting in a waiting room full of sick animals with no protection at all.

That experience reinforced something I still believe today.

Loving your dogs means never stopping your education.

Some of the greatest teachers I've ever had have been veterinarians.

Others have been breeders.

Researchers.

Mentors.

Experience itself.

Whenever I discover a safer...

Gentler...

Better way...

I change.

Not because I think I know everything.

Because I know I never will.

My Vaccination Philosophy

If you've read this far, you've probably noticed a recurring theme throughout this book.

I believe that just because something has always been done a certain way doesn't necessarily mean it's the best way.

That philosophy extends to vaccinations.

Let me say something that often surprises people.

I believe in vaccinations.

Every Storybook puppy is vaccinated.

If I didn't believe vaccines protected puppies from devastating diseases, I wouldn't use them.

The question has never been whether to vaccinate.

The question has always been how to vaccinate as safely and thoughtfully as possible.

Over more than twenty years with Maltese, I have watched my own puppies grow from birth into old age.

I've watched generations of puppies.

I've listened to countless respected toy breed breeders, both here in the United States and around the world.

I've spent years reading veterinary literature, holistic literature, research papers, and articles from every viewpoint I could find.

My goal isn't to convince you that I'm right.

My goal is to explain why I have adopted the protocol I follow today.

Everything I recommend is based on one simple question.

"How can I provide the protection my puppies need while placing the least possible stress on their developing immune systems?"

That question has guided every decision I make.

Why I Separate Vaccines

One of the easiest changes I ever made was deciding that my puppies would receive as few challenges to their immune systems at one time as possible.

Whenever practical, I prefer one vaccine at a time.

I prefer separating rabies from all other vaccinations. Followed by Titer testing to check for immunity prior to asking your little dog's system to process yet more vaccines if it is unnecessary.

I also prefer not combining vaccinations with elective procedures such as spay/neuter whenever scheduling allows.

Why?

Because I believe every vaccine asks the immune system to do an important job.

If that job can be accomplished without asking the body to respond to several different challenges on the very same day...

That simply makes sense to me.

Perhaps another breeder would reach a different conclusion.

Perhaps another veterinarian would.

That's perfectly acceptable.

This is simply the philosophy I've adopted after decades of working with tiny toy breeds.

As I mentioned earlier, tiny dogs don't share the same margin for error as larger breeds.

Because of that, I choose to be conservative whenever I reasonably can.

Why I Don't Recommend Leptospirosis Vaccination for My Puppies

This is probably one of the recommendations that generates the most questions.



People often ask,

"But my veterinarian recommends Lepto."

I understand.

Many do.

My recommendation is based upon my own experiences, years of studying the available literature, discussions with respected breeders, and my own

philosophy regarding risk versus benefit in toy breeds.

I have personally witnessed a dog come frighteningly close to dying following a Leptospirosis vaccination.

That experience has never left me.

When I combine what I personally witnessed with everything else I've learned over the years, I have chosen not to include Leptospirosis vaccination in my own protocol for Storybook Maltese puppies.

You will find additional reading included with this book explaining some of the information that influenced my thinking.

I encourage you to read it.

Study it.

Discuss it with your veterinarian.

Then make the decision you believe is best for your own dog.

Why I Prefer Revolution or Sentinel

Preventing parasites is important.

I don't believe anyone should simply ignore heartworms, fleas, or intestinal parasites.

Protection matters.

The question, once again, becomes...

Which protection?

Over the years, I have become increasingly comfortable recommending products such as Revolution or Sentinel.

They have fit well within my own philosophy of providing protection while minimizing unnecessary risk whenever possible.

One of my earliest veterinarians explained it to me this way:

Revolution and Sentinel work by rendering parasites infertile. Because fleas have such a short life cycle, you may occasionally see an individual flea, but you should not see an infestation.

Most of the other products work differently. They use a neurotoxin to attack the pest's nervous system. Here is the problem with that! Those neurotoxic chemicals can also affect the nervous systems of our dogs. Over the years, I have personally witnessed enough cases that I feel very strongly about this.

Because of those experiences, I have made the decision that if you choose to use a flea and tick preventative other than Revolution or Sentinel, it will void my Health Guarantee.

No medication is completely without risk.

Nothing in medicine is.

But based upon my own experience, these are the products I feel most comfortable recommending for Storybook puppies.

That is why you'll see them throughout this book and throughout my Health Guarantee.

Why I Avoid Over The Counter Flea and Tick Medications, Nexgard & Heartgard

This section is deeply personal for me.

Over the years, I have personally known dogs that developed devastating neurological problems, and some that died, after receiving just one dose of these medications.

Some eventually recovered.

Others never completely did.

Some lost their lives.

Those are experiences that permanently changed my thinking.

In addition to my own personal experiences, I have spent years following the stories of dog owners around the world who have reported similar concerns.

Those stories matter to me.

Could every single case be explained the same way?

I don't know.

But I do know this.

I have seen enough.

As a breeder, I have reached the point where I am simply no longer comfortable recommending these products for my own dogs or for the puppies I bring into this world.

Because I believe there are alternatives that better fit my philosophy, my Health Guarantee requires owners to follow my parasite prevention protocol if they wish to maintain warranty coverage.

That requirement isn't meant to control anyone.

It simply reflects an honest reality.

I can only stand behind the protocol that I personally believe gives my puppies the greatest opportunity for a long and healthy life. I've learned that Neurologic injury from these pest control treatments mimic very closely conditions such as GME. I have watched my counterparts in the Toy Breed world be accused of providing a puppy that had GME when the whole time it was the flea/tick medication they chose to use. I don't intend for that to happen to my puppies; therefore, my policy stands.

Why I Recommend Laser Spay and Neuter

If you have access to a veterinarian who performs laser surgery...

Take advantage of it.

Laser surgery has become one of those advances that simply makes sense to me.

Instead of cutting tissue with a traditional scalpel, the laser seals many tiny blood vessels and nerve endings as it works.

In my experience, puppies often experience less swelling, less bleeding, less discomfort, and a smoother, faster recovery.

Anything that reduces pain and speeds healing is worth considering.

As always, finding the right surgeon is every bit as important as choosing the surgical technique itself.

A skilled veterinarian using excellent anesthetic monitoring is far more important than any single piece of equipment.

If you can find a veterinarian who offers laser surgery and has extensive experience with toy breeds...

I consider that a tremendous advantage.

The Heart of the Matter

I have never expected everyone to agree with every recommendation I make.

That isn't my goal.

My goal has always been much simpler.

To study. To keep learning. To ask questions.

To never become so convinced that I've found all the answers that I stop looking for better ones. Everything in this chapter represents the best conclusions I have reached after years devoted to this remarkable breed.

You may ultimately make different decisions.

I respect your right to do so.

My greatest hope is simply that whatever decisions you make...

You make them intentionally. You make them thoughtfully.

Never stop learning. Never stop asking questions. Never stop advocating for your puppy.

They're depending on you to make the best decisions you can with the knowledge you have.

Why I Require Spay and Neuter by Six Months

One of the questions I occasionally hear is,

"Why are you so firm about having pet puppies spayed or neutered by six months of age?"

The easy answer is because I don't sell my pet puppies to be bred.

But that's only part of the reason.

The bigger reason has nothing to do with pedigrees.

It has everything to do with helping families enjoy a lifetime with a wonderful companion.

After watching generation after generation of Maltese mature, I've noticed something.

Many of the behavior problems that eventually frustrate owners don't appear overnight.

They develop gradually.

Then they become habits.

One of the most common conversations goes something like this...

"My little boy has started lifting his leg all over the house."

"He's marking my furniture."

"He's humping everyone who comes to visit."

"He's become much harder to live with."

My first question is almost always the same.

"Was he neutered by six months of age?"

Far too often...

The answer is no.

Hormones are powerful.

They influence behavior for a reason.

The problem isn't simply the hormones themselves.

The problem is that once certain behaviors become routine, they often continue even after the hormones are gone.

By the time many owners decide to neuter...

The habit has already become part of the dog's daily life.

Preventing a habit is almost always easier than breaking one.

The puppies have been my greatest teachers.

One lesson they have taught me over and over again is that preventing a problem is almost always easier than trying to correct one later.

That is why I require every pet puppy sold by Storybook Maltese to be spayed or neutered by six months of age.

This requirement is not arbitrary.

It isn't about convenience.

And it certainly isn't included only to prevent unauthorized breeding, though that's a big part of it.

It exists because I believe it gives my puppies the greatest opportunity to become the delightful, well-mannered companions I envisioned when I planned the breeding that brought them into this world.

I've had heartbreaking conversations with families who were overwhelmed by urine marking, hormone-driven mounting, and other behaviors that placed tremendous strain on the relationship between the dog and the family.

Those conversations are painful because many of them could have been avoided.

My responsibility as a breeder doesn't end the day you carry your puppy out my front door.

I feel a responsibility to do everything reasonably within my power to stack the odds in favor of a long, happy, successful life together.

Sometimes that means making recommendations.

Sometimes it means establishing requirements.

This is one of those requirements.

It is a material condition of my Purchase Agreement.

Every pet puppy sold by Storybook Maltese must be spayed or neutered by six months of age.

Failure to comply constitutes a breach of the Purchase Agreement and immediately voids the Health Guarantee.

This requirement is one of the ways I fulfill the promise I made to every puppy I have ever brought into this world.

To do everything within my knowledge and experience to give them the very best chance at a wonderful life.

Hypoglycemia

HYPOGLYCEMIA. ♥ *Imagine this.!* 🐾

You've had your beautiful Storybook puppy home for about **twenty-four hours**. Everything has gone wonderfully. He's explored the house, played a little, met the family, taken a nap in your lap, and you couldn't possibly love him more.



Then suddenly...
Something isn't right.

-  He doesn't come running when you call.
-  He isn't interested in breakfast.
-  He seems quieter than usual.
-  Maybe he's a little shaky.
-  Maybe he's a little sleepy.
-  Maybe he just doesn't seem like himself.

YOUR FIRST THOUGHT MIGHT BE,
"He's probably just tired."
DON'T MAKE THAT ASSUMPTION.

The biggest danger during those first few days isn't that your puppy is being stubborn. **It's low blood sugar.** 

Tiny puppies simply don't carry the energy reserves that larger dogs do. Sometimes all it takes is the excitement and stress of leaving everything they've ever known to make them skip a meal. That can quickly become an **emergency**.

THAT'S EXACTLY WHY EVERY STORYBOOK PUPPY GOES HOME WITH A SYRINGE OF NUTRI-CAL ALREADY PACKED IN THEIR BAG.



