



Foster Puppy Safety

At San Antonio Pets Alive!, protecting vulnerable puppies from Canine Parvovirus (Parvo) is one of our top priorities. Parvo is a highly contagious and potentially fatal virus that is common in our area. Please carefully follow the guidelines below to help keep your foster puppy safe.

"No Paws on the Ground" Policy

Puppies are **not allowed on the ground outside** until they meet specific safety criteria:

- Puppies must have received **at least 2 DHPP vaccines** to be allowed on the ground in a **private, fenced backyard only**.
- High-risk or public areas, including **parks, dog parks, sidewalks, parking lots, vet clinics, pet stores**, or any space where unknown dogs may have been **must be avoided until the puppy is at least 5 months old or has received 5 DHPP vaccines**, whichever comes first.

Puppies who do not meet these criteria are considered **"No Paws on the Ground."** This means:

- No outdoor access at all, not even in a backyard.
 - Keep the puppy in a clean, indoor space or in an above-ground playpen or kennel setup.
 - Do not allow contact with the ground, shoes, or potentially contaminated items.
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Indoor Safety

Parvo can be tracked into the home on shoes, hands, clothing, and other surfaces.

- Remove shoes before entering any area where your puppy is housed.
 - Puppies under 8 weeks or with fewer than 2 DHPP vaccines should remain in a **contained, sanitized space** such as a playpen.
 - No outside shoes should be worn in the puppy's area.
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About Canine Parvovirus

Parvo is a virus that attacks the gastrointestinal and immune systems of dogs, especially young puppies. It is spread through direct or indirect contact with infected feces and can survive in the environment for **up to a year**, especially in soil.

It is resistant to weather changes and many common disinfectants. The virus can also be carried by wildlife (raccoons, squirrels, etc.) and brought into yards without your knowledge.

Signs of Parvo

Seek veterinary help immediately if your puppy shows any of the following symptoms:

- Bloody or severe diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Lethargy
- Loss of appetite
- Fever
- Weight loss
- Dehydration or weakness

 **Contact our Marbach Clinic immediately if you notice symptoms:**
appointment@sanantoniopetsalive.org

Parvo can progress rapidly. Early treatment is critical.

Puppies at Highest Risk

- Puppies between 6 weeks and 6 months old
- Unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated dogs

Puppies lose maternal immunity over time and rely on timely vaccinations for protection. Delays in vaccination or exposure to outside environments can lead to severe illness or death.

Prevention and Vaccination

Parvo is preventable with proper vaccination:

We at SAPA! follow a vaccine protocol which states that puppies need a DHPP vaccine every 2 weeks until they are 5 months old.

Until the full vaccine series is complete, **do not expose your puppy to unfamiliar dogs or outdoor environments.**

Thank you for helping protect our foster puppies. Your commitment and caution are saving lives.