

Cavalier Secrets

King Among Spaniels



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FOREWORD

You see a little dog with large, round, deep brown eyes and long silky ears. He looks at you with the most endearing expression, begging to be cuddled and fussed over. You are unable to resist an "Awww, he is so *cute*!" as you allow him to leap into your lap and smother you with doggy kisses. Welcome to the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Fan Club, people!

The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is classified by the American Kennel Club (AKC) as a toy dog and is a small, utterly charming breed that dates back to the early 17th century. Extremely popular as a house pet with the royal families of Europe, the Cavalier was initially known as the "*comforte*" dog and it was not uncommon for doctors to write out prescriptions advising the company of this little dog as the best remedy! Even today, they make wonderful therapy dogs. Patients in nursing homes and the elderly eagerly wait for visits from this friendly, cuddly little spaniel.

At about a foot high at the shoulder and weighing between 13 to 18 pounds, the Cavalier is a small bundle of delight and happiness. Their affectionate nature makes them excellent companions for children. They are not aggressive dogs, which means they also readily make friends with other dogs and pets that you may have at home.

The Cavalier has a long, silky fur coat that is very similar to that of a Golden Retriever. He needs regular brushing but does not really need trimming. Keeping him clean is a simple task, as he is essentially a clean dog and will also housetrain very easily. A gentle and easy to train breed, the Cavalier is also bred for show. Being very intelligent, a Cavalier learns quickly. Many Cavaliers are the star performers at their obedience and agility classes.

The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel has such a wonderful temperament that he is willing to share any and all moments of your life. Should you want to spend a quiet afternoon, reading by the fire, he will snooze in your lap. If you decide to head off on a three-mile trek on a windy morning, he will not complain. He will be there right by your side, trotting along as if being with you is the most delightful experience of his life.

If you wish to buy a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, do think the decision through before acting on it. This is an extremely sociable dog that needs companionship and is miserable when left alone. If you work all day, travel frequently or are otherwise engaged in pursuits that keep you away from home often, this may not be the best breed for you. A lonely dog indulges in destructive behavior, if only to attract attention. This breed also has a history of heart problems. While good breeders are making great efforts to screen the sire and the dam thoroughly, there is likelihood that your Cavalier may need medical attention, as he grows older.

Your decision to buy this dog should, therefore, be a well-considered one. Make sure that he will fit into your lifestyle. Do you have the time to devote to him? He is going to be a part of your family for many years to come and will be dependent on you for his wellbeing. Do you have the patience to train him and the resources to commit for his care and possible medical needs?

If you do, however, decide to make a commitment to a Cavalier puppy, you will be rewarded with the most wonderful companion for the next 12-15 years. You will need to know where to get a Cavalier pup, what is the price range they are sold for. As a responsible parent, you will be concerned about his training, exercise, health care and much more.

This book will help you tackle all these issues and will also assist you in choosing the right breeder from whom to acquire your pet. You will find helpful tips in grooming, diet and nutrition and a whole range of frequently asked questions about the Cavalier. Your puppy is a living, breathing, sensitive creature, no different from a child in your house. This book will equip you to deal with his needs effectively and your puppy will respond with warm affection and complete devotion. This will be one of the wonderful relationships in your life.

Chapter 1.

HISTORY OF THE CAVALIER KING CHARLES SPANIEL

Ancestry

The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel traces its ancestry to Toy Spaniels that were extremely popular in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. In fact, many paintings of this period, by noted painters such as Titian, Gainsborough, Van Dyck and Romney, depict noblemen and women, accompanied by small spaniels that have a striking resemblance to Cavaliers.

In England, it was during the reign of the Stuarts that the dog was given the name, King Charles Spaniel. These dogs had small, flat heads, almond-shaped eyes, ears that were set rather high on the head and pointed noses. They were especially popular as ladies pets and made easy travelling companions as a result of their small size.

In addition to being a fine companion, one of the jobs the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel was originally bred to do was to warm laps in draughty castles and on long carriage rides in winter. They were also used to attract fleas, and thereby protect their masters' lives, in the days of the plague. The Cavalier was such gorgeous bundle of warmth that it was not uncommon to find the dog featuring in medical prescriptions! A prescription written in Olde English for the Queen of England directs her to keep a "comforte dog" (our very own Cavalier King Charles Spaniel) on her lap to treat a cold.

King Charles II was besotted with this breed and had a couple of these spaniels with him wherever he went. Although he was inseparable from his pets, there were public places, where animals were not permitted. King Charles then issued a decree that the King

Charles Spaniel was to be allowed in all public places, including the House of Parliament. This decree is in existence even today.

Waning Popularity

With time, however, the popularity of this breed declined in favor of the Pug, which was the favorite of the Dutch kings that subsequently ruled England. Except for a red and white Toy Spaniel that was bred at Blenheim, by the Dukes of Marlborough, the King Charles Spaniels seemed to have dropped out of favor completely. The Blenheim spaniels were known for their sporting qualities and were also popular as ladies' companions.

It must be pointed out that in the 17th and 18th centuries, breeding was not such a sophisticated activity as it is now. Scientific knowledge was limited and communication, as well as modes of transport, was slow, at best. There was no recognized breed standard as there is now. It was only by the mid-nineteenth century, in Queen Victoria's reign, that breeding and showing of dogs became a serious pursuit.

Appearance of a New Toy Spaniel

As the breeders began to understand the principles of genetics, they could alter the breed to suit popular demand. As a result, a new strain of Toy Spaniel was developed: it had a flat face, a dome-shaped skull with an undershot jaw, long, low set ears and large round eyes. This type is still quite popular and is a very lovely breed. These dogs were known as Charlies in England and as the English Toy Spaniel in the United States. But by the early 20th century, the Charlies became so popular that the King Charles Spaniel that featured in the paintings had almost disappeared.

Search for the Older Strain

It was only due to the persistent efforts of an American, Roswell Eldridge, that the breed was revived. He wanted breeding stock for the Toy Spaniels that were similar to those found in paintings, including Edwin Landseer's "The Cavalier's Pets." He came across to England but found that the short-faced Charlies were all that were available.

He persisted, though, and even offered a prize at the Crufts Dog Show in 1926 for dogs of the Blenheim variety. The prize amount of twenty-five pounds sterling each, for the best dog and the best bitch, was a considerable figure at that time. The dog had been described in the Crufts' Catalogue as "As shown in the pictures of King Charles II's time,

long face no stop, flat skull, not inclined to be domed and with the spot in the center of the skull." The prizes were to go to the dogs nearest to the type described.

But there was no interest among the breeders to take up the revival of this strain, especially as they had worked hard to get rid of the long nose of the Toy Spaniel. Besides, the prize monies offered for the popular Charlies were far higher. As time passed, however, the large prizes were no longer offered and some serious breeders, led by Mrs. Hewitt Pitt, took up the experiment of reviving the long nosed spaniels. But little had been achieved even after five years. The dogs were so similar to the Charlies that the Kennel Club did not consider a separate registration was necessary, especially as the dogs were not numerous nor was there any standardization of the breed.

The Breakthrough

In 1928, however, there was a breakthrough. A dog owned by Miss Mostyn Walker, called Anne's Son, won the prize. Unfortunately, Roswell Eldridge had passed away just a month before the Crufts show and he was unable to see the result of the experiments to revive the breed. This dog was clearly a different strain and the name Cavalier King Charles was chosen for it. A breed club was soon formed and breeders actively sought the long faced pups that were a throw back to the older variety.

The breed standard was also drawn up. At the meeting to define the standard, Anne's Son was used as the live model and club members also caught hold of as many paintings as they could, of the 16th, 17th and 18th century, depicting the Toy Spaniels. The revival of the Cavalier presented an opportunity to the breeders to develop a new breed and this time around, they decided not to buckle under the forces of fashion trends. The dogs would be kept as close to their natural features as possible and they would not even be trimmed.

Cavaliers become Popular in England

Recognition from the Kennel Club took some time though and as there were no Challenge Certificates, the breeders had little incentive to breed a dog with low sales value. But a small band of pioneers struggled on, nonetheless, showing the dogs in the Open class or specific classes where the Show officials came to their aid. As a result, public knowledge of this breed increased but it was not until 1945 that the recognition of the Kennel Club came through. The Club also instituted Challenge Certificates for the Cavalier King Charles Spaniels to win championships and the breed was now well established.

The first Cavalier Champion was Daywell Roger, owned by the daughter of Mrs Pitt, Jane Bowdler. He was a beautiful specimen and was used very widely as a stud, contributing to further development of the Cavalier breed. It became so popular that by the '60s, there were more than a thousand registrations with the Kennel Club and the dogs had done well in the Championships too - more than sixty championships had been awarded to the Cavalier. In 1973, a Blenheim was awarded the Supreme Best in Show at Crufts.

The Cavalier was becoming popular outside England too. By this time, Cavalier Clubs had been established in the United States, Australia and New Zealand, as also in Finland and Sweden. In the UK, Cavaliers were regularly leading in the Toy Group entries and the breed club celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1978 with a Championship show that received a huge number of entries.

Cavaliers In The United States

The first Cavaliers came to the United States in the late 1940's from England. In the early 1950's, Mrs. W. L. Lyons Brown and her sister-in-law, Mrs. George Garvin (Trudy) Brown of Louisville, Kentucky contacted the American Kennel Club (AKC) and asked to register their Cavaliers. The AKC explained that a new breed must first become established in the country, there must be evidence of sufficient numbers of both dogs and owners and they must begin keeping records of activity. In other words, there must be a strong and sustained interest in a new breed.

On the advice of AKC, they began to contact other Cavalier owners and in 1956 formed the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club, USA (CKCSC, USA) as a registry organization. Trudy became the matriarch of the breed in this country. Working from English Kennel Club export pedigrees, she began keeping a studbook, issuing registration papers and keeping all records for the breed. Once this record keeping process became established, they again asked the AKC to recognize the breed, and on April 1, 1962 the AKC admitted Cavaliers to the Miscellaneous Class. This was the first step that all breeds were required to take in order for the AKC to grant full recognition.

The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club, USA

The CKCSC, USA also began to hold shows. The first Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Specialty Show was held at Prospect, Kentucky, in the early 1960s, by which time 118

dogs had been registered, of which 68 had been born in the United States. By 1977, the CKCSC began to award club championships.

Even today, the CKCSC-USA keeps complete and accurate records of litters, of imported Cavaliers, Stud Books, etc. Specialty Shows are still organized around the country so that Cavalier owners have the opportunity for an objective evaluation of their dogs by knowledgeable judges and their dogs can compete for a Championship in the USA.

The Club also enforced a stringent Code of Ethics, applying to all Club Members. This meant that the Club expects its members to act responsibly with regard to the welfare and breeding of Cavaliers. The Code of Ethics would also help keep the Cavalier out of unethical hands, which might turn the dogs over to puppy mills or pet shops.

In 1985 the CKCSC-USA held a Silver Jubilee Show in Prospect, Kentucky, marking the 25th consecutive CKCSC-USA Specialty show. But the CKCSC, USA always remained a private registry body, and has *never* been the Parent Club for Cavalier King Charles Spaniels in the United States. There can be no Parent Club for any breed of dogs until that breed has been recognized by the official kennel club of that country. In the United States it is the AKC, in the United Kingdom the Kennel Club, and so on.

Over the years, several votes had been taken about whether to seek full AKC recognition for the breed, and this proposal was always defeated. Cavaliers remained in the AKC Miscellaneous Class for almost three decades, even though it was a recognized breed in nearly every other country around the world.

Trudy Brown Albrecht passed away in 1983, and at the same time, the club began to lose direction. By 1990, it bore little resemblance to the club she had founded.