-  Nutri-Cal helps raise blood sugar quickly in an emergency.
-  **Keep it handy. Know how to use it.** It could save your puppy's life.

Watch for these warning signs:

-  Weakness
-  Lethargy
-  Shakiness
-  Cold ears or paws
-  Seizures (in severe cases)
-  Collapse

♥ When in doubt, don't wait. Feed. Then call your veterinarian. *We're here for you.* 🐾 STORYBOOK MALTESE

The Emergency Every Maltese Owner Needs to Understand

If there is one chapter I hope you never need...

It's this one.

I would love for you to read these pages, tuck them away in the back of your mind, and never think about them again.

But if the day ever comes when your puppy suddenly seems "not quite right," I want you to recognize the signs immediately.

Minutes matter.

Tiny Maltese puppies simply do not have the energy reserves that larger dogs have.

They burn through blood sugar remarkably quickly.

A missed meal.

Stress.

Travel.

Vomiting.

Diarrhea.

Too much excitement.

Even a long afternoon of playing can occasionally tip the balance in a very young puppy.

That is why every Storybook puppy goes home with Nutri-Cal.

I don't send it because I expect you'll need it.

I send it because I never want you wishing you had it.

Learn What Is Normal

The best way to recognize a sick puppy is to first know what a healthy puppy looks like.

Healthy puppies are curious.

Busy.

Playful.

Hungry.

They bounce from toy to toy.

They race around the room.

Then suddenly...

They collapse into a nap as though someone switched them off.

That's perfectly normal.

A healthy puppy wakes up ready to play again.

A puppy developing hypoglycemia often looks different.

They don't simply become sleepy.

They become quiet.

They lose interest.

Something just doesn't seem right.

I've learned over the years to trust that feeling.

If you ever find yourself saying,

"My puppy just isn't acting like himself..."

Pay attention.

You know your puppy.

Trust your instincts.

Early Signs

Hypoglycemia often begins quietly.

Your puppy may:

Refuse to eat.

Act unusually sleepy.

Seem weak.

Walk more slowly.

Become wobbly.

Have pale or blue gums.

Hide.

Tremble.

Appear confused.

Sometimes owners tell me,

"I thought he was just tired."

Maybe.

But don't assume.

Advanced Signs

If blood sugar continues to fall, things can become serious very quickly.

You may see:

Staggering.

Difficulty standing.

Head pressing.

Glassy or squinty eyes.

Muscle twitching.

Seizures.

Collapse.

Loss of consciousness.

This is no longer something to "watch."

This is an emergency.

What To Do Immediately

Stay calm.

Your puppy needs you thinking clearly.

Your first priority is simple: get calories into your puppy.

If your puppy is awake enough to swallow...

Offer food immediately.

Freshpet is often tempting because it's soft and aromatic. Rotisserie chicken works well too — anything your puppy finds hard to resist.

If they refuse food...

Reach for the Nutri-Cal.

Squeeze a small pea sized amount into their mouth at the side between the molars and canines where there's a natural gap that perfectly fits the syringe of Nutri-Cal provided with the puppy.

Not down the throat.

The sugars begin absorbing almost immediately, and it will likely make your puppy thirsty, so offer water too.

Wait about thirty minutes, then check on your puppy again.

While you wait, check your puppy's gums frequently. They should be a healthy pink. Pale gums are concerning. White, blue, gray, or very pale gums mean this is an emergency.

If you don't have Nutri-Cal available, Karo syrup, pancake syrup, or another simple sugar can be used in an emergency until veterinary care is available. Avoid honey for the first year, just like for human babies.

Keep your puppy warm.

A chilled puppy has an even harder time recovering.

Wrap them in a soft towel or blanket while you contact me and your veterinarian.

Never delay seeking veterinary care simply because your puppy seems a little better after receiving sugar.

Sometimes improvement is temporary. If the crash has been significant, continue offering a small amount of Nutri-Cal every thirty minutes while encouraging your puppy to eat, until you can get them eating on their own — that's the ultimate goal.

You'll know your puppy has turned the corner when they're eating normally on their own, their gums are a healthy pink, and they're acting like themselves again.

If your puppy continues to refuse food, becomes weaker, has difficulty standing, becomes unresponsive, has seizures, or simply doesn't improve promptly after Nutri-Cal, seek emergency veterinary care immediately.

Keep a can of chicken in the pantry just in case so you'll always have something tempting to offer if nothing else works.

Prevention Is Much Easier Than Treatment

Fortunately...

Most cases can be prevented.

Keep dry kibble available at all times.

Offer Freshpet food twice daily during the adjustment period.

Avoid allowing your puppy to become overtired.

Limit long periods of strenuous play.

Watch carefully during times of stress.

Monitor eating after travel.

Monitor eating after vaccinations.

Monitor eating after exciting family gatherings.

Pay attention after vomiting or diarrhea.

One missed meal isn't always an emergency.

Several missed meals can become one.

Why I'm Such A Stickler About Eating

Sometimes families laugh because I ask the same questions every time they call.

"Is your puppy eating?"

"Is your puppy drinking?"

"Has your puppy peed?"

"Has your puppy pooped?"

I'm not making conversation.

Those four answers tell me an enormous amount.

Especially with a toy breed.

I've learned that by the time a tiny puppy actually looks critically ill...

They've often been getting into trouble for quite a while.

That's why I would much rather have you call me early.

I'd rather reassure you that everything is fine than wish we'd talked an hour sooner.

When In Doubt...

Call. Text. Email. GET IN TOUCH!

Call your veterinarian.

Call the emergency clinic.

I have never been upset because someone called too soon.

I have been heartbroken because someone waited too long.

Never worry about bothering me.

If one of my puppies needs help...

I want to know.

And remember to always check those gums! They should be nice and pink. Never pale, white, blue, only pink.

The Heart of the Matter

Hypoglycemia is one of the few true emergencies every Maltese owner should understand before they ever need to.

Learn the signs.

Keep Nutri-Cal where you can find it quickly.

Trust your instincts.

When something doesn't feel right...Act.

I'd much rather discover it wasn't an emergency than discover we waited too long.

Reverse Sneezing

At some point, almost every Maltese owner witnesses something that sounds like their puppy is choking, honking, or trying to inhale a goose.



That's reverse sneezing.

The first time you see it, it's terrifying.

Your puppy stands still, extends their neck, and makes a loud snorting sound over and over, as though they can't quite catch their breath.

Take a breath yourself.

In all my years with this breed, I have never seen reverse sneezing create a lasting health problem in one of my own dogs.

Most episodes last well under a minute.

Some are triggered by excitement, allergens, dust, or pulling against the leash.

Then it stops, just as suddenly as it started, and your puppy goes right back to whatever they were doing, completely unbothered.

The best thing you can do is stay calm.

Gently stroke your puppy's throat, offer a small distraction, or softly blow on their face.

Your puppy is watching you to decide how worried to be.

If you panic, they will too.

If you stay calm, most episodes pass in seconds.

Daily Maintenance

Little Problems Stay Little

One of the greatest advantages you have as a puppy owner is that you see your Maltese every single day.

Your veterinarian may see your dog once or twice a year.

You see them every morning.

Every evening.

Every mealtime.

Every cuddle.

That makes you the first person likely to notice when something changes.

I've learned that little problems usually stay little...

If they're recognized early.

Get into the habit of giving your puppy a quick "nose-to-tail" check every day.

It only takes a minute or two, and it may someday save your puppy's life.

Eyes

A Maltese should have bright, sparkling eyes.

Look for excessive tearing. (All dogs have tears; I'm talking excessive tearing)

Redness.

Squinting.

Cloudiness.

Or discharge.

A tiny amount of moisture in the corners of the eyes can be perfectly normal.

Thick yellow or green discharge is not.

If your puppy suddenly begins holding one eye closed, rubbing at it, or seems unusually sensitive to light...

Don't wait.

Eye injuries can become serious surprisingly quickly.

Hair should never be allowed to constantly rub against the eyes.

Keeping the hair around the face clean and properly trimmed isn't simply about appearance.

It's about comfort and protecting your puppy's vision.

Tear Staining

One of the first questions many new Maltese owners ask is,

"How do I prevent tear stains?"

The truth is...

There isn't one magic product.

Tear staining can be influenced by many things, including genetics, irritation, diet, excessive tearing, and any stress on overall health, such as worms, fleas, or an infected tooth or ear infection.

My philosophy has always been simple.

Keep the face clean.

Wash the face regularly.

Comb the hair around the eyes every day.

Don't allow moisture to remain trapped against the hair.

Once staining develops, it takes time for clean white hair to grow back in.

Prevention is much easier than trying to remove stains later.

Remember...

A clean face isn't simply prettier.

It's healthier.

That being said, ALL dogs have tears and naturally you'll see the evidence of that on a white dog much more than you would on a brown or black dog.

Ears

Every week, lift each ear and take a look inside and give it a sniff.

Healthy ears should be clean and light pink.

A small amount of wax can be normal.

Strong odor...

Dark discharge...

Redness...

Or a puppy constantly scratching at one ear deserves attention.

Never ignore your puppy shaking his head over and over.

That's often your first clue that something isn't right.

Teeth

One of the biggest health challenges facing toy breeds is dental disease.

The good news is...

Much of it can be prevented.

Begin brushing while your puppy is still young.

Don't wait until there's a problem.

Puppies who grow up thinking toothbrushing is simply part of life rarely object to it.

Adult dogs who have never experienced it often do.

Use a toothbrush and toothpaste made specifically for dogs. My favorite kind of toothbrush is the kind that slips over your fingertip as it's much more acceptable for the puppy for you to put your finger in his mouth than a long hard bristly object.

Human toothpaste should never be used.

As your puppy grows, watch carefully for retained baby teeth, which is very common in Maltese. Normally you'll ask your vet to remove any retained puppy teeth at spay/neuter.

Sometimes the permanent tooth erupts while the baby tooth stubbornly remains in place.

This creates two teeth occupying the same space.

Food becomes trapped.

Plaque develops.

The bite can be affected.

If you suspect retained baby teeth, discuss them with your veterinarian and ask for them to be removed while they are already under anesthesia. The less time spent under anesthesia the better.

Healthy teeth contribute to a healthy body.

An unhealthy mouth can affect far more than just the teeth and can very quickly cause heart disease. Your dog should have a dental yearly. February is dental month and most vets provide up to 20% discount on dentals during February.

Nails

Your puppy's nails should never become so long that they change the way he stands or walks.

Long nails place unnecessary stress on the feet and legs.

Fortunately, Storybook puppies have already learned that nail trims are simply part of life.

Continue trimming a little at a time, or use my favorite method and file them with a simple human nail file available at Walmart or Amazon for about \$20. These are reversable and have adjustable speed and are small enough to work well for a Maltese puppy. Check out my grooming videos on YouTube about how to teach a puppy to have their nails filed.

