

The 30 Minute Guide To

# KEEPING YOUR COCKAPOO HEALTHY

by Simon James



**The  
Concise  
Ultimate  
Guide**

how to check your cockapoos health - common illnesses  
genetic diseases - orthopaedic diseases Preventive health care  
home dental care - hazard prevention - nutrition & diet  
reproductive health - affordable health care  
and much more!

## Acknowledgments

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## Foreword

Hello! My name is Simon James and I'm the editor of this book. I hope you enjoy all of the specialist advice it contains that has been contributed by Cockapoo owners from their own knowledge and research. I'm a huge advocate of preventative health care for all animals, and as a big fan of Cockapoos I'd love to see more Cockapoo owners taking the time to research their dog's health and care needs. Being proactive and educating yourself about your Cockapoo's health now, rather than later on, could save you and your dog a lot of trouble and you a lot of unnecessary heartache and expense.

### About the 30 minute Cockapoo Guides

This 30 minute guide is a quick reference for Cockapoo owners and those interested in Cockapoos a brief but thorough overview of the topic. Raising awareness of health issues that affect Cockapoos will give you as a owner a clear route to action. That maybe adjusting the diet or calling the Vet— but ignorance breeds poor canine health and that's what this guide is trying to reduce.

You may find after reading the book you want to dive deeper into the subject. Please do that, we're glad to alert you to your dog's health needs and encourage you to take steps to build your knowledge and implement preventative health care for your dog.

Enjoy!



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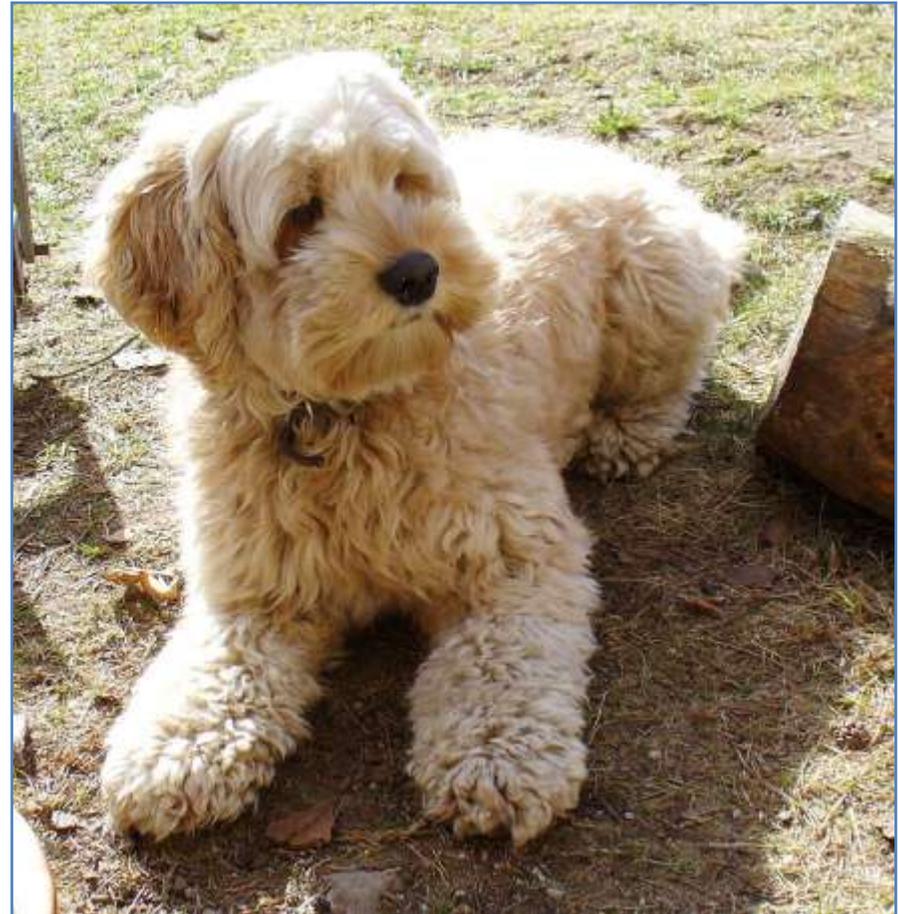
## 1. How to check your dogs Health

Ask to see *original copies* of the veterinarian reports to make sure your puppy is as healthy as possible. The following Ten basic health evaluation checks are recommended before purchasing a Cockapoo puppy or rescuing a dog.