AKC Recognition

In 1993, the AKC formally invited the CKCSC, USA, for a discussion regarding official recognition of the breed. There were many Cavalier owners who had, in the meanwhile, contacted the AKC for recognition, as that would permit them to avail of AKC services and also to participate in AKC events. The AKC also had vast resources committed to health research, under the purview of the Canine Health Foundation.

Thus far, the Cavalier had been classed in the "Miscellaneous Class," which, the AKC officials were quick to point out, was merely a holding slot, until the breeds represented therein were officially recognized. Cavaliers could not be in the "Miscellaneous Class" forever. It was also a strange circumstance that the United States was the only country in

the world where the Cavaliers did not have official recognition. The AKC encouraged the CKCSC, USA to follow the due process towards becoming the "American Kennel Club Parent Club" for the Cavalier breed.

It was also made clear that the breed would be accorded official recognition, with or without the CKCSC, USA agreeing to become the AKC Parent Club. The AKC gave the CKCSC, USA some time to consult its members on the AKC recognition. However, when the ballot was sent out to the members, they roundly voted against AKC recognition yet again.

It must be pointed out at this juncture that a Parent Club is responsible for the protection of a breed. The club publishes the breed standard, holds specialty shows, writes illustrated guides for owners, hold talks and film shows on the breed and assist local clubs to form, so that owners have access to information and assistance. Now there was official recognition for the Cavalier but there was no Parent Club.

The American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club

This situation caused great alarm among Cavalier owners and about 150 owners, breeders and exhibitors, most of them members of the CKCSC, USA, decided to set up a separate club. Thus the American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club was formed. Regular membership was awarded only to breeders and exhibitors, in order to avoid the kind of circumstances that had plagued the CKCSC. Other dog owners were awarded associate membership, which meant they could access all of the services but they would not be eligible to vote, be counted in a quorum or hold office.

By December of 1994, the ACKCSC, Inc. asked to become the Parent Club for the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel and the AKC granted their request. The Stud Book was opened in March 1995 by the AKC and Cavalier owners began to register Foundation Stock. On January 1, 1996, the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel became the 140th breed to receive official recognition from the AKC - over 40 years after Trudy Brown Albrecht and Sally Brown had first made their request.

For the first time the Cavalier was eligible to compete as a recognized breed at AKC events, with the American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club, Inc. as its Parent Club. The American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club, Inc. held its first National Specialty in May of 1997.

Chapter 2

BREED STANDARD

The breed standard is an important reference for new owners. It defines the physical qualities of the breed as well as its temperament. If you are looking for a companion or pet dog, you may decide to accept some minor faults in the pup but you must make sure the dog is healthy and due care has been taken to screen the breeding line for health problems.

However, if you are buying the dog for breeding or for show, then you must make sure you have the best quality, as close to the breed standard as possible.

General Appearance:

- ❖ The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is an active, graceful, well-balanced toy spaniel.
- ❖ It is a lively animal, with a fearless, sporting character.
- ❖ It has an extremely affectionate temperament. The dog is not aggressive and has no tendency to nervousness either.
- ❖ A gentle, sweet, melting expression is an important characteristic of this breed.
- ❖ It moves with elegance and has a royal appearance.
- ❖ The natural appearance is preferred and the Cavalier does not require any trimming, sculpting or artificial alterations.

Size, Proportion, Substance

Size

- ❖ The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is usually between 12 to 13 inches tall at the withers.
- ❖ Weight is always proportionate to height, varying between 13 to 18 lbs.
- ❖ While these are the ideal height and weight parameters, small variations within these are acceptable. A dog should be penalized only in comparison with one of equal general appearance, type and quality.

Proportion

- ❖ The Cavalier has an almost square body, though it is actually very slightly longer than tall.
- ❖ The height from the withers to the elbow is approximately equal to the height from the elbow to the ground.

Substance

- ❖ Bones are moderate in proportion to size.
- ❖ Weedy specimens are to be equally penalized as oversized ones.

Head

The head is neither too large nor too small for the body; it must be in proportion to the size of the dog.

Eyes

- ❖ Cavaliers have large, round eyes, set a little apart on the head.
- ❖ Color of the eyes must be a warm brown, giving the dog a lustrous, limpid expression.

- ❖ Eyes are dark-rimmed
- ❖ The eyes have a soft fleshy cushion under them.
- ❖ Faults - eyes are small and almond-shaped, or light in color; they have a white surrounding ring.

Ears

- ❖ Cavaliers have ears set high on the head, not too close to each other.
- ❖ Ears are long, with plenty of long silky hair (feathering).
- ❖ Ears are wide and come forward to frame the Cavalier's face when he is alert.

Skull

- ❖ Slightly rounded, but without dome or peak;
- ❖ In fact, it appears flat because of the high placement of the ears.
- ❖ Stop is moderate, neither filled nor deep.

Muzzle

- ❖ Full muzzle, which is slightly tapered.
- ❖ Length from base of stop to tip of nose should be about 1½ inches.
- ❖ Face well filled below eyes, with any tendency towards snippiness undesirable.
- ❖ Nose is uniformly black colored, without flesh marks. Nostrils are well developed.
- ❖ Lips well developed but not pendulous giving a clean finish.

Faults:

- ❖ *Sharp or pointed muzzles.*
- ❖ *Putty, or "dudley" noses, and white patches on the nose are serious faults, as are small, pinched nostrils.*
- ❖ *Full or pendulous lips.*
- ❖ *Flesh marks, i.e. patches of pink pigment showing through hair on muzzle.*

Bite

- ❖ Jaws are strong.
- ❖ The Cavalier should have a scissors bite, i.e. the upper teeth overlap the lower teeth very closely and are set square into the jaws.

***Faults** - undershot bite, weak or crooked teeth, crooked jaws. While undershot mouths are a fault, it should be emphasized that a slightly undershot bite in an otherwise well-balanced head with the correct sweet expression should not be penalized in favor of a level mouth with a plain or hard expression.*

Neck, Topline, Body

Neck

- ❖ The Cavalier has a fairly long neck
- ❖ Neck is well muscled and forms an arch at the crest.
- ❖ The neck slopes smoothly into the shoulders to give an elegant look.

Topline

- ❖ The topline is level, both when the Cavalier is walking and standing.

Body

- ❖ The Cavalier's body is short-coupled with well-sprung ribs, though they should not be barreled.
- ❖ The chest is moderately deep, extending to the elbows.
- ❖ Slightly less body at the flank than at the last rib, but with no tucked-up appearance.
- ❖ The back slopes gently, with moderate angulation, to give the characteristic look of top class and presence.
- ❖ Back is well level, leading into strong, muscular hindquarters.

Tail

- ❖ Well set on, carried happily but never much above the level of the back
- ❖ The Cavalier's tail is in constant characteristic motion when the dog is in action.
- ❖ Docking is optional. If docked, the tail must not be cut too short; two-thirds of the tail must be left on the body. Tails of broken-colored dogs should always be docked so as to leave a white tip.

Forequarters

- ❖ Shoulders well laid back.
- ❖ Forelegs straight and well under the dog with elbows close to the sides.
- ❖ Pasterns strong
- ❖ Feet compact with well-cushioned pads.

- ❖ Dewclaws may be removed.

Hindquarters

- ❖ The hindquarters construction should come down from a good broad pelvis, moderately muscled;
- ❖ Stifles must be well turned and hocks well let down.
- ❖ The hind legs, when viewed from the rear, should be parallel to each other from hock to heel.
- ❖ Feet should be compact, cushioned and well feathered.
- ❖ The dog must stand level on all four feet.

Faults - cow or sickle hocks.

Coat

- ❖ Of moderate length, silky, free from curl.
- ❖ Slight wave permissible.
- ❖ Feathering on ears, chest, legs and tail should be long,
- ❖ The feathering on the feet is a feature of the breed.
- ❖ No trimming of the dog is permitted.
- ❖ Hair growing between the pads on the underside of the feet may be trimmed.

Specimens where the coat has been altered by trimming, clipping or by artificial means shall be so severely penalized as to be effectively eliminated from competition.

Color

Blenheim

- ❖ Rich chestnut markings well broken up on a clear, pearly white ground.
- ❖ The ears must be chestnut and the color evenly spaced on the head and surrounding both eyes,
- ❖ There is a white blaze between the eyes and ears, in the center of which may be the lozenge or "Blenheim spot". The lozenge is a unique and desirable, though not essential, characteristic of the Blenheim.

Tricolor

- ❖ Jet black markings well broken up on a clear, pearly white ground.
- ❖ The ears must be black and the color evenly spaced on the head and surrounding both eyes, with a white blaze between the eyes.
- ❖ Rich tan markings over the eyes, on cheeks, inside ears and on underside of tail.

Ruby

- ❖ Whole body is colored rich red.

Black and Tan

- ❖ Jet black with rich, bright tan markings over eyes, on cheeks, inside ears, on chest, legs and underside of tail.
- ❖ Tan should be bright.

Faults -

- ❖ *Heavy ticking on Blenheims or Tricolors, white marks on Rubies or Black and Tans.*
- ❖ *Any other color or combination of colors.*

Gait

- ❖ Free moving and elegant in action,
- ❖ The dog must have a good reach in front and sound, driving rear action.
- ❖ When viewed from the side, the movement exhibits a good length of stride,
- ❖ When viewed from front and rear it is straight and true, resulting from straight-boned fronts and properly made and muscular hindquarters.

Temperament

- ❖ Gay, friendly, non-aggressive
- ❖ No tendency towards nervousness or shyness.

Bad temper, shyness and meanness are not to be tolerated and are to be so severely penalized as to effectively remove the specimen from competition.

Any departure from the foregoing points should be considered a fault and the seriousness with which the fault should be regarded should be in exact proportion to its degree and its effect upon the health and welfare of the dog.

It is important to remember that a dog can have one or more of the faults listed in the Standard, in moderation, and still be an over-all typical gay, elegant Cavalier. On the other hand, bad temper or meanness are not to be tolerated and shall be considered disqualifying faults. It is the typical gay temperament, combined with true elegance and "royal" appearance, which are of paramount importance in the breed.

Chapter 3

ARE YOU SURE IT IS THE CAVALIER YOU WANT

Before you buy a Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, or any dog for that matter, you must study the breed and its characteristics to be sure this is the dog you want to buy. The Cavalier is such a popular dog because it has exquisite colors and has a friendly temperament. It is a delightfully affectionate, playful, intelligent little dog that repays his owner's care and attention with endearing devotion. A toy breed, they have a natural coat which needs no trimming, long silky ears, and large soulful eyes. More than one person has described them as looking like a Cocker Spaniel puppy all their lives.

It is also a very fashionable breed to own. The list of Cavalier owners reads like a veritable who's who: Frank Sinatra, Candice Bergen, the Reagans, Robert Wagner and Natalie Wood have all succumbed to the charms of this little dog. It does have some snob appeal, therefore, and it is not unusual to find yourself in a "waiting list" at the breeders'.

But any dog you acquire as a pet is a living, breathing, and sensitive creature. It has its own temperament that has been molded over centuries. The Cavalier was specially developed as a companion dog and he thrives in the warm, secure environs of a home. The playful nature and the soulful eyes are hard to resist - but precisely for that very same reason, he is not a pet you can leave alone at home.

So if you have long working hours or you travel frequently, your dog is going to get lonesome and he may start exhibiting behavior that will create problems. It is extremely important that you consider your lifestyle and make sure you will have the time for your Cavalier. Buying the Cavalier on the basis of a momentary whim or fancy is the worst thing you could do for the dog, as it is terribly unfair to leave such a sociable dog alone for the most part of his life.

If you are buying a Cavalier as a companion for your child, then again you need to examine how much free time your child has after school. If your child is involved in a lot of extra-curricular activities and sports, the initial novelty of a new puppy will wear off

very quickly indeed. The gloriously happy puppy you bought will soon turn into a noisy brat, as he is only trying to attract your attention, even if it is by making a nuisance of himself.