Frequent small filing sessions or trims are much less stressful than waiting until the nails become overgrown.

Always reward your puppy afterward.

By now you probably recognize that pattern.

Good things always follow grooming.

Skin And Coat

Your hands are often your best diagnostic tool.

As you pet your puppy, feel for anything unusual.

Small lumps.

Scabs.

Mats.

Dry skin.

Tender areas.

Changes are much easier to evaluate when you notice them early.

Regular combing serves another purpose besides preventing tangles.

It gives you an opportunity to examine every inch of your puppy.

Many owners discover little problems long before they become big ones simply because they groom regularly.

Weight

One of the kindest things you can do for your Maltese is keep them at a healthy weight.

Food is love.

I understand that.

But too much food isn't. I'm NOT talking about keeping kibble always available. I'm talking about excessive treats and table scraps.

Extra weight places unnecessary strain on tiny joints, the heart, and the entire body.

You should be able to feel your puppy's ribs beneath a light covering of muscle without pressing hard.

If you have to dig for them...

It's probably time to reassess how many treats are being handed out.

Remember...

Those adorable little faces become very convincing.

Don't let them negotiate themselves into obesity.

Make Daily Observation A Habit

Your puppy cannot tell you when something hurts.

They can't explain that their vision is blurry.

Or that one ear has started itching.

They depend entirely upon you.

Fortunately...

Most health problems don't suddenly appear overnight.

They whisper before they shout.

Learn to notice the whispers.

A slight decrease in appetite.

Sleeping more than usual.

Less enthusiasm for play.

An unusual odor.

A subtle limp.

A little extra tearing.

Those small observations are often the earliest clues that something deserves attention.

The sooner you notice...

The easier many problems are to solve.

The Heart of the Matter

I've often said that raising Maltese successfully isn't about doing one big thing right.

It's about doing hundreds of little things consistently.

A two-minute health check each day may not seem important.

Until the day it allows you to catch a problem before it becomes an emergency.

Little problems stay little...

When we notice them while they're still little.

When Tummies Go Wrong

Diarrhea, Vomiting, and Why I Am So Particular About Food

If you've read this book from the beginning, you've probably noticed something.

I'm very particular about what goes into a Storybook puppy.

There's a reason.

Maltese have wonderfully sensitive hearts...

Wonderfully sensitive personalities...

And wonderfully sensitive stomachs.

Unlike some larger breeds that seem capable of eating an old shoe without consequence, a Maltese can develop digestive upset from something as simple as a well-meaning treat from a neighbor.

One of the first things I tell every new puppy family is this...

A healthy Storybook puppy should not have diarrhea.

Notice I didn't say "never."

Life happens.

Stress happens.

Occasionally a puppy picks up a little stomach bug.

But if you've continued feeding the food I sent home, always kept kibble available, and limited treats to those I've recommended, diarrhea should be uncommon.

When it does happen...

I immediately begin asking questions.

Has your puppy eaten anything different? A leaf from a houseplant? A bug on the floor? A penny? Anything?

Did someone sneak it a bite from the dinner table?

Did a grandchild decide to share a cookie?

Did they chew on something outside?

Has anyone changed foods?

Almost every time, there's a reason.

Authorized Treats

One of the reasons I recommend only a handful of treats is because I've learned that simple is almost always better.

My favorite treats are **single-ingredient chicken treats**, such as PureBites Chicken.

That's it.

Chicken.

No preservatives.

No fillers.

No mysterious ingredients I can't pronounce.

People often ask,

"What about liver treats?"

No.

They're simply too rich for many Maltese.

"What about fish treats?"

Also no.

Again, many tiny stomachs simply don't tolerate them well.

"What about cheese?"

Definitely not as a regular treat.

Many people are surprised when I say that.

Cheese contains a tremendous amount of calcium for such a tiny body.

Over time, I believe excessive calcium from unnecessary treats can contribute to bladder or kidney stone formation in susceptible little dogs.

Why risk it?

Your puppy doesn't know the difference between chicken and cheddar.

They're just thrilled you gave them something.

Choose the option that's easiest on their tummy.

Human Food

My answer is very simple.



Almost none.

I know those little eyes are convincing.

Trust me...

They've practiced.

If you absolutely insist on sharing something with your puppy, keep it limited to:

Unseasoned scrambled eggs.

Unseasoned cooked chicken.

Unseasoned cooked beef.

That's it.

No onions.

No garlic.

No butter.

No seasoning.

No gravy.

No bacon grease.

No sauces.

Remember...

Your puppy isn't asking because they're hungry.

They're asking because they're smart.

And because they've figured out you're soft.

Don't let that adorable little face negotiate you into creating digestive problems.

My Husband, the Treat Dispenser

I should probably confess something here.

My husband is a sucker.

The dogs know it.

In their minds, he serves two very important purposes in this household.

First, he is the resident dog bed.



If he sits down, someone is climbing on him.

Second, he is the treat dispenser.

This became a problem at breakfast.

I would catch him slipping little bites from his plate to the dogs.

Just a tiny bite.

They love it.

What could it hurt?

Apparently quite a lot.

After suffering the consequences one too many times, including an expensive veterinary bill, I finally accepted that I was never going to train my husband.

So, I changed the system.

Now, when I make scrambled eggs for breakfast, I cook extra eggs with no seasoning and put them on a separate plate.

That plate is specifically for him to "share" with the dogs.

He gets to believe he's sneaking them breakfast.

The dogs get to believe they've successfully manipulated the treat dispenser.

And I know exactly what they're eating.

Sometimes good dog training is really husband training.

You just have to be smarter than the husband.

And the Maltese.

Honestly, the Maltese are the harder part.

Diarrhea

If your puppy develops diarrhea, don't panic.

But don't ignore it either.

Watch closely.

Is your puppy still bright?

Still eating?

Still drinking?

Still wanting to play?

Or are they becoming quiet?

Refusing food?

Sleeping excessively?

Remember what we discussed in the hypoglycemia chapter.

A tiny puppy can become dehydrated much faster than a large dog.

If diarrhea is accompanied by poor appetite, vomiting, weakness, or unusual behavior...

Get to the vet.

Don't wait until tomorrow.

Vomiting

Vomiting deserves the same respect.

One isolated episode may not be an emergency.

Repeated vomiting is.

Especially in a toy breed.

Each episode means fluid loss.

Each episode makes eating less likely.

Each episode increases the risk of hypoglycemia.

Pay attention to what happens afterward.

Does your puppy bounce right back?

Or do they seem different?

The answer tells me a great deal.

The Best Medicine

One of the nicest compliments I receive is when someone tells me,

"My puppy has never had an upset stomach."

That isn't luck.

It's consistency.

Feed good food.

Leave kibble available.

Avoid table scraps.

Limit treats to approved options.

Resist those pleading little eyes.

Your puppy doesn't need variety.

They need stability.

And a stable digestive system makes for a much happier puppy.

The Heart of the Matter

When it comes to feeding a Maltese...

Simple wins. Every single time.

Good food. Fresh water.

Kibble always available.

A few safe treats.

No experimenting. No buffet table.

Your puppy may think you're being mean.

I promise...

Their tummy will disagree.

Raise a Toy Breed Like...a Toy Breed

One of the biggest mistakes I see isn't made out of neglect.

Raise a Toy Breed Like... a Toy Breed

One of the biggest mistakes I see isn't made out of neglect. It's made out of love.

People finally bring home their beautiful little Maltese and think, "He's a dog."

Well...
Yes.
But he's also a *toy breed*.
A baby.
And babies need protecting.

Small Size. Big Responsibility. A Lifetime of Love.

- HANDLE GENTLY**
They are delicate and can be easily injured.
- PROTECT ALWAYS**
Shield them from big dogs, rough play, and danger.
- KEEP THEM SAFE**
Mind the temperature. Toy breeds can get too hot or too cold very quickly.
- CREATE SECURITY**
Routine, boundaries, and a calm environment help them thrive.
- LOVE DEEPLY**
They give back ten times more than we could ever imagine.

They may be tiny, but their hearts are huge. 🐾 It's our job to keep them little...and safe.

It's made out of love.

People finally bring home their beautiful little Maltese and think,

"He's a dog."

Well...

Yes.

But he's also a toy breed.

A baby.

And babies need protecting.

One day your Maltese may confidently race through the house, leap onto the sofa, and think they're ten feet tall.

That doesn't mean they should.

You already know not to let them leap off the couch or the bed — we covered that earlier, and for good reason. But there's a second danger here, one that has nothing to do with falling.

Tiny bones are just that...

Tiny.

Growth plates are still developing.

Joints are still forming.

A single awkward landing can change the course of a puppy's life.

That's why I ask my puppy families to think differently.

Don't encourage jumping on and off furniture.

Lift them.

Don't encourage running flights of stairs dozens of times each day.

Carry them.

Don't take your tiny puppy hiking over rough ground because it sounds fun.

Their little legs weren't designed for miles of rocky trails.

One unexpected hole in the ground...

One awkward twist...

One bad landing...

And you've injured a puppy that may have enjoyed perfectly sound movement for the rest of its life.

I hear people say,

"But he loves to jump!"

Of course he does.

Children love climbing onto countertops too.

That doesn't mean it's good for them.

Part of loving a puppy is protecting them from dangers they don't yet understand.

As your Maltese matures, you'll naturally give them more freedom.

But during those first months...

Err on the side of caution.

Your puppy has an entire lifetime ahead.

There is no prize for rushing them through babyhood.

Protect those growing bones.

Protect those tiny joints.

Protect the future you're building together.

The Heart of the Matter

Treat your Maltese like what they truly are.

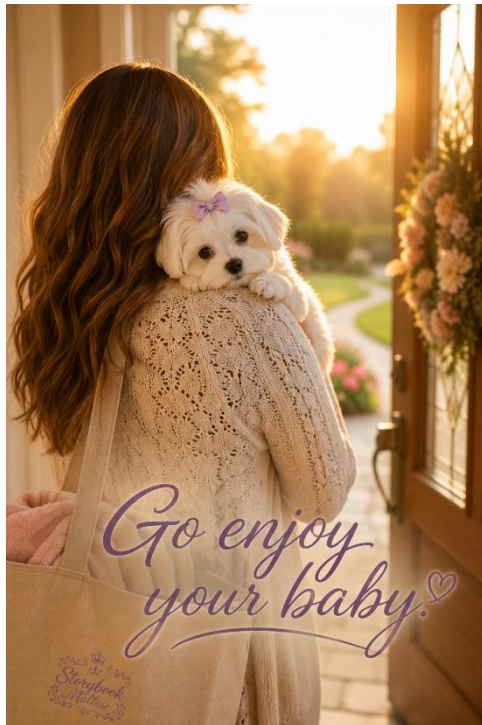
Not a fragile dog...

