

PARVO VIRUS

FACTS:

- **PARVOVIRUS IS DEADLY AND HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS**
- Canine parvovirus is carried by dogs and only spread to other dogs
- It is excreted in the feces of infected dogs, and if someone -- human, dog, bird, etc. -- steps in (or otherwise comes in contact with) the excrement, the possibility for contamination is great
- Dogs and puppies can contract Parvo even if they never leave their yards
- Clinical signs: Severe diarrhea, lethargy, acting "out of sorts"
- Dogs may be infected carriers without showing any clinical signs
- Parvovirus can last as long as one year in the environment
- Takes 7-10 days from the time of exposure for dogs and puppies to start showing symptoms and to test positive
- Extremely hardy; most disinfectants cannot kill the virus, however chlorine bleach is the most effective and inexpensive agent that works, and is commonly used by veterinarians

PREVENTION:

- **Limit your puppy's exposure to other dogs as much as possible and avoid public parks until they have received at least two vaccinations**
- Puppies should receive their first vaccinations at 6-8 weeks of age and boosters administered every 3 weeks until 16 weeks of age
- When visiting the vet, hold your puppy in your lap or place them in a carrier
- Any areas that are thought to be contaminated with Parvo should be thoroughly washed with chlorine bleach diluted 1 ounce per quart of water

GROOMING YOUR AUSSIE

BRUSHING:

- Their thick water-resistant double coat protects them from the weather, sticks, burrs and the other hazards of corralling livestock. *With proper grooming care these dogs need very little trimming.* It is especially important to brush them weekly to remove their thick undercoat when it is no longer needed, especially in the spring. This allows for "loft"--ability of the air to circulate through the coat and cool your dog. There are several tools to remove the undercoat, but a favorite of ours is the stainless steel wide-toothed rake. With frequent brushing, they should not need a bath more than every month or every other, except when they get dirty.

FEET:

- Australian Shepherds tend to get long hair on their feet, and keeping this trimmed helps them to be more comfortable and to look neat. Carefully lift any hair from between the dog's toes and from inside the pads on the underside of the foot. To give the foot a clean appearance, trim the hair off the top of foot so it doesn't stick up above the toes. Clip the nails short as well.

EARS:

- Use thinning shears to remove any thick or long hair from around the dog's ears. By thinning, instead of just clipping the hair off, you get a result that looks blended, with no abrupt edges in the coat. The **bottom area on the back of each ear is especially prone to matting**, along with the section at the bottom directly in front of the ear opening. If they get especially matted, it may be necessary to cut those pieces out to prevent skin wounds from lifting as it tightens closer & closer to the skin. It is best not to let it get to this point for obvious reasons.

FEATHERS:

- The term "feathers" refers to the long, silky hair on the backs of all four legs of an Australian Shepherd. These can become tangled or matted, and many owners choose to trim the feathers to minimize grooming requirements. While the feathers on the front legs and the lower part of the back legs are usually relatively thin, the hair that grows up the back legs and onto the dog's rear, often called the britches, can sometimes be quite thick and may require trimming to keep it clean. **Use thinning shears to remove excess hair in the britches area, under the tail and below the anus, so that nothing sticks to it when the dog defecates.**

BODY:

- While you can clip an Australian Shepherd's body hair, it generally **isn't necessary** unless the dog's coat or skin is damaged in some way. **The double coat of an Australian Shepherd also may not grow back right if you cut it too short. This is very detrimental to your dog's health, as they cannot thermoregulate properly and may not be able to cool off or stay warm.** If you do choose to trim them, at a minimum leave 1.5 inches of hair to protect them from sunshine and help protect their undercoat.