1. Breathing: Should be quiet, without coughing / wheezing / sneezing. Check for crusting or discharge around their nostrils.
2. Body and Weight: Place your hands around their rib cage: you should be able to feel the ribs under a layer of fat – ribs shouldn't be visible.
3. Coat: Whether Poodle style ringlets or Cocker style wavy hair it should feel lustrous and soft with no dandruff / bald spots or excessive oiliness.
4. Temperature: Normal temperature is 38.3 to 39.2 degrees Celsius or 101 to 102.5 degrees Fahrenheit. Insert a thermometer into the anus with care and leave there for 3 minutes
5. Demeanour: a well-rested puppy should be energetic and alert
6. Hearing: a puppy should react if you clap your hands behind their head.
7. Genitals: no visible discharge or worms around the genital or anal region.
8. Mobility: No wobbling or limping they will walk and run normally with a natural gait.
9. Vision: bright & shiny, clear eyes. Watery look is normal

10. Elimination - Stools should be brown and firm, urine yellow to clear.

If anything feels abnormal get a vet to check the dog over before buying the puppy.



## When to call the vet

As a responsible dog owner you need to be alert to changes in your Cockapoo's well being. Even when there is no obvious injury or illness, you are the one who will sense that something is wrong.

The better you are spotting signs that something isn't quite right the better your dog can avoid pain and suffering as conditions or illness develop preventive health care, is far better than treating a sick dog!

If your normally active, happy Cockapoo seems down cast, less responsive and off their food and water it's time to investigate why this is definitely NOT normal behaviour for the breed.

Other symptoms that should prompt a call to the veterinarian are:

- Fainting, loss of balance,
- Constipation / straining to urinate
- Runny eyes or nose,
- increase discharge from eyes, ears, nose or sores
- Persistent scratching at ears / eyes
- Bouts of coughing or sneezing
- Difficulty breathing or prolonged heavy panting
- Shivering
- Whining for no apparent reason
- Restlessness
- Longer than normal sleep patterns
- Limping, or protecting part of the body
- Excessive thirst

## A good vet is worth their weight in gold

Working with a qualified veterinarian is critical to long-term and comprehensive healthcare for a companion animal. If you do not already have a vet, ask your breeder for a recommendation.

## First visit to the vet

If the breeder has not already had the puppy taken to the vet, schedule a visit. Bring all the dog's medical records with you and discuss completing the required vaccinations and having the animal spayed or neutered

Routine examination procedures include taking your dog's temperature and a check of its heart and lung function with a stethoscope.

The puppy will be weighed and measured to provide baseline figures by which growth rate and physical progress may be judged. Ask questions. Use the vet's knowledge to reassure yourself and learn as much as you can about your dogs health and as you are now your Cockapoos primary health giver.

## 2. Common Diseases

### Genetic Diseases

Like all dogs, Cockapoos are susceptible to some genetic diseases. The parent breeds used to produce a F1 (or first cross) Cockapoo puppy will pass on hereditary diseases if not tested for breeding suitability.

This is the same for all dogs but the list below is particular for Cockapoo parent dogs (the male and female are known as dams and sires or stud dogs ).

If health tests are not carried out before breeding, the breeder and the eventual owner of the Cockapoo puppy might unknowingly be accepting a Cockapoo with health issues in later life.

As a buyer, it's far better to understand what test results you should *insist* on seeing with original written documentation rather than risk having health concerns as your puppy matures.

Below is a list of the most prevalent diseases to scrutinize to ensure you buy a healthy Cockapoo!

#### Prcd-PRA - (Progressive Retinal Atrophy)

A genetic disorder that causes blindness. Cells at the back of the retina gradually decay and die leaving the dog suffering from night blindness and most likely full blindness by end of life.