But a precious baby who depends on you to make wise decisions until they're old enough to make safe ones themselves.

That investment during puppyhood pays dividends for the rest of their life.

Now it's your turn.

Maybe your puppy is already curled up beside you.



Or maybe you're still counting the days until you can finally bring your baby home.

Either way...

The best part is still ahead of you.

When that little white puppy is finally in your arms, breathe in that puppy smell while it's still there.

Take too many pictures. (Send them! I LOVE to see them)

Laugh at the things they do.

Forgive the accidents.

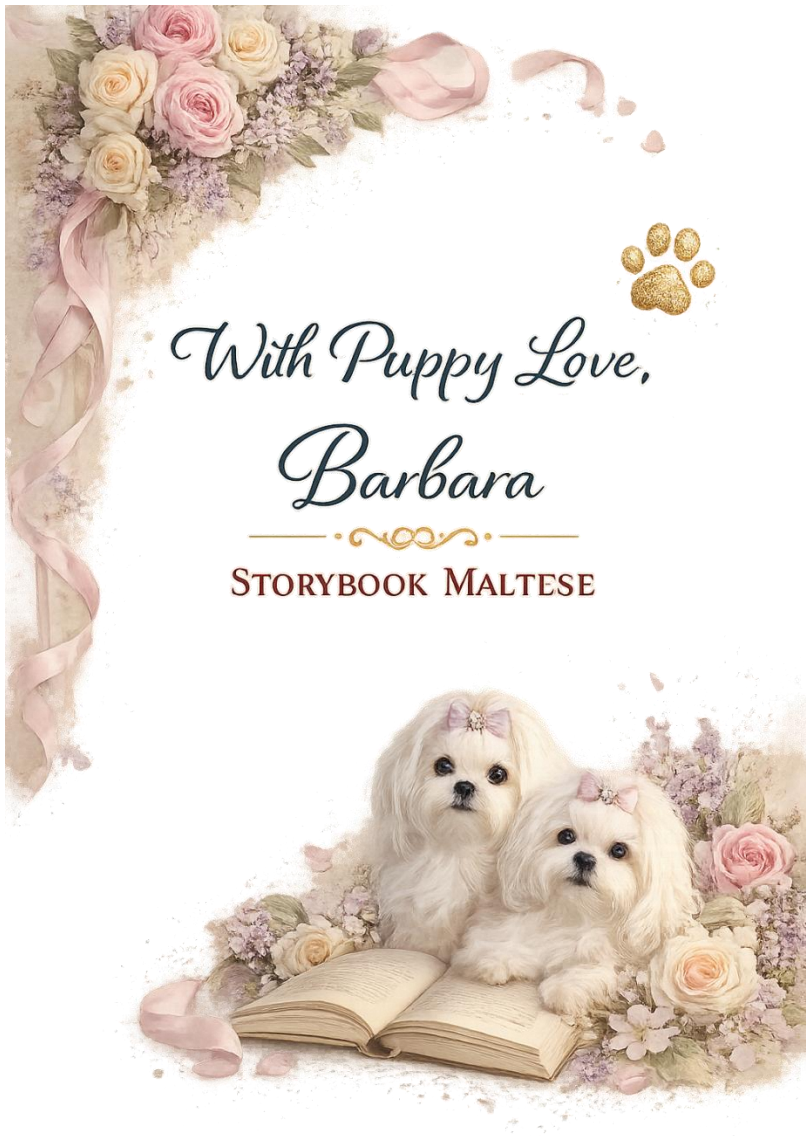
Celebrate the victories.

And don't be in such a hurry for them to grow up.

Because one day, much sooner than you think, you'll look at the beautiful Maltese sleeping beside you and wonder how that tiny puppy became such a big part of your life.

Go enjoy your baby.

You've got this!



A letter from your puppy

Dear Mommy,

I am your puppy, and I will love you until the end of the earth, but please know a few things about me. I am a puppy; this means that my intelligence and capacity for learning is much like a little baby. I am a puppy; I will chew EVERYTHING I can get my teeth on. This is how I explore and learn about the world. Even human babies put things in their mouths. It's up to you to gently guide me to what is mine to chew and what is not.

I am your puppy, and I have a tiny bladder and a little tummy that is still learning. I will need to go outside often and with consistent routines. Please take me out regularly—especially after eating, drinking, playing, waking up, and after a bath. Accidents will happen in the beginning. Please be patient with me and help me succeed. Praise me with a happy voice and treats when I go in the right place. In time, I will learn—because it is my life's goal to make you happy.

I am your puppy. I like to play! I will run, chase, pounce, wrestle, grab toys, and invite you to join in the fun. I may chase your feet or toes, "attack" you, and even invent games with imaginary monsters. It is play—this is what puppies do! Please enjoy this stage; it flies by. Guide me with appropriate toys, games, and gentle training. If I nip too hard, let out a high "YELP" like another puppy would. I will usually get the message. Then redirect me to something I can chew or simply step away for a moment. I am just a baby—please remember I do not understand like an adult dog does. I learn best with kindness, consistency, and encouragement.

I am your puppy, and I depend on you to keep me safe. I cannot tell the difference between your old sock and your new one, or a stick and a cord. Please puppy-proof your world and set me up for success. Say "no chew" and offer me what I can chew. It's not disobedience—it's curiosity!

I am your puppy, and I have feelings just like you do. I feel joy, fear, excitement, and love. I am not a robot that can instantly obey your every wish, but I truly do want to please you and be part of your family. Please include me in your life. Don't relegate me to the backyard or leave me alone all day. I thrive on connection, guidance, and belonging.

I am your puppy, and I am still learning how to be the best dog I can be. Please keep learning with me! Ask your breeder and veterinarian for advice, read books, watch videos, attend puppy classes, and use the wonderful training apps available today. Learn about my breed and its characteristics so you can understand why I do what I do. Together, we will build a bond that lasts a lifetime.

I am your puppy, and more than anything, I want to love you, be with you, and make you proud. Please take the time to understand me, speak my language, and guide me with love and patience.

Someday I will be the beautiful dog
you dreamed of—your loyal companion,
your heart dog, your best friend.



Because I already know one thing for certain...

I am yours.

And I will love you with everything I have.

Love,

Fluffy



MALTESE BODY LANGUAGE

♥ Understanding Your Little Companion ♥



ALERT

Focused and attentive



SUSPICIOUS

Unsure about something



ANXIOUS

Nervous or worried



THREATENED

Feeling threatened



ANGRY

Mad or very frustrated



"PEACE!"

Look away / head turn



STRESSED

Yawn



STRESSED

Nose lick



"PEACE!"

Sniff ground



"RESPECT!"

Turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE"

Whale eye



STALKING

Moving in a focused way



STRESSED

Scratching



STRESS RELEASE

Shake off



RELAXED

Soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"

Offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE

Curved body



FRIENDLY

Relaxed and happy



"PRETTY PLEASE"

Round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"

Belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"

Greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"

Reaching up



"I'M FRIENDLY!"

Play bow



"READY!"

Play invitation



"YOU WILL FEED ME"

Patiently waiting



CURIOUS

Head tilt



HAPPY

(or hot!)



OVERJOYED

Wiggly





"MMMM...."

That feels good



"I LOVE YOU, DON'T STOP!"

Keep doing that!

Watch the whole dog, not just the tail.  Context, timing and your dog's personality matter. 

♥ ITEMS I RECOMMEND KEEPING ON HAND ♥

Helpful Items for Your Puppy Care Kit

These items can be useful in a variety of situations.

They are not a substitute for veterinary care. ♥



LIQUID BENADRYL® (DIPHENHYDRAMINE)

May be used for some mild allergic reactions when directed by your veterinarian.

Use plain, liquid diphenhydramine only. No flavors, colors, or artificial sweeteners (especially xylitol).

Always verify the correct dose for your puppy.



PEDIALYTE® ADVANCED CARE+ FOR DOGS

An oral electrolyte solution that helps replenish fluids and electrolytes lost during diarrhea, vomiting, or excessive activity.

Ask your veterinarian when and how much to offer.



PROBIOTIC GEL (PROBIOS)

Live probiotic gel containing *Lactobacilli* strains that help support a balanced intestinal microbial flora.

Administer orally or on food as directed.

A great item to have on hand for digestive upset.



DURVET ELECTRO GEL®

An oral electrolyte supplement designed to help support hydration during periods of fluid loss.

Helpful during diarrhea, vomiting, or after strenuous activity.

Not a replacement for veterinary care.



SOFT-TIP FEEDING SYRINGE

- Soft silicone tip is gentle on teeth, gums, and cheeks
- Helps encourage pets to feed
- Durable and reusable
- Useful for offering appropriate liquids or supplements when instructed

Never force liquid toward the back of your puppy's throat.



NUTRI-CAL® PUPPY

A high-calorie nutritional gel for puppies who are not eating or need rapid calorie support.

Useful for stressed, recovering, or growing puppies.

Follow the emergency feeding instructions in this book.

A few important reminders:

- ♥ These items are tools, not treatments.
- ♥ Always determine the cause of illness and seek veterinary care when needed.
- ♥ When in doubt, call your veterinarian.

♥ BE PREPARED, STAY CALM, AND YOU'LL BE THEIR HERO. ♥

First Night Home

with Your

NEW BABY

Maltese

The first night in a new home is a big change for your puppy. This setup and routine help your little one feel safe, secure, and loved—so you can both get the best rest possible.

My Beside Pen Setup

Puppies sleep in a pen right beside my bed so they can see, hear, and smell me during the night. This constant contact brings comfort and helps build trust.

Placement
Right beside
my bed for
reassurance
and safety.

COZY BED & CHEW

Soft, comfy bed and a chew for teething and stress relief.

WEE PAD

Always available for nighttime potty breaks.

WATER BOTTLE

Always fresh water—attached outside the pen so it can't be knocked over.

FOOD DISH

Offered earlier in the evening. Remove after a short time.

HOW TO MAKE THE FIRST NIGHT A SUCCESS



BEFORE BEDTIME

- Spend time playing with your puppy to help them burn energy.
- Avoid naps 1–2 hours before bedtime.
- Offer dinner a couple of hours before bed, then remove the food.
- Make sure they have fresh water.



BEDTIME ROUTINE

- Place your puppy in the pen with their bed, chew, wee pad, water, and a favorite toy.
- Turn out the lights and talk softly to let them know you're there.
- Your puppy is already used to this setup from here.