This breed has also a marked history of Mitral Valve Disease, which is a heart ailment. While efforts are being made by good breeders to screen the stock, there are chances that your dog may develop this condition. You must be sure you are going to have the time and resources to commit to his care if he falls ill. Mitral Valve Disease is a progressive condition but modern drugs can alleviate the symptoms and extend the dog's lifetime. While this is a condition that is late onset in other breeds, Cavaliers have been known to fall prey as early as 2-3 years of age. Not only does that mean a long drawn out medical program for the dog; it also affects his quality of life.

If you wish to own a Cavalier, you are making a commitment for a long period and the dog will be completely dependent on you for physical care and emotional security. You should make your decision after careful thought and not on the basis of a temporary infatuation with your friend's puppy. You have only seen him there in the course of a short visit and it will not prepare you for the kind of effort and care that he needs on a daily basis. Also remember that puppies are no indicators of what the grown up dog is going to be like.

Here is a short list of pros and cons that you should evaluate with your family before making your decision:

The Joys of Owning a Cavalier

- The Cavalier is a small, soft, cuddly dog with large expressive eyes and a beautiful, glossy, feathered coat that has very striking colors
- Cavaliers are affectionate dogs and they will bring a whole new meaning into to the word "cuddly".
- Cavaliers are also great companions for the more athletic owners, willingly jaunting along by your side on long walks. They love the outdoors just as much as they love snoozing on your soft cushions.
- In the Cavalier you will find a friendly dog that bears no ill will to any other creature - man or beast.
- Cavaliers need your loving attention and are always eager to please you. They respond well to praise and encouragement and are thus easy to train.

What You Should Know About Cavaliers

- Because they are such friendly and sociable dogs, they do not fare well in homes where they may have to fend for themselves for long periods of time. They are known to display "Separation Anxiety", which can mean destructiveness (chewing up your furniture) and too much barking when left alone.
- The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is a soft and submissive breed. They need to be cautiously exposed to the sights and sounds of their surroundings otherwise they become fearful and suspicious. Some breeding lines may have a fault in the temperament and the dogs can be shy and timid instead of the affectionate and friendly dog that is the "norm". Socializing the Cavalier is an activity you must be prepared to devote time to; otherwise the dog will not be a pleasant companion to live with.
- Chasing instincts are very strong in the Cavalier King Charles Spaniels. They carry very prominent traits of the hunting dog nature of spaniels and cannot be left off the leash at any time when they are out. They chase anything that runs, often at great risk to their own lives.
- The Cavalier is not the ideal dog if you have small children at home. This is a small breed and they can get seriously hurt with the inadvertent clumsiness of a small child - something could fall on them, they could be stepped on, squeezed too much or just dropped out of the child's hands. The Cavalier puppy gets extremely frightened with the sudden, loud noises children typically make and the dog could end up becoming stressed and shy.
- The Cavalier King Charles Spaniel is an expensive breed and puppies cost a minimum of \$1000 and can go up to \$3000, depending on the reputation of your breeder and the locality.
- The breed is currently affected by a serious health problem. Mitral Valve Disease affects up to 50% of Cavaliers by the time they are 5 years old. You should be prepared to invest time and money into his medical care, if he does get MVD.

If after going through the list above, you should still decide to own a Cavalier, you will have made an informed decision. Particularly in the case of the Toy breeds, their captivating appearance often causes people to rush into acquiring one. What follows is an unpleasant experience for both, the owner and the dog. It is worse for the animal, though, as he is completely dependent on you for his daily needs and for a secure, nurturing environment.

As a responsible owner, you will now be prepared for what to expect when you start checking with breeders on the availability of a Cavalier puppy.

Chapter 4

BUYING YOUR CAVALIER

Having made the decision to buy the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel, you can decide whether you want to buy a puppy or do a good turn to an unfortunate animal and get a dog from Cavalier Rescue. In the case of the latter, you would be offering a beautiful animal a second chance at happiness in a warm and caring home that he deserves. You will also be spared the early efforts at housetraining and obedience training. But also remember that there will not be much that you will be able to change in terms of behavior. You get an adult dog "as is".

If you decide to buy a puppy, there are some issues that you should think of and be ready to answer, as your breeder is likely to quiz you a great deal. Many breeders will choose not to sell, even if there is a puppy available, if they feel the new owner is unclear about what they need and have not done some preliminary homework on the breed.

Pet or Show?

When you speak to a breeder about your needs, you should be prepared to make a distinction between a pet and a show puppy. Unfortunately, most people are undecided; as all that they are sure about is that they have lost their heart to this radiantly beautiful dog, whose soul shines through his limpid eyes. They arrive at the breeder's with the light of love in their eyes and are not prepared for the round of questions he fires at them. But really, you would need to think this one through. If all you are looking for is a cute looking pet, you need not buy a show puppy.

Consider the following:

- ◆ Show puppies conform to the breed standard and no faults should be tolerated.
- ◆ A Cavalier as a home companion may have some physical flaws but could still retain the essential Cavalier character.

- ◆ Show puppies can be very expensive - breeders charge up to \$3000 for one.
- ◆ There is no guarantee that your show puppy will indeed grow into an adult Cavalier that can participate in conformation shows.

Male or Female?

The next issue you need to tackle is whether you want a male or a female Cavalier. Earlier, most pet buyers wanted a male. They did not want the bother of the female's seasons. Then there were those pet buyers who wanted females, having heard of the persistent efforts required to housetrain a male - as he was inclined to "mark" his territory, even indoors!

Whether you buy a male or a female, there are advantages and disadvantages of both decisions. Make an informed choice - for instance, there is a myth that spaying a female made her fat and lazy. Nothing is further from the truth. Spaying does not alter the Cavalier's personality, weight or energy level in any way. It only alters their sex drive. Then again, it is a myth that females are more affectionate than males. Actually, their affectionate nature is specific to the *breed* and not to any particular *sex*.

There really is no reason to prefer one sex to the other. Chances are, your decision will eventually be based on availability, as there are more male pups available. Breeders tend to keep the females to breed from.

Once you have made the decision to buy a Cavalier, you will need to locate a good breeder. Cavaliers are available from different sources in today's market. It is very important that you know the difference between the various types of sellers and that you make the right choice.

Hobby/Show Breeders

These are the people who are committed to breeding to the breed standard. Their primary aim is to breed as close to the standard as they continuously add to their knowledge of the breed and are very concerned about the welfare of their litters. They subscribe to the Code of Ethics of the AKC and while they may not always have a puppy available, they will do their best to find good homes for the ones they are not going to keep.

Good breeders try to perpetuate the superior qualities of the Cavaliers and these qualities, as well as the health of the dogs they are breeding, are of paramount importance to them.

If the breeder has many questions to ask of you, do not get upset by their "attitude". In fact, this is very kind of breeder you should be looking for.

A few typical questions the breeder may ask of you are:

- ◆ How well informed are you about this breed?
- ◆ Are you buying the puppy as a pet and companion or for show/breeding purposes?
- ◆ Do you keep long hours at work? If so, what arrangements can you make to look after the puppy?
- ◆ Do you have small children at home?
- ◆ If you have a yard, is it fenced in?
- ◆ What arrangements can you make if the dog needs veterinary attention?

Waiting Lists for Cavaliers

This is a circumstance that can put off a new owner - that the puppy is not readily available. But if you choose to work with a reputable breeder, you should be prepared to deal with this. The Cavalier is an extremely popular breed and as there are not so many of them, new owners do have to wait, sometimes for up to a year if you want a show puppy.

After speaking to you and once they are convinced that you genuinely care for dogs and will be attentive to the newest addition to your family, the breeder will put you on their waiting list and inform you as soon as there is a litter available.

A good breeder will also be happy to answer any questions you may have, including those related to the health of the Cavaliers. They will, in fact, welcome these queries as it will give them an opportunity to explain the kind of steps they take to screen the sire and the dam, as well as the close relatives of the breeding stock, before they decide to breed them.

You may need to meet or call many breeders before you find one with whom you are comfortable dealing with. Once you do locate such a person, work closely with them through the waiting period as well as over the life span of your pet.

Good breeders will provide support to their litters no matter how far from home they may have sold them. They will also be happy to put you in touch with equally good breeders closer to your area as well as inform you of local breed clubs, grooming and training centers.

Backyard Breeders

These are well meaning folks who stray into occasional breeding, as they own one or two dogs. They have no idea of the code of ethics and will not be in a position to tell you the health profiles of the breeding stock. They indulge in breeding out of a whole number of good-natured but potentially disastrous reasons, including:

- ◆ Having a litter is good for the health of the bitch.
- ◆ The Cavalier we have is just so adorable, we'd like a couple more just like him.
- ◆ My parents adore our Cavalier and can't seem to get enough of him. They can't afford one themselves, so we thought we'd gift them one for Christmas.
- ◆ It's great for the children to experience the miracle of birth.
- ◆ This is a good way of teaching the children about the birds and the bees

These breeders will usually advertise their litters in newspapers. They may or may not have done health testing and while the prices may look attractive, as the Cavalier is an expensive breed, in the long run you are likely to run into more expenses on healthcare. Apart from that, there is no way you can be compensated for the heartache caused by having to watch your pet develop debilitating diseases.

Importers and Brokers

Cavaliers are also available from importers who bring puppies in from foreign puppy farms. These are puppies born and raised in awful conditions and many have multiple health and personality problems. There is no guarantee of the quality of dog you are going to get from this kind of seller. They advertise in the newspapers and usually add a lot of hype surrounding their foreign origin - as if to imply that these dogs are superior merely for the fact that they are imported.

If you buy a puppy from one of these sellers, you are likely to end up with a dog that has health problems and will definitely have personality problems, as these farms are notorious for cramped, unhygienic conditions. Such sellers will continue to be in business as long as there are gullible buyers around. As a responsible owner, you should never succumb to their sales gimmicks.

Commercial Breeders and Pet Shops

Commercial breeders are better known as puppy mills -for that is really what they are. They breed puppies purely for profit. The dam will have had far too many litters than is good for her health. They will have no health screening of the sires and the litters will be of questionable quality. These establishments usually sell their litters to pet shops or they may also sell directly to individual buyers.

When questioned, this kind of seller will usually profess to follow the most stringent breeding standards but beware - they are only interested in closing the sale as soon as possible. There will no support available to your puppy from this kind of seller. As a responsible dog lover and committed parent, you must beware of these commercial breeders. Their pursuit of profit only ends up creating generations of unhealthy dogs. When owners have no clue how to manage such dogs, they end up in rescue.

Eventually, you must decide which type of breeder you want your puppy to come from. While reputable breeders can charge anything from \$1000 to \$1500 for a puppy (apart from keeping you waiting to get your puppy) you will be assured of the best quality of dog for your family.

Locating a Good Breeder

- ◆ Most good breeders will not advertise in the newspapers
- ◆ They prefer to create awareness of their work by word-of-mouth.
- ◆ They will feature on the Parent Club referral list.
- ◆ Many are using the internet as a medium to promote awareness. It allows them to up pictures and references from earlier buyers.

- ◆ If you attend AKC shows, you are likely to meet with some very good breeders. You will also get a chance to see some of the finest Cavaliers, conforming to breed standards.

Questions You Should Ask

- ◆ At what age are the puppies sold?
- ◆ Are they Cavaliers good around the children? How about with the elderly or the infirm?
- ◆ Have the puppies received their vaccination shots on time?
- ◆ What are the kind of behavioral problems you may have to deal with?
- ◆ What are the grooming and nutritional needs of the Cavalier?
- ◆ Would the breeder help you in dealing with health or training issues? Through the lifetime of the Cavalier?

Your breeder should be more than willing to field any question that you may have to ask of them. They should also be able to help you select a puppy from the litter, based on your preferences and your budget.

