



## **ALPHA K9 U - WELLNESS POLICY - ALL SERVICES**

We have set high standards at Alpha K9 U and we have implemented strict health & safety requirements for a very good reason – we are committed to keeping all pets safe and healthy! If we failed to require protection against contagious diseases and parasites, we could not promise your pet the safest environment possible. Accordingly, all pets visiting our campus must be current on the routine preventative health care for contagious diseases. To insure adequate protection, vaccinations & parasite testing procedures must be provided by a licensed veterinarian (hard-copy documentation required). Thank you in advance for helping us keep all of our canine companions healthy and safe!

**Vaccination Requirements:** Alpha K9 U requires Rabies, DHPP (Distemper, Hepatitis, Parainfluenza, Parvovirus), and Bordetella. For your canine's safety and well-being, please allow a minimum of forty-eight (48) hours after receiving vaccinations such as Distemper and/or Rabies prior to arrival. PLEASE NOTE: If the Bordetella vaccine has never been given, has expired, or was given via: intranasal (drops in the nose), the vaccine must be administered at least FOURTEEN (14) DAYS PRIOR to arrival at Alpha K9 U. If the Bordetella vaccine is boosted a minimum of FIVE (5) DAYS is required before entry.

PUPPIES are required to have their second set of DHPP, Bordetella vaccinations, and are required to have their Rabies vaccination (at 16 weeks of age).

**Parasite Testing (Fecal Flotation and Giardia Tests):** A negative fecal float is required for all services. A negative Fecal Float along with a negative Giardia Fecal Test is required to utilize our Aquatic Center and/or puppies up to ten (10) months of age. Helpful Hint: If your pet needs a Giardia Test make sure to ask your vet to perform both fecal tests on the single stool specimen you provide.

### ***Fecal Flotation and Giardia Testing Information***

- Intestinal parasites can cause serious illness and even death in pets.
- Some parasites are zoonotic, which means they can infect humans.
- Fecal flotation and Giardia testing can identify intestinal parasites, which is important for determining the best treatment and helping the pet to ensure a full recovery.

### ***Giardia/Giardiasis***

- Giardiasis is an infection of the small bowel that occurs mostly as a result of fecal-oral transmission or ingestion of contaminated water containing cysts.
- The majority of symptoms, which usually develop one (1) to three (3) weeks after ingesting the cysts, are gastrointestinal and can include acute and chronic diarrhea.
- The duration of acute giardiasis is usually longer than one (1) week and the disease is communicable for as long as the infected pet excretes cysts.
- Puppies, young adolescent dogs, and pets with weakened immune systems are more susceptible to infection.

*Surveys of various canine populations report a presence of giardia as follows: a) 10% prevalence in dogs that receive proper care. b) 50% prevalence in puppies. c) 100% prevalence is possible in some breeding kennels.*



## Parasite Testing (Fecal Flotation & Giardia Test) - Brief Q&A Summary

### *What Are the Benefits of Fecal Flotation and Giardia Testing?*

Although some pets infected with intestinal parasites develop diarrhea or other clinical signs, many pets don't show any signs at all. The only way to identify infected pets is to test them periodically for evidence of infection. Thus fecal flotation and giardia tests are helpful for identifying and, more importantly, treating infected pets.

### *Why does Alpha K9 U have a Giardia policy in place?*

Although it is not always convenient, policies and processes are developed and put into place for the safety and well-being of all of our canine companions and guests. Due to the high prevalence factor combined with the ability of giardia cysts to survive outside the pet within any environment for long periods of time, is just one of the many reasons why this policy is in place.

*Moreover, since the giardia parasite thrives in cool, damp environments, we need to be more vigilant due to the fact that pets are in or around water and damp environments, such as the Alpha K9 U Aquatic Center.*

### *Is there separate and/or special testing procedures for Giardia?*

Yes, special diagnostic procedures, beyond a routine fecal examination, are necessary to identify Giardia. But, there is no perfect test for giardia. Giardia is an elusive parasite, and cysts are shed only intermittently from the gastrointestinal tract of an infected dog. It will be at the Veterinarian discretion to determine which giardia testing/procedures should be utilized due to the specific circumstances of each pet. Some veterinarians perform fecal testing in the office, so results may be available the same day. Other practices use an outside laboratory for diagnostic testing, so results may take a few days.

### *What if your pet tests positive for Giardia?*

If your pet has tested positive for giardia, hopefully your pet has cleared the infection successfully after treatment. However, Alpha K9 U requires a follow up test to provide the best information about whether the infection is completely cleared. Again, the important thing to note is that giardia cysts aren't passed in every single stool sample, which is why additional tests are necessary to insure the infection is completely resolved.

**PLEASE NOTE: IT IS SOLELY UP TO YOUR VETERINARIAN TO INTERPRET THE TEST RESULTS** (in light of your pet's medical history and specific signs or symptoms, if any). Please be aware that different testing procedures may produce varying results; regardless, if it has been determined that your pet is free of all parasites, including giardia, by your Veterinarian, he or she may make a notation /document and "sign-off" stating that a "negative" diagnosis has been determined, on that date/time.

For your convenience, you or your veterinarian's office can easily fax the documentation to 317-284-1354 or email the data to Rachel at: [rachel@alphak9u.com](mailto:rachel@alphak9u.com)