IF THEY CRY

- Your puppy has everything they need.
- If they cry, give a quick, calm pat or soft word to reassure them.
- Then ignore the crying. This teaches them that quiet behavior brings comfort, not attention.
- They will settle and sleep.



IN THE MORNING

- Get up and greet your puppy with a calm, happy voice.
- Let them out of the pen for playtime, snuggles, and potty outside.
- Start the day with love, routine, and lots of praise!

Helpful Notes



Small bladders: Young puppies can't hold it long. The wee pad in the pen is there for them—day and night.



Every puppy is different: Some need more time to settle, especially in the first few nights.



Consistency is key: Your calm, loving routine helps your puppy feel safe and adjust quickly.



Remember

- Your puppy is not trying to be difficult. They are just adjusting to a new world.
- Patience, consistency, and kindness build trust and a lifelong bond.
- This stage won't last long—but the bond you build now will last forever.



YOU ARE THEIR WORLD. YOU ARE THEIR SAFE PLACE.



Together, you've got this.

Food, Treats & Chews

FOR YOUR STORYBOOK MALTESE PUPPY

Good nutrition, safe treats, and the right chews help your puppy grow strong, stay healthy, and feel secure in their new home. 🐾



📖 PUPPY FOOD

Your puppy is currently eating Health Extension Chicken & Brown Rice Little Bites available here.



Use code
STORYBOOKMALTESE
for a 10% discount!



<https://www.healthextension.com/?ref=STORYBOOKMALTESE>

Health Extension provides high-quality, holistic nutrition to support healthy growth, a strong immune system, and a happy, thriving puppy.



📖 TREATS

Maltese are quick to learn using treats for rewards.

Please stay away from treats that have wheat or corn which can cause an allergic reaction.



PureBites

Freeze Dried Chicken Breast

A simple, one-ingredient treat that Maltese love!

Available at

chewy

amazon

📖 CHEWS

Good for their teeth.
Great for their stress. 🐾

Chews are a natural outlet that helps keep puppies calm, focused, and satisfied.



Nature's Logic

100% Natural Beef Tendon Dog Chew

We use this particular chew because it doesn't break down into shards that can lodge in their throat or intestines.



The best things for your puppy are made with love and intention. 📖

Thank you for choosing the best start for your Storybook Maltese!



Everything Your Puppy Needs



♥ *Creating Safe, Comfortable & Happy Spaces* ♥
for Your Maltese Puppy

♥ PUPPY PEN OPTIONS ♥

♥ Choose the pen that fits your space, your lifestyle & your puppy's needs. ♥

RICHELL PET GATE / PEN

Sturdy • Adjustable • Versatile



- Sturdy wood frame with wire panels
- Adjustable panels for multiple shapes
- Secure locking door
- Great airflow & visibility
- Use as a playpen or room divider
- Beautiful furniture-style design

BEST FOR:

Long-term use at home, room division, and growing puppies.

PLEXIGLASS PEN

Sleek • Modern • Climb-Proof



- Crystal-clear visibility from all sides
- Smooth, non-porous & easy to clean
- Great for puppies who climb
- Keeps drafts out while staying visible
- Sleek, modern look
- Ideal for photos & videos

BEST FOR:

Climbers, escape artists, and when you want maximum visibility.

IRIS PET PEN

Lightweight • Easy • Practical



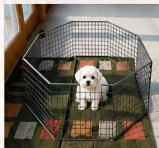
- Lightweight & portable
- Quick setup & take down
- Compact for storage
- Built-in door for easy access
- Affordable & durable
- Available in multiple sizes

BEST FOR:

Everyday use, small spaces, and easy setup anywhere.

SEABREEZE PETITE PEN

Ultra Portable • Travel Friendly



- Very lightweight & ultra portable
- Folds flat for storage under a bed
- Fits in a suitcase for travel
- No tools required – pop up in seconds
- Great airflow & visibility
- Perfect for travel, hotels, visits & small spaces

BEST FOR:

Travel, small living spaces, on-the-go families, and maximum convenience.

♥ ESSENTIALS FOR THE PEN ♥

Provide food, water, a soft bed, toys, and a place to potty.

♥ These items help keep your puppy safe, comfortable, and happy. ♥



WATER BOTTLE

Attaches to crate – no spill or mess. Your puppy is used to drinking from this.



FOOD DISH

Attached to crate – no spill or mess. Your puppy is used to eating from this.



DISPOSABLE PEE PADS

Sometimes pups tear them up. Convenient for car trips. They make holders for these that are wonderful!



WASHABLE PAD

(In pharmacy dept.) Pup can chew and reusable. Your puppy has been trained on this type of pad but also recognizes the paper pads.



♥ SOFT, CUDDLY BEDS ♥

Maltese love soft, cozy beds!



♥ CAR SEAT FOR SAFETY ♥

Their own place in the car.



♥ Protect your puppy and give them a secure, comfortable spot on every adventure. ♥



A little preparation creates a lot of comfort. Happy Puppy, Happy Home. ♥



! IMPORTANT !

FLEA & TICK PREVENTION SAFETY NOTICE



! PLEASE READ BEFORE GIVING ANY PRODUCT !

PROTECT YOUR PUPPY OR RISK EVERYTHING.



The FDA has identified **POTENTIAL SERIOUS NEUROLOGICAL ADVERSE REACTIONS** associated with the **ISOXAZOLINE CLASS** of flea and tick medications.

These reactions may include:

- **MUSCLE TREMORS** • **ATAXIA (LOSS OF COORDINATION)**
- **SEIZURES** • **HYPERSALIVATION** • **LETHARGY**

Seizures have been reported even in dogs with no previous history of seizures.



Isoxazoline products (such as NexGard, Bravecto, Simparica, and Credelio) act on the nervous system. **In our toy breeds, this can mean devastating and sometimes irreversible consequences.**

WE'VE SEEN IT. WE'VE LIVED IT. WE WILL NOT STAY SILENT.

I personally know of far too many Maltese and small breeds who were perfectly healthy—until they weren't. After NexGard, their lives changed forever. Some were never the same again. Some didn't make it.

DON'T BE THE NEXT STORY.

THE FOLLOWING ISOXAZOLINE PRODUCTS ARE **NOT RECOMMENDED FOR MY STORYBOOK MALTESE PUPPIES OR ANY DOG IN MY CARE.**



! **USE OF THESE OR SIMILAR PRODUCTS VOIDS MY HEALTH WARRANTY.** !

FOR MY STORYBOOK PUPPIES, I RECOMMEND ONLY:



REVOLUTION® (selamectin)
Topical protection against fleas, ticks, roundworms, heartworms, and more.



SENTINEL® (milbemycin oxime + lufenuron)
Helps prevent heartworm disease and controls common intestinal parasites and fleas.

BEFORE YOU ADMINISTER ANY FLEA OR TICK PRODUCT:



PLEASE CONTACT ME FIRST.
Tiny dogs are not small versions of big dogs. What is "safe" for larger breeds is not always safe for our precious Maltese.

YOUR CALL COULD PROTECT THEIR LIFE.

I'M NOT SHARING THIS TO FRIGHTEN YOU. I'M SHARING IT BECAUSE I LOVE THEM. These tiny souls trust us completely. Our job is to protect them with knowledge, not assumptions. When in doubt, ask.

With Puppy Love, *Barbara* **STORYBOOK MALTESE**
Preserving The Purity • Protecting Their Future



! ADVANCED CARE. GENTLER HEALING. BETTER OUTCOMES. !

POWERFUL TECHNOLOGY. GENTLE ON TINY BODIES.

LASER SURGERY

♥ FOR YOUR MALTESE ♥

LESS PAIN. LESS STRESS. FASTER RECOVERY.



WHY I CHOOSE LASER SURGERY FOR MY PUPPIES

Laser technology allows me to perform many procedures with extraordinary precision—minimizing trauma to delicate tissue and supporting a quicker, more comfortable recovery.

For tiny Maltese, that makes all the difference.

Laser surgery uses a focused beam of light that gently removes or shapes tissue with exceptional accuracy. The laser seals tiny blood vessels and nerve endings as it works.

The result? Less pain. Less bleeding. Less swelling. Faster healing.



♥ My Promise

I use advanced laser technology whenever it is in the best interest of my puppies.

It's one more way I protect their tiny bodies and honor the trust you've placed in me.



♥ THE POWER OF LASER BENEFITS ♥



LESS PAIN

The laser seals nerve endings as it works, resulting in much less post-operative pain.



LESS BLEEDING

It seals small blood vessels as it cuts—giving me a clearer surgical field and often a shorter surgical time.



LESS SWELLING

No bruising or tearing of tissue. The laser seals lymphatic vessels, so there's less swelling and seepage.



LESS RISK

The heat from the laser helps kill bacteria, reducing the risk of infection and complications.



FASTER RECOVERY

Less pain, swelling and bleeding mean a quicker, smoother return to your puppy's normal life.

LASER SURGERY vs. TRADITIONAL SURGERY

LASER SURGERY		THAT MEANS...	TRADITIONAL SURGERY
Minimal bleeding	🐾	Cleaner surgery, safer for tiny patients	More bleeding & bruising
Less pain	🐾	Your puppy is more comfortable	More pain medication needed
Less swelling	🐾	Less pressure & discomfort	More swelling & tenderness
Lower infection risk	🐾	Healthier healing	Higher chance of infection
Often back to normal in 1-2 days	🐾	More play, more cuddles, sooner!	May be uncomfortable for a week+
Less stress for you & your puppy	🐾	Peace of mind	Longer recovery & worry

♥ A DRAMATIC DIFFERENCE YOU WILL SEE ♥

WITH LASER SURGERY:

- ✓ Less pain and discomfort
- ✓ Less bleeding and swelling
- ✓ No pressure bandages
- ✓ Tiny incisions, less trauma
- ✓ Up and feeling like themselves—fast



WITH TRADITIONAL SURGERY:

- ✗ More pain and soreness
- ✗ More bleeding and swelling
- ✗ Pressure bandages required
- ✗ Larger tissue trauma
- ✗ Longer recovery, more stress

NOT EVERY PROCEDURE REQUIRES A LASER, but when it's the best choice for your puppy,

I will always choose the kinder path.



With Puppy Love,

Barbara
STORYBOOK MALTESE



Preserving The Purity • Protecting Their Future

♥ TINY BODY. BIG HEART. EXTRAORDINARY CARE. ♥

! WARNING – PLEASE READ BEFORE SAYING YES! !

PLEASE – NO LEPTO!