A responsible breeder should provide you with the following documents/information when you buy your Cavalier:

- ◆ A Pedigree showing at least three generations
- ◆ Feeding Instructions
- ◆ Vaccination Certificate
- ◆ Dates of Worming and any medical treatment currently being received

Registration

The CKCSC, USA, is the older of the two breed clubs but it is not the Parent Club as recognized by the AKC. The Parent Club for the breed is the American Cavalier King Charles Spaniel Club. However, the CKCSC also undertakes

registration of Cavaliers and holds shows. In order to spare new owners the complexities of the situation, most breeders will register the puppies with both clubs.

Chapter 5

YOUR CAVALIER COMES HOME

Now that you are the proud owner of a Cavalier, it is time to bring your little bundle of joy home. When you go to fetch him do carry:

- ❖ A crate in which to bring him home
- ❖ An old shawl or blanket to line it with.
- ❖ Some toys to keep him amused on the way home
- ❖ A leash and collar

When he comes home, he is likely to be utterly miserable. Remember, he is just a baby and this is the first time he is away from Mommy and his siblings. Though it is an extremely exciting moment for you and your family when the new puppy comes home, he is likely to get scared and upset by a noisy welcome. He will respond best if you are warm and reassuring. Please explain to the children that he needs some time to settle in and sudden noises and rowdy games will not be up his street for a few days.

Cavaliers are inquisitive dogs and no sooner has he settled in, you will find he will get up to all sorts of escapades. There are many things you should know, therefore, in order to puppy-proof your house and protect him from harm or injury.

By the same token, you also need to keep a check on the damage a young, energetic puppy can inflict on your sofa pillows and your favorite rug. While no one can anticipate all the mischief a young puppy can get up to, certain safety precautions are well worth the effort.

Puppy Proofing Your Home

- ❖ Till he is trained, do not allow him all over the house. Keep him restricted to a smaller area by using baby gates.
- ❖ Check that area thoroughly for any loose electrical leads.
- ❖ If you have a garden, make sure it is fenced in and there are no gaps.
- ❖ All gates must be kept securely locked. If you have wrought iron gates he can squeeze through, board them up at the bottom with ply or with a sheet of plastic.
- ❖ Invisible fences have disadvantages. You will know it has malfunctioned only after he has broken bounds.
- ❖ Cavaliers chase anything that moves. They can train themselves to bear the small electrical shock from the fence if the chase looks exciting enough.
- ❖ Keep all cupboards securely closed at all times. Any drawers or shelves at low levels must be kept shut when he is around.
- ❖ Cavalier pups have been known to swallow all kinds of objects, sometimes requiring surgical removal from the stomach. Keep the place free of sharp, pointed metal objects like staples or fasteners, as well as things he could choke on, like buttons.
- ❖ Put hazardous trash out immediately and keep any solvents, insecticides and other harmful chemicals well out of his reach in the garage.
- ❖ The puppy's bones are soft and it is not good for him to leap from heights. The stairs should be marked clearly out of bounds, again by a baby gate if necessary.
- ❖ Children should be taught not to engage him in rough and tumble activity as he can get seriously hurt.

Making Him Comfortable

Give him an area that is quiet and yet not isolated - a kitchen is what most people find works best. Take a look around the house and keep him away from those areas that have expensive rugs, furniture or delicate glass and crystal. The kitchen fits the bill best and is a warm and cozy area for him to bed down in.

Your puppy will need a place of its own where he feels safe and secure. Crates make for great dens and as dogs are naturally den animals, your new puppy will enjoy seeking refuge in a small cozy area. You will find him quietly making his way there when he is tired and needs a nap.

You must teach your children to let him be when he is tired. It will communicate to him that the crate is a safe haven that is all his own. Remember that he does need a lot of rest, as he is still a baby. Crates are also useful in housebreaking because puppies learn quickly not to soil their bed.

Puppy's Possessions

Your puppy is going to need a few things of his own.

- ❑ A bed - most owners report that the hard plastic beds work better than the wicker ones - they are more difficult to chew!
- ❑ Feeding bowls - one for food and another for water. They should have a stable base so that they don't tip over easily or slide around when he eats or drinks. Don't buy two bowls bonded together as you can't take away just one or the other if needed.
- ❑ Puppy Pens are extremely useful. They should be at least 4 feet square in size. Made of metal or plastic, they are sold as kits that you assemble at home. The puppy can then be right in the middle of the family room and be a part of everything that is going on. And your cupboard doors and sofa pillows will be protected as well.
- ❑ Collapsible metal cages are becoming popular too and the optimum size for your Cavalier is one that is at least 24" x 18" x 21". He can use this even when he is grown up, as his own den. You could leave the entrance open once the puppy is housetrained and your dog will love to wander in and out of his special space. The cage comes in handy on holidays, on visits to the vet or even when you need to keep your Cavalier safe from visitors' children.

- He will need toys to keep him amused. When buying toys you must take care that:
 - ❖ They do not have small parts that can be chewed off
 - ❖ Squeaky toys with a small white object that makes the sounds are dangerous - your Cav is quite capable of swallowing and choking on that object.
 - ❖ Squeaky toys that squeak through a hole in the bottom are best.
 - ❖ Hard rubber toys are difficult to chew and therefore safe.
 - ❖ Puppies love tennis balls.
 - ❖ Puppies love bones. They can play and chew on them endlessly. Nylabones, gumabones or the solid rope type bones are available at pet stores.
 - ❖ Rawhide chews are not advisable and if you get him a compressed bone, you must watch for the cracked or chipped pieces, as they can hurt his mouth.

Cavaliers and Children

Cavaliers are very gentle dogs, and they make for ideal pets and companions, especially when there are children in the family. They are a courageous breed and quite strong for their size. But they cannot be subjected to the rough handling of children. In the case of Cavaliers, it is not so much whether the child will be safe with the dog, as whether the dog will be safe with the child. Many breeders will refuse to sell Cavaliers to families when the children are still very young.

Feeding Your Puppy

When you buy your puppy, your breeder will give you a diet sheet and also a small supply of what they have been feeding the puppy. The diet list should also contain the amount of food he should be fed and the recommended feeding times. Obviously, as he grows, the amount of feed he needs is going to increase.

When you first bring him home, he may refuse to eat but don't panic. He is missing his earlier home and his family. It is best to check with the breeder for the pup's favorite snacks and you should try those, rather than giving him morsels of all kinds of goodies to win him over. When he feeds, let him do it in quiet and at his own pace. He may enjoy a leisurely meal, now that he doesn't have to fend off other young pups as he eats.

If you decide to switch his diet from what he was fed earlier, wait until he has settled in to the new environment. Then you can gradually introduce his new food along with some of his earlier one, so that he makes the change without fuss. It will also allow his stomach some time to adjust to the change and he will not suffer tummy upsets.

Generally puppies need three feeds a day till they are 12 weeks old. Then they need to be fed twice a day till they are either 9 or 12 months old, depending on what your breeder advises you. After that he should be fed only once a day. To decide the amount of feed, refer to the instructions on the bag but then adjust them to your puppy's needs. If he is fat, you should feed him less.

Puppies are very energetic and need food that is rich in proteins. Use puppy food that has meat as its primary content. Foods that are high in corn or other bulk products are not as digestible as those derived from chicken, lamb or beef. Some breeders advise against using puppy food that has "beet pulp" instead of rice or corn or wheat as bulk. They have found the hair on the pup's feet turns a pinkish hue from the earlier white.

A growing pup needs good nutrition but do not indulge him. If you cannot refuse him table scraps now, you are in for a tough time through the dog's life. Cavaliers love to eat and their limpid eyes are designed to melt the stoniest heart. But by over-feeding your Cavalier you are putting his health at grave risk. It aggravates their tendency to heart disease and you will actually be reducing the life span of your beloved pet. Table scraps also build up tartar more easily than dry dog food does. The resulting gum disease only predisposes your Cavalier to Mitral Valve Disease.

Puppy Care

- Take him to the vet as soon as you can, after you bring him home.
- If his vaccination program is not complete, check with the list that your breeder gave you, so that the remaining shots are of appropriate dosage.
- Fix his annual vaccination schedule with the vet.

- Your pup will get 42 permanent teeth between the age of 16 to 30 weeks. Check that each baby tooth is being replaced with a permanent one.
- Do not feed him cooked bones as they splinter and can hurt or choke him. Rawhide bones are good when they are teething but buy the smaller ones. Raw beef marrowbones are ideal.
- His teeth must be brushed regularly.
- Cavaliers often need their anal glands emptied some more frequently than others do. A good indication is when they are regularly ' scooting ' their rear end on the floor.
- Keep his eyes clean. If fur around the eye area is stained, clean with some cotton wool soaked in warm water. If he has irritation, redness or discomfort in the eyes, please take him to the vet at once.
- Check his ears regularly for wax buildup or ear mites. If he shakes his head often, he could have an ear infection.

House Training

- This is one of the first activities you will undertake when your puppy comes home.
- You can begin on day one itself, taking him out every couple of hours.
- Take him to the same spot each time and reward him with encouraging words and praises every time he goes.
- You will need to wake up a few times in the night as well, till he grows older.
- Most puppies soon make through 6 hours without soiling their beds, especially if they are let out just before bedtime and the first thing in the morning.
- In a few days time, he will have learned that this is the place where he can relieve himself.

- You can also watch for signs in his behavior that will indicate to you that he needs to go out. Take him out as soon as he shows the sign and keep him at the elected area till he has relieved himself.
- As he grows older, he will be able to retain a while longer and may need to go out every four hours or so.
- Do not yell or shake him when there are "accidents". He is small and he will make mistakes.
- Just speak to him sternly and he will understand from the tone of your voice that he has done something wrong.
- By no means should you hit him or rub his nose in it to drive your point home. Such violent methods only inspire fear and you don't want to tamper with that cheerful, affectionate temperament he has been blessed with.
- With diligent repetition of the same set of actions, he will understand that there is a specific place, which is his bathroom.
- Soon he will let you know when he can't wait any longer.
- Make sure his bed is not too far from your bedroom. He will keep calling till you wake up and let him out.

Many new owners are anxious about the puppy's first few months at home. They worry whether they will be able to housetrain him at all, whether he will chew through everything in sight and what they must do if he keeps getting sick from having swallowed something poisonous. Actually, if you are well prepared, having a puppy around the house is one of the most joyous experiences you can have. They are playful and naughty but never unmanageable.

It is really up to you to decide when you will give in and when you wish to be firm. If you follow certain simple principles:

- Earmarking his space in the house and not letting him in to your bed
- Feeding him on time and not indulging him with scraps,
- Encouraging good behavior with lots of praise, hugs and cuddles (and an occasional treat),

- Scolding him each time he breaks the rules

If you remain persistent and consistent in your efforts at training, he will respond very fast. The Cavalier is an intelligent dog and he learns quickly. He needs to know he is loved and cared for and like any young child, he will crave your hugs and cuddles.

Training is so much simpler when the dog learns the rules because he realizes there is praise and a treat waiting. The tone of your voice when you scold him is something that will always upset him and he will learn quickly that that happens when he has done something wrong.

A well-trained dog is a delightful addition to the family. His training and temperament will also reflect on the overall atmosphere of your home and you will wonder how you ever did without your Cavalier before.

Chapter 6

GROOMING AND NUTRITION

Cavaliers are very easy dogs to groom and maintain. The puppies do not come into their adult coat until they are 1-2 years old. A good brushing once a week with your basic bristle dog brush will prevent you from having a matted coat. Adult Cavaliers have longer hair or "feathering" of their ears, chest, tail, and behind their legs. Ears need particular attention and should be checked and given a quick combing every few days, daily in shedding season. These areas can develop knots and are easily removed with a wire slicker brush. In case one of them becomes too tangled, you can snip it off with a pair of scissors.