**Onset age:** Early adolescence / adulthood

**Symptoms:** Night blindness, gradual short sightedness

**Cure:** No

**Prevention:** Test parents before breeding

**Parent dogs affected:** American Cocker Spaniel / English Shower Cocker / English Working Cocker / Miniature Poodle / Toy Poodle

**Health testing:** Always. For all registered cockapoos one parent must be clear.

#### FN - Familial Nephropathy

A recessive inherited disease that destroys nephrons (cell structure that makes up the kidney)

**Onset age:** six to 24 months of age

**Symptoms:** drinks more, urinates more, weight loss, lack of appetite, vomiting, or diarrhea

**Cure:** No

**Prevention:** Test parents before breeding

**Parent dogs affected:** English Shower Cocker / English Working

**Health Testing:** Always - Always for all registered Cockapoos. (F1 and poodle back crosses are exempt) carrying English Show & Working Cocker Spaniel genes, must have one parent clear/normal

#### Phosphofructokinase (PFK)

Phosphofructokinase (PFK) is an essential enzyme needed to produce energy. The disease occurs when the gene mutates and stops producing energy from sugar sources within the dog.

**Onset age:** adolescence / adulthood

**Cure:** none

**Symptoms:** jaundice, sudden weakness, cramping, and anaemia

**Prevention:** health testing

**Parent dogs affected:** American Cocker Spaniel

**Health testing:** Always for all registered Cockapoos. (F1 and poodle back crosses are exempt) carrying American Cocker Spaniel genes must have one parent clear/normal.

## Glaucoma

Primary Glaucoma is caused by increased pressure build up within the eye. It is classified as either primary or secondary. The eye's drainage becomes blocked, but the eye keeps making fluid. As a result, pressure on the eye increases.

## Secondary Glaucoma

Occurs when other eye diseases cause fluid drainage problems. With secondary glaucoma be watchful for eye inflammation, cataracts, retinal detachment and movement of the lens.

**Onset age:** Adolescence / adulthood

**Cure:** It is crucial to determine if the dog is affected by primary or secondary glaucoma. The treatment needed and the prognosis for vision is different for each type.

**Symptoms:** Can start in just one eye

**Prevention:** Annual vet check-up can prevent secondary glaucoma. [The British Veterinary Association](#) (BVA) also have a scheme for specialist Canine Ophthalmologist. A manual examination of the eye needs to be done.

**Parent dogs affected:** American Cocker Spaniel / English Shower Cocker / English Working Cocker / Miniature Poodle / Toy Poodle

**Health testing:** Preferable

## Von Willebrand disease TYPE 1 (vWD1)

A bleeding disorder. vWD1 is a protein that enables blood clotting.

**Onset age:** Early adolescence / adulthood. Often discovered after nail trimming, teething, spaying, sterilizing, tail docking, cropping

**Cure:** Type 1 is only results in mild bleeding. Type 2&3 are more severe and bleeding can occur in intestines, stomach, urinary tracts, genitals and joints

**Symptoms:** Spontaneous bleeding from the nose, gum and other mucous membranes. Excessive bleeding occurs after an injury, trauma or a surgery.

**Prevention:** Testing before breeding

**Parent dogs affected:** Miniature Poodle

**Health testing:** Advisable

## Hip dysplasia

Hip dysplasia is an abnormal development within the hip joint, which leads to deformity in the joint.

**Onset age:** 14 to 26 weeks of age. The developmental 'primary' changes appear first. The secondary changes may be referred to as Degenerative Joint Disease or Osteo Arthrosis or Osteo-Arthritis.

**Cure:** Hereditary hip dysplasia is not curable. Secondary hip dysplasia can be treated as its primary cause is wear and tear

**Symptoms:** As Hip dysplasia can include joint looseness (laxity), inflammation, pain, new bone formation and bone erosion, changes in gait to pronounced lameness, stiffness after exercise.

**Prevention:** Not over exercising, particularly developing puppies in their first year.

## Hip Score

BVA/KC Hip Dysplasia Scheme determines how likely hip dysplasia is likely to occur in dogs. The lower the 'hip score' the less the better. The minimum (best) score for each hip is zero and the maximum (or least desirable) is 53, giving a range for the total score of 0 to 106.