PAW PROTECT YOUR MALTESE. PROTECT YOURSELF. PAW



Leptospirosis is a potentially **life-threatening** disease caused by the bacteria *Leptospira*. It lurks in infected urine and contaminated water or soil. The leptospirosis vaccine **does not protect against all strains**—and for many small dogs, the **risks can be extreme**.

**TOY BREEDS
HIGH RISK
OF SEVERE
REACTIONS**

LEPTOSPIROSIS VACCINE BASICS

This is a **NON-CORE** vaccine – **NOT required** for all dogs. Your veterinarian should assess your dog's **ACTUAL RISK** before recommending this vaccine.

- Puppies:** 1st dose at 12 weeks, 2nd dose in 2–4 weeks
- Unvaccinated dogs ≥ 4 months:** 2 doses, 2–4 weeks apart
- High risk dogs:** Revaccinate every 12 months
- Very high risk dogs:** Revaccinate every 6–9 months

! THIS VACCINE DOES NOT PROTECT AGAINST ALL STRAINS. INFECTION IS STILL POSSIBLE AND STILL CAN BE SPREAD.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS – VERY COMMON IN MALTESE

Side effects can appear in some dogs and may be mild or severe. These reactions happen more often in toy breeds.



Loss of Appetite



Lethargy / Lack of Energy



Skin Rashes (especially on hairless areas)



Shock Reactions

ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK CAN BE DEADLY.



Toy breeds, including Maltese, may be vulnerable to **ANAPHYLACTIC SHOCK** – a rapid, severe allergic reaction that can become life-threatening within minutes.

POTENTIAL SIGNS:

- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Urination
- Passing Stools
- Loss of Energy
- Weakness
- Itching
- Salivation
- Difficulty Breathing
- Increased Heart Rate
- Collapse / Coma
- Seizures
- Death

ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS ARE AN EMERGENCY. SEEK IMMEDIATE VETERINARY CARE.



IF YOU SEE ANY SIDE EFFECTS OR REACTIONS, CONTACT YOUR VETERINARIAN IMMEDIATELY. DO NOT WAIT. DO NOT ASSUME IT WILL PASS.



RISK FACTORS

- Dogs have higher risk if they:
- Live in or visit areas with warm, wet weather**
 - Live in rural areas with wildlife**
 - Spend time in or drink from lakes, rivers, streams, ponds, or standing water**
 - Drink from outdoor water bowls or ground water sources**

PROTECT YOURSELF

The risk of humans getting leptospirosis from dogs is **LOW** – but **NOT ZERO**.

- Avoid contact with your dog's urine.**
 - Wear rubber gloves when cleaning up urine.**
 - Disinfect any areas contacted by urine.**
 - Wash your hands thoroughly.**
- YOUR HEALTH MATTERS, TOO.**

THE TRUTH YOU MUST KNOW

Even if your dog is vaccinated, they can **STILL**:

- Get infected**
- Show no signs**
- Carry and shed the bacteria in their urine**
- Spread it to other animals and to humans**



THIS VACCINE IS NOT ROUTINE. IT IS NOT RISK-FREE. IT CAN BE DANGEROUS FOR SMALL BREEDS. ASK QUESTIONS. KNOW THE RISKS. MAKE INFORMED CHOICES.



OUR PROMISE TO YOU

Your Maltese's safety and well-being always come first. We will never recommend this vaccine unless the risk of exposure outweighs the risk of a potentially severe reaction.

*With Puppy Love,
Barbara*

STORYBOOK MALTESE

Preserving The Purity • Protecting Their Future



♥ BLOOD SUPPLY NAIL “QUICK” ♥

Cut only the sharp tip of the nail — staying well above the quick.

CORRECT

SAFE & QUICK

Blood Supply
Nail “Quick”

Traditional
Cut Line

CUT HERE

Only the sharp tip
of the nail

A little
at a time
keeps your
Maltese
happy & safe!

INCORRECT

TOO LOW – HITS THE QUICK

Blood Supply
Nail “Quick”

Traditional
Cut Line

TOO LOW

This cuts the quick
– causes pain
and bleeding

Cutting here hits the blood supply (quick).
It hurts and can bleed a lot.



LOVE, PATIENCE & GOOD LIGHT ♥ MAKE NAIL CARE EASY.

If you're ever unsure, stop and try again later.

Happy Puppy. Happy Home. ♥

Storybook
Maltese

The Purdue Vaccination Studies and Auto-antibodies

by Catherine O'Driscoll, April 26, 2011

A team at Purdue University School of Veterinary Medicine conducted several studies (1,2) to determine if vaccines can cause changes in the immune system of dogs that might lead to life-threatening immune-mediated diseases. They obviously conducted this research because concern already existed. It was sponsored by the Haywood Foundation which itself was looking for evidence that such changes in the human immune system might also be vaccine induced. It found the evidence. The vaccinated, but not the non-vaccinated, dogs in the Purdue studies developed autoantibodies to many of their own biochemicals, including fibronectin, laminin, DNA, albumin, cytochrome C, cardiolipin and collagen.

This means that the vaccinated dogs — “but not the non-vaccinated dogs”—were attacking their own fibronectin, which is involved in tissue repair, cell multiplication and growth, and differentiation between tissues and organs in a living organism. The vaccinated Purdue dogs also developed autoantibodies to laminin, which is involved in many cellular activities including the adhesion, spreading, differentiation, proliferation and movement of cells. Vaccines thus appear to be capable of removing the natural intelligence of cells. Autoantibodies to cardiolipin are frequently found in patients with the serious disease systemic lupus erythematosus and also in individuals with other autoimmune diseases.

The presence of elevated anti-cardiolipin antibodies is significantly associated with clots within the heart or blood vessels, in poor blood clotting, haemorrhage, bleeding into the skin, foetal loss and neurological conditions. The Purdue studies also found that vaccinated dogs were developing autoantibodies to their own collagen. About one quarter of all the protein in the body is collagen. Collagen provides structure to our bodies, protecting and supporting the softer tissues and connecting them with the skeleton. It is no wonder that Canine Health Concern's 1997 study of 4,000 dogs showed a high number of dogs developing mobility problems shortly after they were vaccinated (noted in my 1997 book, *What Vets Don't Tell You About Vaccines*).

Perhaps most worryingly, the Purdue studies found that the vaccinated dogs had developed autoantibodies to their own DNA. Did the alarm bells sound? Did the scientific community call a halt to the vaccination program? No. Instead, they stuck their fingers in the air, saying more research is needed to ascertain whether vaccines can cause genetic damage. Meanwhile, the study dogs were found good homes, but no long-term follow-up has been conducted. At around the same time, the American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Vaccine-Associated Feline Sarcoma Task Force initiated several studies to find out why 160,000 cats each year in the USA develop terminal cancer at their vaccine injection sites.(3) The fact that cats can get vaccine-induced cancer has been acknowledged by veterinary bodies around the world, and even the British Government acknowledged it through its Working Group charged with the task of looking into canine and feline vaccines(4) following pressure from Canine Health Concern.

What do you imagine was the advice of the AVMA Task Force, veterinary bodies and governments? “Carry on vaccinating until we find out why vaccines are killing cats, and which cats are most likely to die.” In America, in an attempt to mitigate the problem, they're vaccinating cats in the tail or leg so they can amputate when cancer appears. Great advice if it's not your cat amongst the hundreds of thousands on the “oops” list. But other species are okay – right? Wrong. In August 2003, the *Journal of Veterinary Medicine* carried an Italian study which showed that dogs also develop vaccine-induced cancers at their injection sites.(5) We already know that vaccine-site cancer is a possible sequel to human vaccines, too, since the Salk polio vaccine was said to carry a monkey retrovirus (from cultivating the vaccine on monkey organs) that produces inheritable cancer.

The monkey retrovirus SV40 keeps turning up in human cancer sites. It is also widely acknowledged that vaccines can cause a fast-acting, usually fatal, disease called autoimmune haemolytic anaemia (AIHA).

Without treatment, and frequently with treatment, individuals can die in agony within a matter of days. Merck, itself a multinational vaccine manufacturer, states in The Merck Manual of Diagnosis and Therapy that autoimmune haemolytic anaemia may be caused by modified live-virus vaccines, as do Tizard's Veterinary Immunology (4th edition) and the Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine.(6) The British Government's Working Group, despite being staffed by vaccine-industry consultants who say they are independent, also acknowledged this fact.

However, no one warns the pet owners before their animals are subjected to an unnecessary booster, and very few owners are told why after their pets die of AIHA.

A Wide Range of Vaccine-induced Diseases

We also found some worrying correlations between vaccine events and the onset of arthritis in our 1997 survey. Our concerns were compounded by research in the human field. The New England Journal of Medicine, for example, reported that it is possible to isolate the rubella virus from affected joints in children vaccinated against rubella. It also told of the isolation of viruses from the peripheral blood of women with prolonged arthritis following vaccination.(7) Then, in 2000, CHC's findings were confirmed by research which showed that polyarthritis and other diseases like amyloidosis, which affects organs in dogs, were linked to the combined vaccine given to dogs.(8) There is a huge body of research, despite the paucity of funding from the vaccine industry, to confirm that vaccines can cause a wide range of brain and central nervous system damage.

Merck itself states in its Manual that vaccines (i.e., its own products) can cause encephalitis: brain inflammation/damage. In some cases, encephalitis involves lesions in the brain and throughout the central nervous system. Merck states that "examples are the encephalitides following measles, chickenpox, rubella, smallpox vaccination, vaccinia, and many other less well defined viral infections". When the dog owners who took part in the CHC survey reported that their dogs developed short attention spans, 73.1% of the dogs did so within three months of a vaccine event. The same percentage of dogs was diagnosed with epilepsy within three months of a shot (but usually within days).

We also found that 72.5% of dogs that were considered by their owners to be nervous and of a worrying disposition, first exhibited these traits within the three-month post-vaccination period. I would like to add for the sake of Oliver, my friend who suffered from paralysed rear legs and death shortly after a vaccine shot, that "paresis" is listed in Merck's Manual as a symptom of encephalitis. This is defined as muscular weakness of a neural (brain) origin which involves partial or incomplete paralysis, resulting from lesions at any level of the descending pathway from the brain. Hind limb paralysis is one of the potential consequences. Encephalitis, incidentally, is a disease that can manifest across the scale from mild to severe and can also cause sudden death.

Organ failure must also be suspected when it occurs shortly after a vaccine event. Dr Larry Glickman, who spearheaded the Purdue research into post-vaccination biochemical changes in dogs, wrote in a letter to Cavalier Spaniel breeder Bet Hargreaves: "Our ongoing studies of dogs show that following routine vaccination, there is a significant rise in the level of antibodies dogs produce against their own tissues. Some of these antibodies have been shown to target the thyroid gland, connective tissue such as that found in the valves of the heart, red blood cells, DNA, etc. I do believe that the heart conditions in Cavalier King Charles Spaniels could be the end result of repeated immunisations by vaccines containing tissue culture contaminants that cause a progressive immune response directed at connective tissue in the heart valves.