Trimming of the Cavalier coat is not required and is against the breed standard. Except for the hair between the pads on their feet, Cavaliers should never be trimmed. In the case of the hair on the pads, it is essential to trim because this is where he is likely to pick up most dirt. The hair growing on the top of the feet should never be trimmed, just the one underneath the feet; otherwise he will look like he is wearing "slippers".

Cavaliers can shed heavily, particularly in spring and fall. They shed some hair all the time. Regular combing will take care of loose hair but you should not be surprised to find Cavalier hair on your cushions, on tabletops and on your rugs. But then, extra vacuuming does come with owning a dog.

Cavaliers need to have their nails clipped to keep them looking well groomed. These are naturally clean dogs and will not require too much bathing. In any case, if you bathe the Cavalier frequently, it will tend to dry out his skin and the coat will lose its glossy sheen. A bath twice a month is more than enough to keep him clean and looking his best. Many owners find that bathing their pets every two months is quite adequate.

Some breeders advise that Cavaliers need their anal glands emptied more frequently than others do. The Cavalier tends to "scoot" his rear end on the floor, indicating that the anal glands need attention. This is something that needs to be taken care of throughout their lives. When the anal glands are not cleared, the dog can develop a severe abscess that is painful and takes a long time to heal. In other cases, surgical removal of the glands was needed.

However, there are some breeders who never carry out this process, and have never had a problem. The Cavalier's diet probably has an impact on the anal gland situation, with breeders reporting that roughage and fiber in the diet does help. The best course would be to keep an eye on the dog and check monthly if the glands should be left or expressed.

Pests

You can keep the nuisance of fleas and ticks in check by using of any of the products available in the pet store or recommended by the breeder/vet. There are many shampoos and sprays available. Some owners find the products for topical spot application work best.

If your dog has been badly infested, you must treat the carpets and furniture that he has access too. Fleas and ticks are resilient pests and they don't necessarily disappear when the weather turns cooler - keep checking your dog's coat as he may have an occasional visitor even when summer is long gone.

Cavalier Diet

An adult Cavalier needs one meal per day. You could also spread the same quantity of feed over two meals, though. While considering the diet of the cavalier, it is important that you keep a watch on your dog's weight. If the dog is getting fat, you are either feeding him too much or you are allowing him too many snacks and treats.

Your Cavalier is a small dog that should weigh between 12 to 18 pounds. Your Cavalier could be on the heavier side and still be healthy, as the weight recommended is after all an *average* range. But if he is well over 20 lbs. you need to reduce his weight immediately, considering the health risks to a dog that is overweight.

There are many ways of reducing his weight. One is, of course, to make sure he gets moderate exercise every day. The other is to keep a watch on what he is offered as treats. You could offer a carrot or a stick of celery instead of a biscuit, for example. Scraps from your meal should not be allowed right from the time you bring him home.

There is a lot of good quality dog food that manufacturers have developed and you can adjust the recommended meal quantity depending on how fat (or slim) your dog is. At all times, the dog must have a bowl of fresh drinking water available for him to drink.

Kibble tends to make the dog thirsty and he will need to drink a lot of water to compensate for the dry food.

Commercial vs. Home-Prepared Food

This is an on-going debate and you should take your own decision, based on what you feel suits your pet and what is possible for you to sustain over the dog's life span.

- Some owners feed their Cavaliers commercial food combined with some fresh food.
- Others swear by commercial food only.
- Then there are those who feed only fresh cooked food while others feed fresh, raw food.
- However, pet food producing companies claim that the fresh meat may be contaminated with infectious bacteria and result in infections that spread from the dog to the family.
- They also claim some dietary deficiencies arose from such a diet.
- At the same time, there has been increasing concern on the contents of commercial food.
- Recent research indicates that dogs fed only commercial food are more prone to cancers than those who are fed fresh food as well.
- The impact on Cavalier health of all the chemicals that are included in the making and preserving of commercial food is not yet fully understood.

Combined diet can take the form of canned meat mixed with fresh rice, eggs, vegetables and yogurt. Many owners feel this has a beneficial impact on Cavalier health - teeth stay cleaner, breath is fresh, anal gland problems are reduced and small, compact poop suggests that the food is digested and assimilated.

BARF Diet

The proponents of raw food feed their dogs a natural, raw diet that is as close to the food the dog ate in the wild. The diet has been developed by an Australian veterinarian, Ian Billinghurst, and is known as the BARF diet. The acronym has been variously interpreted as Bones and Raw Food, Biologically Appropriate Raw Food, or Billinghurst Australian Real Food. The diet consists of raw meat, organ meat, vegetables, fruits, raw eggs and uncooked meaty bones.

In the wild, a dog would have mainly eaten small prey, eating the meat and the bones, as well as the organ meats and the contents of the stomach. The stomach contents would have been their only source of vegetables and grains.

Putting your dog on BARF diet is something you should think through carefully, as changing the dog's diet is going to have an effect on its health. Some of the commonly observed effects of switching to BARF diet are:

- Your Cavalier may drop coat, as in most cases the dogs go through a detoxification process. One of the effects of this may be dropping coat. However, the new coat has been found to be richer in quality and quantity.
- You must make a commitment to BARF, without giving in to the easier option of mixing it in with processed foods. Your dog will never enjoy the benefits of the BARF diet if you do not follow it diligently.
- Finally, *you* must be prepared to make the effort of organizing a fresh meal each time. As you can imagine, opening a bag of kibble is far simpler.

BARF diet consists of raw meat, raw meaty bones (RMBs) and vegetables. Chicken meat is especially good for small Cavaliers, as the dog will gain a lot of calcium from eating the chicken bones.

Raw Meaty Bones are great because the dog has to put in some hard work in order to eat them. He needs to use all the muscles of his body to tear the meat away from the bone - that is excellent for muscle development! His young jaws and teeth will develop well and teeth will stay clean.

Occasionally, a Cavalier is sensitive to chicken or he could be allergic to the antibiotics used in rearing poultry. You should then use only organic or free-range chicken or else switch to turkey, lamb, duck, venison, or beef, prepared in a similar manner to the chicken.

With BARF diet becoming more popular, sources for chicken backs and necks, and raw bones for small dogs are becoming much easier to find. They generally make them into 40 lb. bags ready for the freezer.

Raw meat is better than cooked because the cooking process destroys many of the vitamins, and removes the fat. Cooking also hardens any bones in the meat, making them indigestible- this can cause very painful (and expensive) bowel obstructions, so please do not give cooked bones, wings or necks to your dog.

The adult Cavalier needs between 180 and 200 grams of a mix of the following daily: raw chicken/ beef mince, raw chicken wings or necks (they have the best ratio of meat to bone), raw eggs with shell, mixed raw vegetables (diced or pureed), yogurt and grated cheese along with raw meaty bones.

This may be supplemented with raw beef bones, sliced into rounds. The raw meat elements can be treated with grapefruit seed extract to eliminate any bacteria, which is one of the main concerns regarding raw food. Ideally, the backs and necks are fed to the Cavalier whole but, to those who are concerned about the risk of choking, or damage from splintered bones, the solution is to serve them ground.

Raw meat and RMBs should constitute not more than 70% of your dog's diet, as he will need other nutrients as well. Vegetables supply fiber, proteins, anti-oxidants, enzymes, B group vitamins, minerals and essential fatty acids. Fruit can also be used but in small quantities.

Vegetables and fruit, which are useful, include carrots, pumpkins, cauliflower, spinach, broccoli, celery, apples, pear and over-ripe bananas. It is best to crush or puree the vegetables, thus allowing easier access to the nutrients for the dog's digestive system. This is how he would have ingested the vegetables in the wild (from the stomach contents of his prey). You must avoid potatoes as they are too starchy and onions too, as they cause anemia.

Some supplements, which can be added to the diet (added in small quantities of less than ½ tsp. per meal), include:

- ❑ Brewer's Yeast (some dogs are allergic and may break out into a rash),
- ❑ Kelp
- ❑ Vitamins C and E
- ❑ Offal
- ❑ Flaxseed oil
- ❑ Fish oil
- ❑ Garlic (repels fleas and worms)

- ❑ A raw egg 3 times a week is great for the dog. It can be used to bind together the minced meat or just cracked open over his meal.
- ❑ Yogurt and honey are very healthy too.

Dogs do not need the same level of carbohydrates as humans and they have little use for grains like rice, wheat, corn and barley. These should be used as little as possible. Many breeders recommend using rice as a “filler” to make the meal go further, but it really has little nutritional value to a dog. Even when you buy commercial dog food, you should be careful to read the contents on the bag. If the food consists of a corn or rice base rather than a meat base, it is not good enough for your Cavalier.

Even though you may be committed to the BARF diet, you should be prepared for those odd occasions when you are unable to organize the meal for your dog. For such emergencies, scout around for what is closest to his food type that is available in tinned food and keep some stock handy.

In the final analysis, the diet of your dog must be determined by what suits his health. If you have your Cavalier's best interests at heart, it will not be a painful chore to organize his meal, should you decide to opt for the BARF diet.

A healthy dog is a happy dog. Your Cavalier is capable of boundless enthusiasm and if you take care of his health, he will be a priceless member of your family.

Chapter 7

FIRST AID

Your Cavalier is bouncing along the living room one moment and the next moment he is violently ill. What should you do? It is important that you have a first aid kit handy and that you are equipped to deal with an emergency till you can get him to a vet.

The First Aid Kit

These are some basic things that should be kept in a well-marked box. You should discuss the contents of the kit with your vet as well. The vet is best placed to guide you on what the kit should contain.

Antiseptic solution	Diarrhea medication	Cold Pack
Childrens' aspirin	Hydrogen peroxide	Tweezers
Rectal Thermometer	Cotton wool	Iodine
Scissors	Glucose	Ear cleaner
Gauze pads & Bandages	Sting relief pads	Latex Gloves
Tourniquet	Syringe	Thermal Blanket

Please ensure that you have the vet's telephone number with you at all times. You should also keep the numbers of the emergency hospital and local Poison Control Center out-of-hours. Keep these numbers handy, preferably by the phone.

Some emergency first aid tips

External Bleeding

- ◆ If your Cavalier receives any injury that causes severe bleeding, stem it with a bandage or a clean cloth. Small injuries should stop bleeding within 5 minutes.
- ◆ If the bleeding is profuse, use the tourniquet.

- ◆ Take your dog to the vet as quickly as possible.
- ◆ He may need antibiotics to stave off infection.

Internal Bleeding

- ◆ Your Cavalier may bleed internally if he has a heavy fall or if a car knocks him down.
- ◆ This is more dangerous than external bleeding and if it is not attended to, can lead to severe blood loss. Your dog's life is at risk.

Symptoms of internal bleeding include:

- ◆ Blood flowing from the nose or mouth.
- ◆ Blood in his urine, feces or vomit.
- ◆ Swollen abdomen.
- ◆ Pale gums.

It is not possible for you to deal with internal bleeding in any way at home and you must rush to the vet immediately.

Difficulty in Breathing

Breathing difficulties can be caused by a number of reasons. In the case of the Cavalier, if he has been diagnosed with Mitral Valve Disease, he will have shortness of breath as the condition progresses. You should administer his medication and call his vet immediately, as this causes great distress to your pet.

Alternatively,

- ◆ Your pet may have a swallowed a round object and is choking on it. He will gag and drool as he struggles to dislodge it by pawing at his mouth.
- ◆ Some poisons affect the respiratory system.

- ◆ Your Cavalier could have received chest injury and is having trouble breathing.

Until the vet arrives or you can get him to the hospital, you should administer artificial respiration to ease his distress.

Administering Artificial Respiration

- ◆ Remove the Cavalier's collar. Check the mouth for mucus or blood and clear the fluids with cotton swabs.
- ◆ Hold his mouth closed. Take a deep breath and cover his nose completely with your mouth.
- ◆ Exhale gently into his nostrils. Repeat every 5 seconds
- ◆ Observe his lungs to see if they are inflating and deflating as you do this.