Sires (fathers) to be bred from should ideally be ones whose offspring have consistently low scores. The same selection procedure should be used for breeding bitches, since the use of animals with higher scores will increase the risk of producing offspring with higher scores.

For fees and further information contact: CHS, 7 Mansfield Street, London, W1G 9NQ. Tel 020 7908 6380 Email [chs@bva.co.uk](mailto:chs@bva.co.uk) / [www.bva.co.uk/chs](http://www.bva.co.uk/chs)

**The breed mean score:** The suggested mean score for Cockapoos is 12/13.

**Parent dogs affected:** American Cocker Spaniel / English Shower Cocker / English Working Cocker / Miniature Poodle / Toy Poodle

**Health testing:** Advised

## Retinal Dysplasia

Retinal dysplasia appears as streaks and dots in the central retina affecting a dog's eye site. Most cases are hereditary.

**Onset age:** Adult dogs

**Symptoms:** Mild retinal dysplasia may not show symptoms. In dogs with more severe cases, the symptoms may include being afraid of the dark (even inside the house), bumping into things and noticeable visual impairment.

**Cure:** None

**Prevention:** Other than an inherited condition, retinal dysplasia may be bought on by prenatal infections like the Herpes-virus. Herpes-virus causes inflammation of the eye and retinal dysplasia may develop later on in life. Also parvo-virus and exposure to toxins can cause retinal dysplasia in dogs.

**Parent dogs affected:** American Cocker Spaniel

**Health testing:** Advisable

Most Cockapoo health problems can be avoided by selecting good breeder. Why roll the dice and buy a puppy off the internet - could well end in heart break.



## Infection Diseases

Infectious diseases spread fast and are caused by organisms which could be either: bacterial, viral, fungi or parasite. Some are air-borne diseases that spread by water droplets and some spread via ticks or mosquitoes.

Diseases that can be spread to humans are called Zoonoses and are an obvious public health concern. The well known ones are Rabies (transmitted through a bite) or Scabies caused by mites.

### Viral

Viral diseases spread very rapidly in kennels. It's important to vaccinate against the common viruses so book this in with the first visit to the vet or ensure you have received original documentation from the breeder for the recommended condition below.

- Rabies - inflammation in the brain and is usually fatal.
- Canine distemper - impacts the gastrointestinal and respiratory systems, the spinal cord and brain
- Canine hepatitis - acute liver infection
- Canine parvovirus - Originated from cats, but now common in dogs and spread through faeces. signs may include lethargy, vomiting, fever, and diarrhoea (usually bloody)
- Herpes virus - is transmitted to puppies during birth.
- Canine influenza - dog flu or kennel cough

### Bacterial

Bacterial infections generally do not spread as are usually resulting from a wound of some kind.

The exceptions are:

- Kennel Cough (airborne and caused by *Bordetella bronchiseptica*)
- Leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease caused by bacteria of the genus *Leptospira* - transmission most commonly occurs by drinking puddle, pond, or ditch water contaminated by urine from infected wildlife
- Lyme disease or borreliosis is a tick borne disease. Symptoms include joint swelling, fever, lameness, and swelling around the lymph nodes
- Brucellosis is a sexually transmitted disease

### Fungal diseases

Ring Worm - The clinical name is Dermatophytosis. It's actually caused by fungi not from parasitic worms. Humans get it to specially people who play sports as it thrives on moist warm skin. It manifests as a dry red patch of skin

A topical crème will defeat ring worm within 1 to 2 weeks.

### Parasites

External parasites are very common particularly for 'working dogs'

- Fleas and ticks (in their various forms) particular affect rural dogs attaching themselves to the skin
- They can lead to tick-borne Lyme Disease
- Mites cause skin problems such as mange
- A Mosquitoe's bite can cause heartworm

Internal parasites

- Parasites, particularly intestinal worms (such as roundworms, hookworms and tapeworms) are transmitted in a dog's faeces.