The clinical manifestations would be more pronounced in dogs that have a genetic predisposition [although] the findings should be generally applicable to all dogs regardless of their breed." I must mention here that Dr Glickman believes that vaccines are a necessary evil, but that safer vaccines need to be developed.

Vaccines Stimulate an Inflammatory Response

. The word “allergy” is synonymous with “sensitivity” and “inflammation”. It should, by rights, also be synonymous with the word “vaccination”. This is what vaccines do: they sensitise (render allergic) an individual in the process of forcing them to develop antibodies to fight a disease threat. In other words, as is acknowledged and accepted, as part of the vaccine process the body will respond with inflammation. This may be apparently temporary or it may be longstanding. Holistic doctors and veterinarians have known this for at least 100 years. They talk about a wide range of inflammatory or “-itis” diseases which arise shortly after a vaccine event.

Vaccines, in fact, plunge many individuals into an allergic state. Again, this is a disorder that ranges from mild all the way through to the suddenly fatal. Anaphylactic shock is the culmination: it’s where an individual has a massive allergic reaction to a vaccine and will die within minutes if adrenaline or its equivalent is not administered. There are some individuals who are genetically not well placed to withstand the vaccine challenge. These are the people (and animals are “people”, too) who have inherited faulty B and T cell function. B and T cells are components within the immune system which identify foreign invaders and destroy them, and hold the invader in memory so that they cannot cause future harm.

However, where inflammatory responses are concerned, the immune system overreacts and causes unwanted effects such as allergies and other inflammatory conditions. Merck warns in its Manual that patients with, or from families with, B and/or T cell immunodeficiencies should not receive live-virus vaccines due to the risk of severe or fatal infection. Elsewhere, it lists features of B and T cell immunodeficiencies as food allergies, inhalant allergies, eczema, dermatitis, neurological deterioration and heart disease. To translate, people with these conditions can die if they receive live-virus vaccines. Their immune systems are simply not competent enough to guarantee a healthy reaction to the viral assault from modified live-virus vaccines.

Modified live-virus (MLV) vaccines replicate in the patient until an immune response is provoked. If a defence isn’t stimulated, then the vaccine continues to replicate until it gives the patient the very disease it was intending to prevent. Alternatively, a deranged immune response will lead to inflammatory conditions such as arthritis, pancreatitis, colitis, encephalitis and any number of autoimmune diseases such as cancer and leukaemia, where the body attacks its own cells. A new theory, stumbled upon by Open University student Gary Smith, explains what holistic practitioners have been saying for a very long time. Here is what a few of the holistic vets have said in relation to their patients: Dr Jean Dodds: “Many veterinarians trace the present problems with allergic and immunologic diseases to the introduction of MLV vaccines...” (9) Christina Chambreau, DVM: “Routine vaccinations are probably the worst thing that we do for our animals.

They cause all types of illnesses, but not directly to where we would relate them definitely to be caused by the vaccine.” (10) Martin Goldstein, DVM: “I think that vaccines...are leading killers of dogs and cats in America today.” Dr Charles E. Loops, DVM: “Homoeopathic veterinarians and other holistic practitioners have maintained for some time that vaccinations do more harm than they provide benefits.” (12) Mike Kohn, DVM: “In response to this [vaccine] violation, there have been increased autoimmune diseases (allergies being one component), epilepsy, neoplasia [tumours], as well as behavioural problems in small animals.” (13)

A Theory on Inflammation

Gary Smith explains what observant healthcare practitioners have been saying for a very long time, but perhaps they’ve not understood why their observations led them to say it. His theory, incidentally, is causing a huge stir within the inner scientific sanctum. Some believe that his theory could lead to a cure for any diseases including cancer. For me, it explains why the vaccine process is inherently

questionable. Gary was learning about inflammation as part of his studies when he struck upon a theory so extraordinary that it could have implications for the treatment of almost every inflammatory disease — including Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, rheumatoid arthritis and even HIV and AIDS.

Gary's theory questions the received wisdom that when a person gets ill, the inflammation that occurs around the infected area helps it to heal. He claims that, in reality, inflammation prevents the body from recognising a foreign substance and therefore serves as a hiding place for invaders. The inflammation occurs when at-risk cells produce receptors called At1 (known as angiotensin II type I receptors). He says that while At1 has a balancing receptor, At2, which is supposed to switch off the inflammation, in most diseases this does not happen. "Cancer has been described as the wound that never heals," he says. "All successful cancers are surrounded by inflammation.

Commonly this is thought to be the body's reaction to try to fight the cancer, but this is not the case. "The inflammation is not the body trying to fight the infection. It is actually the virus or bacteria deliberately causing inflammation in order to hide from the immune system [author's emphasis]." (14) If Gary is right, then the inflammatory process so commonly stimulated by vaccines is not, as hitherto assumed, a necessarily acceptable sign. Instead, it could be a sign that the viral or bacterial component, or the adjuvant (which, containing foreign protein, is seen as an invader by the immune system), in the vaccine is winning by stealth.

If Gary is correct in believing that the inflammatory response is not protective but a sign that invasion is taking place under cover of darkness, vaccines are certainly not the friends we thought they were. They are undercover assassins working on behalf of the enemy, and vets and medical doctors are unwittingly acting as collaborators. Worse, we animal guardians and parents are actually paying doctors and vets to unwittingly betray our loved ones. Potentially, vaccines are the stealth bomb of the medical world. They are used to catapult invaders inside the castle walls where they can wreak havoc, with none of us any the wiser. So rather than experiencing frank viral diseases such as the 'flu, measles, mumps and rubella (and, in the case of dogs, parvovirus and distemper), we are allowing the viruses to win anyway – but with cancer, leukaemia and other inflammatory or autoimmune (self-attacking) diseases taking their place.

*

The Final Insult

** All 27 veterinary schools in North America have changed their protocols for vaccinating dogs and cats along the following lines; (15) however, vets in practice are reluctant to listen to these changed protocols and official veterinary bodies in the UK and other countries are ignoring the following facts. *Dogs' and cats' immune systems mature fully at six months. If modified live-virus vaccine is given after six months of age, it produces immunity, which is good for the life of the pet. If another MLV vaccine is given a year later, the antibodies from the first vaccine neutralise the antigens of the second vaccine and there is little or no effect.

The litre is no "boosted", nor are more memory cells induced. *Not only are annual boosters unnecessary, but they subject the pet to potential risks such as allergic reactions and immune-mediated haemolytic anaemia. In plain language, veterinary schools in America, plus the American Veterinary Medical Association, have looked at studies to show how long vaccines last and they have concluded and announced that annual vaccination is unnecessary. (16-19)** *Further, they have acknowledged that vaccines are not without harm. Dr Ron Schultz, head of pathobiology at Wisconsin University and a leading light in this field, has been saying this politely to his veterinary colleagues since the 1980s.

I've been saying it for the past 12 years. But change is so long in coming and, in the meantime, hundreds of thousands of animals are dying every year – unnecessarily. The good news is that thousands of animal lovers (but not enough) have heard what we've been saying. Canine Health Concern members

around the world use real food as Nature's supreme disease preventative, eschewing processed pet food, and minimise the vaccine risk. Some of us, myself included, have chosen not to vaccinate our pets at all. Our reward is healthy and long-lived dogs. It has taken but one paragraph to tell you the good and simple news. The gratitude I feel each day, when I embrace my healthy dogs, stretches from the centre of the Earth to the Universe and beyond.

Endnotes

1. "Effects of Vaccination on the Endocrine and Immune Systems of Dogs, Phase II", Purdue University, November 1, 1999, at <http://www.homestead.com/vonhapsburg/haywardstudyonvaccines.html>.
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3. See <http://www.avma.org/vafstf/default.asp>.
4. Veterinary Products Committee (VPC) Working Group on Feline and Canine Vaccination, DEFRA, May 2001.
5. JVM Series A 50(6):286-291, August 2003.
6. Duval, D. and Giger, U. (1996). "Vaccine-Associated Immune-Mediated Hemolytic Anemia in the Dog", *Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine* 10:290-295.
7. *New England Journal of Medicine*, vol. 313, 1985. See also *Clin Exp Rheumatol* 20(6):767-71, Nov-Dec 2002.
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11. Goldstein, Martin, *The Nature of Animal Healing*, Borzoi/Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1999.
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** She has brought the truth about pet vaccines to light, and promotes natural canine health care. Her books "Shock To The System" and "What Vets Don't Tell You About Vaccines" have opened the eyes of thousands of pet owners world-wide.

MY VACCINE PROTOCOL

Please take this page with you to every veterinary visit

PUPPY VACCINE SCHEDULE



8 WEEKS



ALREADY GIVEN
BY STORYBOOK MALTESE ♥



MICROCHIPPED
AT 8-WEEK VET EXAM ♥

12 WEEKS



CANINE SPECTRA 5
(5-WAY VACCINE) ♥

16 WEEKS



CANINE SPECTRA 5
(5-WAY VACCINE) ♥



Canine Spectra 5 protects against:

- ✓ Canine Distemper Virus
- ✓ Adenovirus (Type 1 & 2)
- ✓ Parainfluenza Virus
- ✓ Parvovirus
- ✓ Canine Coronavirus

AFTER THE PUPPY SERIES

TITER BEFORE REVACCINATING

I do not recommend automatically revaccinating my dogs year after year without first checking immunity. After the puppy vaccine series, I recommend antibody titer testing before considering additional distemper, adenovirus, or parvovirus vaccination.



ONLY A 5-WAY VACCINE

I recommend Canine Spectra 5 because, in my experience with my Maltese, this brand appears to cause *less post-vaccine discomfort.*



IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR YOUR PUPPY

ONE SHOT AT A TIME

Please do not administer 2 shots at a time (i.e., rabies and the above). This can stress such a tiny puppy. Please wait two weeks between shots.



MICROCHIPPED AT 8 WEEKS

All Storybook Maltese puppies are microchipped at their 8-week vet exam.



TINY BODIES – GENTLE CARE

Your puppy's tiny immune system is still maturing. Spacing procedures helps keep stress low and supports a stronger, healthier start.



NO LEPTOSPIROSIS VACCINE.

See the IMPORTANT LEPTOSPIROSIS WARNING section in this book.



Thank you for protecting my puppies the way I do.