Heart massage (CPR)

If your Cavalier's heart has stopped beating, his life is in grave danger. You must call the vet immediately. Until emergency aid arrives, you can try to revive him by administering the heart massage.

- ◆ Strike the chest firmly a couple of times and check if heart starts beating. If there is no response, start the heart massage.
- ◆ Lay your dog down on his side and place your hands over the heart area. Press firmly. Release pressure.
- ◆ Repeat the pressure/release routine at a rate of 70 times per minute.

Vomiting and Diarrhea

- ◆ This is a reaction to something that your Cavalier has eaten. Cavaliers are extremely fond of food and are curious dogs by nature. They have a great willingness to check if any interesting object can pass for food.

- ◆ He could have eaten something poisonous (see the list below of household things that contain poisons. There are common plants that could poison your dog too)

What you should do

- ◆ Give him plenty of fresh water to drink, as dehydration can be fatal.
- ◆ If he cannot retain even water, call the vet immediately.
- ◆ If the frequency of vomiting or passing stools abates with time, give him a light meal of softly cooked rice and a small portion of bland chicken.
- ◆ If his condition persists after 12 hours, call the vet.

Heatstroke

Take care of your Cavalier in hot weather. This is a time when dogs can suffer heat strokes and their life could be at risk. Never leave your Cavalier in a closed car. He is so small and so susceptible to heat that he could virtually get "cooked" inside a hot, steamy car.

Very often, people leave the dog inside, as they just need to "step into the shop for a minute". But heaven help your Cavalier if you run into a friend there and get lost in an animated conversation. In hot summer months, it is best to leave your Cavalier at home rather than taking him on errands with you.

Even at home, you must make sure he always has a bowl of clean, fresh drinking water, and there is a cool spot in the house where he can rest. You should keep an eye on him when you talk him for exercise. It is best to walk him in the cooler parts of the day - either early morning or late in the evening.

Symptoms of a heatstroke

- ◆ High temperature (above 104 degrees Fahrenheit)
- ◆ Rapid, labored breathing.
- ◆ Pulse (heartbeat) rate is high.

- ◆ Vomiting and diarrhea.
- ◆ Dog collapses and slips into coma

What you should do

- ◆ Shift him to a cooler place immediately and coax him to drink some water.
- ◆ If possible, put in a tub of cool water and gently massage limbs, till temperature begins to drop.
- ◆ Call the vet.

Burns

Your Cavalier can receive accidental burn injury if he finds a loose electrical lead and chews on it. An electric shock can cause a burn in the mouth. Dogs have the uncanny ability to find the one lead that you missed when you were puppy-proofing the place.

What you should do

- ◆ An electrical shock is a nasty experience and your dog is likely to be extremely frightened and nervous. Calm him down by speaking softly and remaining calm yourself.
- ◆ The affected area must be cooled with a soft moistened cloth.
- ◆ Do not apply any ointment or crème to the affected area..
- ◆ He should be given some water to drink.
- ◆ If it is a severe burn, call the vet immediately. Deep burns are painful. Make sure you keep your dog as comfortable as you can till the vet arrives.

Fractures

Your dog may have a fall or may be hit by a car, resulting in a fracture. He will carry the fractured limb awkwardly. In some cases, you may be able to see the broken bone through his skin. Try to keep him comfortable and place him on a hard, flat board in order to move him without causing him pain. When you drive him to the vet take care that he is not jolted around in the car.

Bee stings

Cavaliers chase butterflies with as much abandon as they chase bees and of course they do not know the difference! As the bees begin to sting, the dog is startled and starts yelping in pain and fear. In the process, he could accidentally swallow some bees and stings in the mouth and throat. This is an extremely dangerous condition as the swelling can choke the dog, as his respiratory passages get blocked off.

Preventing Bee Stings

- ◆ First, make sure that any garden to which the dogs have access has the minimum of bee-attracting plants.
- ◆ Second, make sure that someone is watching them as much as possible, particularly those that you know chase insects.

What you should do

- ◆ In the case of a single sting, remove the stinger with a pair of tweezers. You can also scrape it off with a knife.
- ◆ Make sure you have antihistamine tablets and know the right dose to give straightaway
- ◆ Apply an ice pack to cool the area, reduce swelling and soothe the pain.
- ◆ If you have some baking soda handy, make a smooth paste with water and apply to the area.
- ◆ Your dog will be petrified and in considerable pain. Comfort him with your voice and gentle stroking on his back till he feels better.
- ◆ If he has multiple stings or the swelling is enormous and he is in distress, take him to the vet immediately.

Poisons

You will be surprised how many things that you routinely buy for the house actually contain harmful poisons. It is best to store all potentially poisonous substances well out of your Cavalier's reach. If he has swallowed something poisonous, he will show one or more of the following symptoms:

- ◆ You may find him trembling.
- ◆ He will be weak and may vomit.
- ◆ He will lose bowel control.
- ◆ He will show signs of severe abdominal pain or cramps.
- ◆ He may have convulsions.

You should call your vet at once as the longer the poison stays in his system, the more harm it will do.

Substances containing poisons:

- ◆ Grooming aids like flea and tick sprays, shampoos, collars.
- ◆ Household disinfectants, insecticides, drain cleaners and even nail polish is poisonous.
- ◆ Medications must be kept out of reach of not just children but of pets as well. Prescription medicines, including sleeping pills and the dog's own medication, deworming medicines are poisonous if swallowed in large quantities.
- ◆ Antifreeze leaks out of parked cars. It is sweet tasting and can attract passing dogs. It is extremely toxic to dogs and your Cavalier must see the vet immediately if he has been licking at a puddle in a parking lot.

There are some commonly found plants that are also poisonous for your Cavalier. They are commonly found in suburban gardens and you must take care, as many of them are

extremely harmful. Speak to your breeder and your vet for details of plants in your area that can poison your Cavalier.

Chapter 8

CAVALIER HEALTH

The Cavalier King Charles Spaniels are genetically predisposed to a heart condition known as Mitral Valve Disease. It is the most serious problem breeders face today and it is estimated that up to 50% of Cavaliers have this heart ailment.

Mitral Valve Disease affects other breeds and humans as well. But in their case, it is usually an age-related condition, occurring as part of the wearing down of body systems, due to passage of time. The cause for concern in the case of Cavaliers is because they develop this condition at a very young age and the level of incidence is extremely high.

Mitral Valve Disease (MVD) is genetically transmitted. What you can do buy a puppy whose parents are at least 4-5 years old and whose grandparents were clear of MVD. Ask your breeder for the health records of the sire and dam and the pup's grandparents. If your puppy does develop MVD, keep your breeder informed. They must know in which of their breeding lines MVD persists.

Your breeder will be happy to educate you about this condition. It can be detected early and your breeder will be able to educate you on the efforts they are making to remove the affected sires and dams from their breeding programs. However, data on the condition is still being collected and no breeder can guarantee that your puppy will not develop MVD.

What is Mitral Valve Disease?

- It is a term used to describe premature aging and degeneration of the Mitral Valve, in the heart.
- The Mitral Valve allows blood to flow from the left atrium into the left ventricle of the heart but not vice versa. Blood is then supposed to make its way around the heart before being sent back into the body.

- When the valve degenerates, blood flows back into the left atrium. This causes a great strain on this chamber and ultimately leads to congestive heart failure.
- This "backflow" is known as Mitral Regurgitation or Mitral Valve Insufficiency and is diagnosed initially by the sound of a systolic murmur.
- As MVD progresses, the dog begins to display symptoms that include coughing, breathlessness, loss of appetite and an unwillingness to exercise.
- Medication is required in the latter stages, to reduce fluid build-up in the lungs, stabilize the heart and improve quality of life for the dog.
- Less commonly, the same type of degeneration can affect the Tricuspid and Aortic valves.

What you should do

MVD has been only recently recognized as a problem in the breed. While there is no way at present to stop the progression of the condition, there are things you can do to alleviate the symptoms somewhat:

- ✓ Ask the breeder for health records of the dam and of the sire, even if he came from a different kennel. If the parents are clear of MVD at 3-5 years of age, chances that your puppy is also clear are fairly high.
- ✓ Get your puppy checked up the vet. While color doppler ultrasounds are the best to pick up evidence of MVD, auscultation (when the vet "listens" to the heart) works well too. When a dog's heart is free of a murmur, it is pronounced "Heart Clear".
- ✓ The CKCSC, USA, also sponsors "Heart Clinics" where a board-certified cardiologist performs auscultation on all Cavaliers over 18 months of age. These clinics are organized in various parts of the country, several times each year.
- ✓ Studies have shown that GPs cannot detect murmurs effectively until they reach Grade III or IV, by which time your dog may have a full-blown case of MVD. The board-certified cardiologists are better equipped to detect MVD and the club-sponsored clinics are easy on the pocket too.

- ✓ In case your puppy does have a heart murmur, the vet will grade it: Grade I (mild, no symptoms) to VI (severe, latter stages of congestive heart failure).
- ✓ If your dog is diagnosed with even a very faint murmur, have the heart x-rayed at that time to use as a baseline to monitor heart enlargement. After that, x-ray the dog annually.
- ✓ If your dog/bitch is part of breeding stock and is detected with MVD, you must remove it from your breeding program.
- ✓ Early diagnosis will permit you to make certain lifestyle changes that can improve your dog's quality of life: the diet should be without salt; build up an appropriate exercise routine (long walks, or just going up and down stairs); reduce the dog's weight and administering medication.
- ✓ If there is onset of any of the symptoms, like coughing, shortness of breath, enlargement of abdomen etc have your dog checked up immediately.
- ✓ The earlier you deal with the symptoms the greater are the chances of your dog being able to live reasonably well with his ailment.
- ✓ Watch the dog's weight. Cavaliers are extremely fond of their food and it is hard for most owners to resist the imploring look a Cavalier wears when he is begging. But you must remember that you are in charge of the cookie tin and ultimately, his weight is going to have a serious impact on his health.

Syringomyelia

This is another inherited condition that has recently been detected in the breed. It is a progressive, neurological disorder and affects dogs of both sexes, of all colors, in all lines.

Syringomyelia is the result of the malformation of the skull, as a result of which the brain gets squashed inside. Under normal conditions, the fluid surrounding the brain and the spinal cord moves freely back and forth through the connection between the skull and the spinal cord. However, if the skull has been malformed, this movement is obstructed and the fluid is forced into the spinal cord, causing gaps or syrinxes, causing syringomyelia.

Symptoms

Typically, the symptoms of Syringomyelia are found early enough - between 6 months to 3 years of age, although there have been some cases where the symptoms developed in an older dog.

Syringomyelia is immediately diagnosed if an MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging) is taken. However, if you choose not to do an MRI, the following clinical symptoms would also help the vet zero in on the condition:

- This is also known as the neck scratcher's disease as the dog tends to scratch the air near the neck and shoulder, especially when he is excited or walking on a lead.
- Since all dogs tend to enjoy a good scratching session, it is important to observe the dog for the marked tendency to scratch near the neck and shoulder.
- However this is not the only symptom and it is not always present.
- Affected dogs and bitches can be sensitive around the head, neck and front legs, as this accumulation of fluid causes abnormal sensations in the area.
- They often cry, yelp or scream for no apparent reason. Pain may be related to head posture and some dogs prefer to sleep or eat with their heads up.
- Some severely affected young dogs may develop neck scoliosis (a permanently twisted neck) or have a wobbling gait in the hind legs and/or weakness in their front legs.

What you should do

- ✓ Syringomyelia in its mild form can be managed with medication. Usually, non-steroidal, anti-inflammatory drugs are prescribed.
- ✓ Corticosteroids are sometimes administered but the dog may suffer from the side effects of immunosuppression, weight gain and skin changes.
- ✓ Acupuncture appears to help some dogs.
- ✓ Surgery is most often recommended. It reduces the pain and improves quality of life and can reduce or stop further progression of the condition.