STORYBOOK MALTESE

Preserving The Purity
• Protecting Their Future •

With Puppy Love, Barbara

♥ DANGEROUS FOODS ♥

for Your Pet



🐾 LOVE THEM PROTECT THEM KNOW WHAT'S NOT SAFE 🐾

Even a small amount of these foods can cause serious illness or even be fatal to dogs (and many are also dangerous to cats and ferrets).

-  🐾 **Alcoholic beverages**
-  🐾 **Apple seeds**
-  🐾 **Apricot pits**
-  🐾 **Avocados**
-  🐾 **Cherry pits**
-  🐾 **Candy** (particularly chocolate, which is toxic to dogs, cats and ferrets, and any candy containing the sweetener **Xylitol**)
-  🐾 **Coffee** (grounds, beans, chocolate covered espresso beans)
-  🐾 **Grapes**
-  🐾 **Hops** (used in home beer brewing)
-  🐾 **Macadamia nuts**
-  🐾 **Moldy foods**
-  🐾 **Mushroom plants**
-  🐾 **Mustard seeds**
-  🐾 **Onions and onion powder**

-  🐾 **Peach pits**
-  🐾 **Potato leaves and stems** (green parts)
-  🐾 **Raisins**
-  🐾 **Rhubarb leaves**
-  🐾 **Salt** (too much can cause sodium ion poisoning)
-  🐾 **Tea** (caffeine)
-  🐾 **Tomato leaves and stems** (green parts)
-  🐾 **Walnuts**
-  🐾 **Xylitol** (artificial sweetener found in gum, candy, baked goods, peanut butter and some medications)
-  🐾 **Yeast dough** (raw bread dough can rise in the stomach and produce alcohol)
-  🐾 **Garlic** (can damage red blood cells)
-  🐾 **Chives**
-  🐾 **Nutmeg** (in large amounts can cause tremors, seizures and death)
-  🐾 **Fat trimmings, cooked bones and bone splinters** (can cause pancreatitis, choking or intestinal blockage)

ADDITIONAL FOODS TO AVOID

- ♥ Corn on the cob (risk of choking or intestinal blockage)
- ♥ Dairy products (lactose intolerance can cause vomiting & diarrhea)
- ♥ Fish with high mercury (tuna, swordfish)
- ♥ Fruit pits and seeds (plum, nectarine, lychee, persimmon, etc.)
- ♥ Human vitamins with iron (can be toxic)
- ♥ Processed foods (high fat, spices, additives)
- ♥ Rawhide (risk of choking or blockage)
- ♥ Salted or seasoned snacks



WHEN IN DOUBT, KEEP IT OUT!

If you think your pet has eaten something they shouldn't have, contact your veterinarian immediately.



A little knowledge today can save your pet's life tomorrow.

With Puppy Love,
Barbara
STORYBOOK MALTESE

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♥ DANGEROUS PLANTS ♥

for Your Pet

🐾 LOVE THEM. PROTECT THEM. *Know What's Not Safe.* 🐾

⚠️ Many common plants can be toxic to dogs, cats and ferrets.
Even a small amount can cause serious illness or be fatal. ♥



PLANT NAME	TOXIC PARTS	CLINICAL SIGNS
Apricot	Stem, bark, seed pits	Stomach irritation, abdominal pain, abnormal heart rate and rhythm, convulsions, coma, some death.
Azalea (<i>Rhododendron spp.</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	All parts, mostly leaves	Stomach irritation, abdominal pain, abnormal heart rate and rhythm, convulsions, coma, some death.
Bird of Paradise	Fruit, seeds	Sweating, drooling, usually not fatal.
Boston Ivy	All parts	Nausea, abdominal pain, bloody diarrhea, tenesmus, dehydration, shortness of breath, excessive thirst, weakness, muscle twitching, convulsions, coma.
Caladium	All parts	Irritation and inflammation of the digestive tract, diarrhea, bloody stool.
Creeping Charlie (<i>Glechoma hederacea L.</i>)	All parts	Sweating, drooling, usually not fatal.
Castor Bean (<i>Ricinus communis</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	All part but mostly seeds, if chewed	Nausea, abdominal pain, bloody diarrhea, tenesmus, dehydration, shortness of breath, excessive thirst, weakness, muscle twitching, convulsions, coma.
Choke Cherry (<i>Prunus virginiana</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	Leaves, seed pits, stems, bark	Colic, vomiting and diarrhea, usually not fatal.
Daffodil (<i>Narcissus spp.</i>)	Bulbs	Irritation and inflammation of the digestive tract, diarrhea, bloody stool.
Daphne	Berries, bark, leaves	Stomach irritation, diarrhea, troubled breathing, coma, death.
English Ivy (<i>Hedera helix L.</i>) 🍄🍄	Leaves, berries	Stomach irritation, diarrhea, troubled breathing, coma, death.
Foxglove (<i>Digitalis purpurea L.</i>) 🍄	Leaves, seeds, flowers	Dilated pupils, frothing at the mouth, spasms muscles spasms, restlessness, convulsions, and death (within 15 min to 2 hours)
Glacier Ivy	Leaves, berries	Colic, vomiting and diarrhea, usually not fatal.
Heartleaf	All parts	Irritation and inflammation of the digestive tract, diarrhea, bloody stool.
Hemlock, Water (<i>Cicuta maculata L.</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	All parts, root and root stalk	Rapid pulse, rapid breathing, dilated pupils, restlessness, nervousness, twitching, frequent urination, diarrhea, depression, weight loss, weak pulse, convulsions, coma, death.
Hyacinth (<i>Hyacinth orientalis</i>)	Bulbs, leaves, flowers	Colic, vomiting and diarrhea, usually not fatal.
Hydrangea (<i>Hydrangea spp.</i>)	Leaves, buds	Irritation and inflammation of the digestive tract, diarrhea, bloody stool.
Jerusalem Cherry (<i>Solanum pseudocapsicum L.</i>)	All parts, unripe fruit	Not lethal, but can cause skin, mouth, eye and stomach irritation.
Johnsongrass (<i>Sorghum halepense</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	Leaves and stems, especially young plants.	Breathing problems, shaking of the rear legs, rapid heart rate, weakness and death.
Jimson Weed (<i>Datura stramonium L.</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	All parts	Hallucinations, severe intestinal disturbances, diarrhea, drowsiness, numbness, dilated pupils, trembling, labored breathing, nasal discharge, rapid heartbeat, weak pulse, incoordination, paralysis or severe shaking of the rear legs, rapid heart rate, coma. Can be fatal.
Jonquil	Bulbs	Sluggishness, weakness, bloody diarrhea. In severe cases, death may occur in 2 to 4 days.
Lantana (<i>Lantana camara L.</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	Leaves and berries	Breathing difficulty, skin irritation, paralysis, convulsions, death (rare).
Lily-of-the-Valley (<i>Convallaria majalis</i>)	All parts	Troubled breathing, trembling, weakness, coma, death.
Mandrake	Roots, foliage, unripe fruit	Not lethal, but can cause skin, mouth, eye and stomach irritation.
Mistletoe	Berries	Colic, diarrhea, blood in stool, rare cases anemia, and possible death.
Morning Glory	Seeds	Colic, diarrhea, blood in stool, rare cases anemia, and possible death.
Marble Queen	All parts	Colic, diarrhea, blood in stool, rare cases anemia, and possible death.
Nightshade (<i>Solanum spp.</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	All parts	Staggering, trembling, breathing difficulties, weakness, diarrhea, increased drinking and urinating, death.
Nephtytis, Arrowhead Vine	All parts	Rapid pulse, rapid breathing, dilated pupils, restlessness, nervousness, twitching, frequent urination, diarrhea, depression, weight loss, weak pulse, convulsions, coma, death.
Pigweed, Redroot (<i>Amaranthus retroflexus</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	Leaves, stems, roots.	Breathing difficulty, skin irritation, paralysis, convulsions, death (rare).
Poinsettia (<i>Euphorbia pulcherrima</i>)	Leaves, flowers	Not lethal, but can cause skin, mouth, eye and stomach irritation.
Pokeweed, Inkberry 🍄🍄🍄	All parts	Colic, diarrhea, blood in stool, rare cases anemia, and possible death.
Parlor Ivy	All parts	Colic, diarrhea, blood in stool, rare cases anemia, and possible death.
Red Sage	Green berries	Staggering, trembling, breathing difficulties, weakness, diarrhea, increased drinking and urinating, death.
Rhubarb (<i>Rheum raphaniticum</i>) 🍄🍄🍄	Leaves	Staggering, trembling, breathing difficulties, weakness, diarrhea, increased drinking and urinating, death.
Red Princess	All parts	Colic, diarrhea, blood in stool, rare cases anemia, and possible death.
Saddleleaf	All parts	Colic, diarrhea, blood in stool, rare cases anemia, and possible death.
Tulip (<i>Tulipa spp.</i>)	Bulbs	Staggering, trembling, breathing difficulties, weakness, diarrhea, increased drinking and urinating, death.
Umbrella Plant	All parts	Colic, diarrhea, blood in stool, rare cases anemia, and possible death.
Yew, English (<i>Taxus baccata</i>) and Japanese (<i>Taxus cuspidata</i> Sieb. & Zucc.) 🍄🍄🍄	All parts	Breathing problems, trembling, weakness, heart problems, stomach upset, very sudden death.

🍄 Mildly Toxic 🍄🍄 Moderately Toxic 🍄🍄🍄 Highly Toxic

♥ IF YOU THINK YOUR PET HAS EATEN
SOMETHING THEY SHOULDN'T HAVE,
CONTACT YOUR VETERINARIAN IMMEDIATELY. ♥

With Puppy Love,
♥ Barbara 🐾
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The Do's and Don'ts of Dog Training.

DO'S

I LIKE TRAINING TIME!



DO use rewards like treats to train your dog so your dog will enjoy training.

WALKS ARE FUN!



DO use comfortable, dog-friendly equipment so that your dogs relaxed and happy.

SIT-TOY!



DO have your dog work for valued resources like meals, walks and toys so your dog looks to you for guidance.

DON'T'S

TRAINING TIME SUCKS



DON'T use force or punishment when working with your dog. Your dog will not think training is fun and will be afraid of you.

IT'S SELF DEFENSE!



DON'T use aversive equipment like choke collars, prong collars or electronic shock collars. Training will be painful and scary for your dog.

I TRY



DON'T use confrontational methods that to may frighten your dog or, worse, cause your dog to react aggressively.

DO build a cooperative relationship based on mutual respect, communication and trust so both you and your dog enjoy being with one another. **DON'T** use methods or equipment that are uncomfortable, painful, forceful, scary or intimidating to your dog. Positive reinforcement training is so much more fun for both the dog and owner.

With Puppy Love,

Barbara

STORYBOOK MALTESE