- ✓ But if the nervous system has been damaged already, the dog may continue to scratch after surgery.
- ✓ Some dogs may show a recurrence of the condition, even after surgery.
- ✓ An anti-convulsant, Gabapentin, had been found to be effective but it is an expensive drug and it is not yet licensed for treatment in dogs.

It is important for the new Cavalier owner to know that Syringomyelia is quite a widespread condition and that there are clear and carrier dogs in every line. Many breeders are yet to accept this, however. They may not have adequate records about the affected dogs that have been bred in their kennels.

Researchers believe that it may be possible to develop a DNA test, which will help identify which Cavaliers are carriers of Syringomyelia. Like MVD, this condition is threatening the future of the breed and owners as well as breeders are going to have to work closely with clubs to identify and remove affected dogs from breeding programs.

Hip Dysplasia

Canine Hip Dysplasia (CHD) is perhaps the most common orthopedic problem seen in dogs. It afflicts virtually all breeds of dogs but is especially problematic in large and giant breeds. It is not as rampant in the Cavalier breed as MVD is but they have been known to develop this condition.

Symptoms

- In its severe form, Hip Dysplasia affects younger dogs and causes great pain and lameness in the hind legs.
- Some dogs may have a gradual onset of the condition.
- The symptoms include occasional bouts of pain and stiffness in the joint, which restricts movement of the hip as the dog ages.

What you should do

The most important thing you must do is have the dog X-rayed when he is 2 years old. If your dog does have Hip Dysplasia

- ✓ Inform your breeder
- ✓ Submit the reports to the OFA.
- ✓ Restrain him from jumping
- ✓ If any surgery is recommended, have it done when the dog is young. His general condition will be better and results of the surgery will be vastly better than if you delay surgery till he is old.
- ✓ Once again, inform your breeder of the results of the surgery.

Luxating Patellas

This is a name given to a condition, which causes abnormal movement (slipping from side to side is how it is commonly described) of the kneecap. Normally, the kneecap moves up and down over the femur or the thighbone. When a dog has a luxating patella, the movement is sideways and if it is not attended to, it can lead to the development of arthritis.

Luxating patella is a birth defect and affects many small breeds. It causes limping and surgery is the most effective way of dealing with it.

What you should do

- ✓ Have your Cavalier checked up annually.
- ✓ If he has the condition, please do report it to the OFA.
- ✓ Do not be overly delighted by "clear" reports - the dog can develop the condition later on in life.
- ✓ If he needs surgery, as in the case of Hip Dysplasia, for best results have it done when he is still young and healthy.

Eye Diseases in Cavaliers

Corneal Dystrophy (corneal lipidosis) refers to a condition when there are whitish, silver or gray blemishes in the eye. They are usually found in both eyes and are caused by fat deposits under the corneal (outer sheath of the eye) surface, in and around the center of the eye.

This is not a painful condition and generally will not impact on the dog's vision. These deposits are not caused by any infection and most researchers of canine eye diseases believe that diet may aggravate the inherited trait, as they are found to regress or disappear totally in some cases.

Corneal ulcers

Ulcers show up as dull spots or depressions in the cornea. They need immediate attention, as they are actually small tears in the outermost layer of the cornea. If the dog is showing signs of discomfort in the eyes (ulcers are painful) he needs the vet even though you may not be able to see the ulcer. Some ulcers are too small to be seen by the naked eye and your vet will use an eye solution, which will show up the injury to the cornea. Ulcers usually heal in 3-4 days with the application of an ointment, which your vet will recommend.

Sometimes, though, ulcers fail to heal. There could be other eye conditions which are aggravating the condition, such as

- entropion (the abnormal rolling in of the eyelid);
- trichiasis (facial hair in contact with the eye);
- foreign bodies lurking behind the third eyelid, embedded within the eyelid, or within the cornea itself;
- abnormally placed eyelashes.
- infections in the conjunctiva, or in the glands or the tear ducts.

Unless these causes are also treated, the ulcers will not heal.

Ulcers may also not heal if there are other eye diseases present or the dog has tissue-healing problems. It is important to point out that ulcers require immediate attention. If they take too long to heal, they deepen and can result in the loss of the eye.

Cataracts

As in humans, cataract in dogs is a condition that comes from clouding up of the fluid in the lens of the eye. It is a progressive condition and does impair eyesight by causing blurring.

Cavaliers can be affected by one of four types of cataract :

- Juvenile cataract affects young dogs and is found in both eyes equally. It is progressive and affects the eyes totally.
- The other form is present at birth (congenital) and is associated with an abnormal smallness of the eyeball. It affects both eyes but not necessarily to the same degree.
- Cataracts as a result of aging are very common in all breeds and Cavaliers are no exception. It is found in most dogs over eight years of age.
- Cataracts can also be caused as a result of a disease like diabetes mellitus.

The point to note here is that cataract has been shown to be a hereditary condition and your breeder should have screened the breeding line for this condition.

Cataracts need to mature before they can be surgically removed. This is recommended only if the eyesight is severely affected. The biggest risk of surgery is the side effects of the anesthesia. Following surgery, the dog will not completely regain all vision, but will regain some vision.

Abnormalities of the Eyelashes

Distichiasis refers to extra lashes. They grow on the upper lid and can cause corneal ulcers. In case they cause severe irritation or ulcers these lashes need to be removed, either by electrolysis or by cold therapy (cryotherapy). Some owners have resorted to plucking them off, which can provide relief for up to 6 months, after which they are long enough again to cause irritation.

Macroblepharon is the condition when long eyelids expose too much of the sclera (whites of the eye). The eyeball is then exposed to the environment, causing redness. Flat-faced breeds have been found to be more prone to this condition and it affects the appearance of the dog. In its severest form, it can cause the eyeball to roll forward and out of the socket, requiring urgent veterinary attention.

Ankyloblepharon Sometimes, a pup does not open one or both of his eyelids, even after the initial 10-15 days, when all pups have fused eyelids. The pups can then develop bacterial infection, leading to pus formation. This can damage the cornea and can result in the loss of an eye.

Chapter 9

SPAYING AND NEUTERING

Most new owners are puzzled and helpless when it comes to spaying or neutering their dog. There are a number of popular myths associated with this, making the decision that much more difficult.

- ❖ It is a myth that every bitch should have at least one litter. This is not at all necessary. In fact, if all bitches had even one litter each, we would be hard-pressed to deal with the huge number of dogs in the world.
- ❖ You just need to visit the dog pounds and rescue homes to see how many unwanted pets there are already. It has been estimated that in six short years one female dog and her offspring could be the source of 50,000 puppies.
- ❖ Literally thousands of dogs are euthanized in America's animal shelters every year.
- ❖ The second most popular myth is that the bitch becomes fat and lethargic if she is spayed. There is really no evidence of this at all. If she has become fat, it is due to inappropriate diet and lack of exercise.
- ❖ Many people believe that a dog must have his testicles in order to feel "masculine". In fact, a neutered dog does not behave "effeminate" in any way!
- ❖ The dog is a "better" dog if he has not been neutered. This myth is perhaps derived from the owner's anxiety and the fact that he feels he is a better owner if he does not neuter his dog.

Unless you have a specific reason to breed your dog, she should be spayed as early in her life as possible. In fact, most breeders spay the bitch before they place her in a new home. Spaying can be done as early as 2 to 6 months of age. It is the same in the case of male pups - they can be neutered as early as 2-6 months.

While there is always a finite risk associated with any surgical procedure, the surgery for spaying and neutering is not terribly complicated. Early spaying and neutering is beneficial, as it has been found that pups fare better after surgery than older bitches.

It also reduces the chances of some forms of cancer in the adult Cavalier.

Spaying the Bitch

As a responsible and caring owner, you should get your female puppy spayed if she hasn't been already. Check with your breeder and your vet if you still have nagging, persistent doubts about this procedure. Actually, you run a number of risks if you decide *not* to spay your bitch.

- She will exhibit a completely different behavior pattern when she is "in season".
- She will get moody and aggressive, her temper worsening if she takes long to find a mate.
- Bitches will bleed for up to 3 weeks and you will have to keep a constant check on her movements if you don't want her to get pregnant.
- She is likely to run out through the slightest gap in the gate in search of the male. She runs a risk to her life at this point, as a speeding car could run her down.
- Considering that bitches can come into heat at least twice a year, it is a harrowing experience for the family to monitor her movements. She will react adversely too and it will worsen her already edgy mood.
- Her moodiness is the effect of hormonal changes and she may refuse to eat or otherwise exhibit strange behavior.
- She could be at the receiving end of aggressive behavior from male dogs, as also other females in the vicinity.

Spaying the bitch, then, is the most sensible thing you could do when you get a pet Cavalier home. You would then ensure that your sweet-natured Cavalier is not subjected to the discomfort of getting into heat and not being allowed to mate.

You would also contribute to the general well being of the dog species, by not allowing unwanted pregnancies.

Neutering the Dog

Neutered dogs are definitely easier to manage. Neutering reduces aggressive male behavior. Your Cav has a very strong sex drive and when there is a bitch in heat in the neighborhood, he will be able to squeeze through the smallest gap in your fence to get to her.

If your dog is not neutered, you are inviting a lot of trouble

- They are harder to house train and they will pee on everything indoor as well as outdoors to mark their territory. This can mean definite ruin of your furniture, curtains, rugs and shoes.
- The dog becomes aggressive when the bitches are "in season". And once he has actually had sex, this aggressiveness increases manifold.
- Dogs have been known to mate through a fence when there is a bitch in the vicinity.
- They can also chew through fences, break out of sheds and rush down the block to the house where the bitch in season resides.
- In his attempt to get to her, he displays aggressive behavior towards other dogs (especially other males who he thinks may mate with the bitch ahead of him), humans and other animals.
- Male dogs seeking to fulfil their sexual drive can attack anything that moves. The sweetest dog can suddenly turn on you and bite.
- They will try to hump other male dogs if they cannot find a female.
- If there is a bitch in season in the neighborhood, the dog will howl and cry for weeks, driving you and your family nuts.
- The dog may go off his food during this time.

- Males exude a smell that is connected with sexual hormones. It is supposed to attract the female to him, but it is a terrible smell for us humans

As a responsible owner, you would have as much responsibility for the litter as the owner of the bitch, if your dog sires the pups. Having to deal with his aggressive behavior is also going to take its toll on you and your family.

You would do the right thing by your dog, by yourself and by your neighbors, when you decide to neuter your puppy. And please do it early in his life. If you wait till he has started experiences irrepressible sexual urges, chances are that his aggressive behavior may not be resolved by neutering.

Chapter 10

BREEDING CAVALIERS

Breeding is a highly specialized activity and it requires enormous patience, preparation, commitment of time and resources - all for an unpredictable outcome, as you could get just the one pup out of it! Before you decide to get into breeding Cavaliers, you should be very clear why you want to do this.

Ask yourself whether you are in this to improve the breed or you think that this is a lucrative venture, considering the high prices of Cavalier pups. If it is the latter, don't even think about it further. Breeding is a complex and expensive exercise, requiring great commitment of time and resources. You should be prepared to take the responsibility for the health of the bitch and her litter and receive no financial reward in the bargain.

If you do decide to breed, then the first question you must ask yourself is whether your Cavalier was sold to you as a pet or as a breed quality animal. If the dog was sold as a pet quality, then the chances are high that your Cavalier has some faults. Minor faults in pets are overlooked as the temperament, overall appearance and health of the dog are more important.

But the fact that your Cav was not breeding quality means that according to your breeder's judgement, your dog has some faults that should not be passed on. In this case, you should just spay or neuter your pet and give up the notion of breeding.

Criteria Your Cavalier Should Meet

- ✓ **Show Quality:** He should conform to the breed standard and should be able to participate in a conformation show.
- ✓ **Champion:** Not just your dog but his parents and grandparents should also be champions. If your Cavalier is not structurally or temperamentally sound, the puppies will not be so good either; in which case you would be doing a great deal of harm to the breed. Poor looks, poor health and poor temperament affect the reputation of Cavaliers.

- ✓ **Mature:** In the case of Cavaliers, you should wait until the dog is mature. Bitches can be "in seasons" even in the first year, but their bodies are not yet developed for the rigors of breeding.
- ✓ **Free from Hereditary Disease:** He may have been sold to you as a show/breed quality pup. But if he develops MVD, it renders him unsuitable for breeding.

What You Should Know

You should make all efforts to become a responsible breeder and you will find that there is a lot of research and learning you will have to do on the way. For starters, you should be aware that:

- ✓ When you breed your dog, her life is at risk
- ✓ There are numerous expenses associated with breeding and chances are that they will exceed your income from puppies.
- ✓ Results of breeding are impossible to predict and even the most experienced breeders have disastrous results in some cases. When you are starting out, chances of hitting jackpot are fewer.
- ✓ A litter in the house means a lot of noise, sleepless nights and occasional heartbreak when a puppy dies young.

Criteria You Should Meet

- ✓ You have homes already for the puppies of the litter.
- ✓ You have screened the buyers and made sure that they are looking for a Cav not for its snob appeal or on the basis of a passing fancy. You are convinced the puppy will be placed in a warm, caring home.
- ✓ You are in a position to offer a health guarantee of at least two years for your pups.

- ✓ You can offer to take the pups back at any point in their life, should the owners be unable to look after them for any reason whatsoever.
- ✓ You can offer support to the buyers during the lifetime of the pup.
- ✓ You have the resources to commit for all the costs involved in breeding.

If you can meet the criteria, well, congratulations! You are well on your way to becoming a breeder. Remember that while breeding can be rewarding, things don't always turn out the way you planned or expected them to. You will need a strong heart and an optimistic temperament to be a good breeder. Also, don't settle for mediocre. If you are going to be a breeder, do your best to attain the best quality litters.

Now that you are clear about what is involved in breeding and you have a bitch that is worthy of it, you have to look for a stud. Your breeder would have given you a pedigree of the dog. When your Cav is a descendent of one individual of a special lineage, she is a pedigreed dog. She has a known family with generations of purebred animals, and an unmixed lineage with other breeds. She is the member of a recognized strain.

Your breeder will help you locate a stud from a line that is best suited to your young lady. Make your decision based on your breeder's advice and don't let convenience or discounts in stud fees influence your choice. Get the best match possible in the hopes of producing a better dog than you have started with.

Contracts

Once you have found the stud, put your discussions with the owner in writing. Make sure the following are covered:

- ✓ The names of both the bitch and dog along with their registration numbers.
- ✓ The names, addresses, and phone numbers of both owners involved.
- ✓ The date of service and whether another service will be included in the stud fee.
- ✓ The stud fee itself - is it money or will they take a puppy. If the latter, then will it be a pick puppy? At what age will the pup be chosen? At what age will it be taken? If the stud fee is money, then how much is it?

- ✓ What does the stud fee cover - the number of services will your bitch be entitled to, whether there is a guarantee of live births and how many? If there are no puppies, will there be a repeat breeding at no charge?
- ✓ If you are sending the bitch to the stud owner's home, check for a kenneling fee in addition to the stud fee.

Mating

As soon as your bitch comes in to heat, note the date and inform the stud owner, so that they are prepared at their end. She may be ready to mate as early as day five but some breed even as late as day 18. In order not to miss her date, you can

- ✓ Get the vet to make a smear
- ✓ Ship her early in the season

Needless to say, chances of success are improved if she is in good health and in proper weight and condition.

During breeding:

- ✓ Allow the dogs to do what comes naturally. Too much handling during breeding confuses the dogs, especially if it is a first time male.
- ✓ If the bitch is nervous, you may hold her till you are sure she is willing to accept the male.
- ✓ The bitch may need comforting during the waiting period
- ✓ Keep the dogs from pulling away from each other or from lying down and possibly hurting one another.
- ✓ When the tie is ended, place your girl in a warm crate and take her home.

Whelping

Once her pregnancy is confirmed, your bitch is going to need a lot of tender, loving care:

- ✓ Keep her fit and healthy. Do not overfeed her, as she will have problems whelping.
- ✓ At five weeks gradually increase her diet.
- ✓ In the last two weeks she will need a high percentage of protein in her diet. You can switch her to high quality puppy food at this stage.
- ✓ Don't skimp on the quality or quantity of dog food at this crucial time. It is essential for the development of the puppies' bones and teeth, as well as to safeguard your bitch from Eclampsia.

For the delivery, you will need:

- ✓ ***Whelping box*** - She should get used to sleeping in a whelp box. It can be a plywood box, with a top that can be closed or kept open. Line the floor of the box with a heavy vinyl tablecloth. Cover with old towels for comfort and warmth.
- ✓ ***Puppy Crate*** - Pad the puppy crate well too with heat pads and blankets.
- ✓ ***Heating pads*** – Your girl and her litter will need warmth, but not too much. Set the pads for "Low". Too much heat can endanger the lives of the puppies. Keep the pads covered with a sheet as a safety measure.
- ✓ ***Ear scope*** - It will be needed to examine the palate, ears, etc.
- ✓ ***Extra sheets and blankets*** - The puppy crate should get a frequent change of sheets.
- ✓ ***Baby food and bottles*** - Purchase at least two bottles of the 4-ounce size, with cc markings, in case your Cav is unable to feed her pups. The 0 to 3 month baby nipple is ideal for pups. Your vet will assist you in deciding between homemade or commercial formula and the quantity to feed the pups.
- ✓ ***Baby scales*** – To maintain weight records
- ✓ ***Nasal aspirator*** – Rapid nursing may cause congestion. The aspirator will remove the congestion
- ✓ ***Emergency and routine supplies*** - If you don't want to be caught off guard, keep the following items ready a good two weeks before her delivery:
 - Cotton swabs,
 - tissue paper,

- surgical gloves,
- paper towels, cloth towels
- germicidal,
- sterile scissors for cutting umbilical cords,
- washcloths to clean or dry puppies when necessary etc.
- Keep different colors of rickrack handy, as a means of identifying puppies.
- a clock (to note the times of births and time in between. If you need the vet, this information will help him.)
- rectal thermometer
- several clean or new cardboard boxes
- iodine (for tummy cords) - although some breeders do not recommend this
- flashlight (in case she wanders out for potty)
- baby scale
- Notebook and pencil to take notes
- vets number if it is different from the office
- Crates in the car, in case you need to leave ASAP
- Tweezers
- Hemostats
- Puppy Wormer
- baby diarrhea medicine

Sixty-three days is the normal gestation period for all breeds so you do have plenty of time to get ready for the big day. But be careful, some dams may whelp even at 58 days.

When "It's Time":

- ✓ Your bitch will become restless and whine a great deal. She will also go off food.
- ✓ She may have a drop in normal body temperature but many bitches don't. It is not a definite indicator. Observe her for abdominal cramping and licking of the vulva.
- ✓ Place her in the whelping box and inform the vet. She will begin nesting - digging and tearing at her bedding.
- ✓ After awhile she will begin to strain and bear down to push the puppy out.

- ✓ A small grayish sac droops out and it bursts to let a clear liquid out - the pup is on its way! She needs to strain hardest for the first pup and may whimper and moan as she does so.
- ✓ If nothing happens after an hour of straining, it is best to call the vet for advice. Any further delay could be disastrous for the puppy as well as the mother.

Newborns:

- ✓ Pups are covered with a thin membrane, which the mother licks and nips off. If she doesn't you should as the puppy has about six minutes after which he *must* breathe.
- ✓ The pup is attached by his umbilical cord to a greenish black tissue - that is the placenta. You should count the placentas after the delivery is over and ensure that all of them are out.
- ✓ Licking and cleaning the new pup is how the bitch welcomes her pup into this world. If she ignores the pup, you can take a clean towel and rub the puppy dry; this will stimulate it to breathe and it will protest a bit.
- ✓ While doting over the new pup the bitch will probably start the process over and your next pup will be on his way!

In any litter the entire process of whelping can take from two to twenty hours. However, if a bitch is really straining, with contractions coming every minute or so and no pup is presented within half an hour, get the veterinarian on the phone.

If you are sure there are more pups but she seems to be dozing off, you can take her for a brisk walk to encourage the contractions. She will resist it but the fresh air will do her good.

After your bitch has finished whelping,

- ✓ Clean her and the whelping box.

- ✓ If you don't have all the placentas, ask the vet to give her a shot that will bring any remaining one out.
- ✓ Get the puppies to her. Make sure each puppy is suckling properly so that they get that most important first milk. It is rich in fats and proteins and has antibodies that they will need to protect them for their first weeks of life.
- ✓ Let Mommy be with her babies for a while.
- ✓ Keep track of each pup's weight, daily at first, to make sure they are getting the proper amount of nutrition.
- ✓ Make sure they are suckling all the teats. An unused teat causes great discomfort. If one has become hard, gently draw off some milk and then get a puppy to suckle on it
- ✓ Trim puppy nails as their kneading action while feeding can scratch the mother's abdomen and cause pain.
- ✓ Make sure that your bitch is getting plenty of good food and water. Keep their living area clean and dry.

Your Duties

- Keep records of the birth time and sexes of pups
- At two weeks, they will try to walk around. At 4 weeks you can introduce them to some baby cereal.
- At 3 weeks you should worm them for the first time.
- As they grow you can slowly feed them dog food that has been blended with some milk to keep it soft.
- Make sure they get plenty of fresh water to drink.
- They will need regular checks from the vet to confirm their health.
- Once they eat food with absolutely no assistance or supplemented by milk, they are ready to leave to the new owner's house.
- By week 5 they are ready for vaccinations

- After a thorough examination, the puppy shots are started.
- The five in one shot DHLPP protects pups against
 - ✓ Canine Distemper
 - ✓ Canine Hepatitis Virus
 - ✓ Leptospirosis
 - ✓ Parainfluenza
 - ✓ Parvo Virus
- The OFA and CERF screenings.
- The next vaccines may be the annual shots given with the anti rabies vaccine.

Once the puppies are ready for sale, you should have them evaluated. Some of your pups may have flaws but if they are healthy and have the required temperament, your breeding program has been successful!

Chapter 11

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. *Can we breed a ruby with a tri-color? Or a black and tan with a Blenheim? Or do you put a Tri with a Blenheim and a black and tan with a ruby?*

Cavaliers can be bred with those of other colors but you must know the pedigree history. As a rule, unless you really know your colors and the pedigree history it is best not to mix wholecolors and parti colors (Blenheims, tricolors and black and tans).

Blenheim is found to be a dominant color. The following chart gives an indication:

Colors	Litter	Remarks
1. Blenheims with Blenheim	Blenheims	If this is carried on over too many generations, pups tend to have light eyes and light noses
2. Blenheim with Tricolor	Mixed litter of Blen and Tri or just Blens or just Tris	
3. Blenheim to Ruby	Rubies and Blens. Only Blens if Ruby carries parti color blood.	High risk of mismarks (Rubies with white marks)
4. Blen to Black n Tan	Either of four colors are likely	High chances of mismarks and is not a recommended match
5. Tricolors with Tricolors	Mix of Blens and Tris	
6. Tri to Black n Tan	All four colors likely, if B&T has parti color blood.	The Tris of this litter may be too heavily marked. But the Rubies will be rich colored.
7. Tri to Ruby	All four colors likely, if Ruby has parti color blood.	
8. Ruby to Black n Tan	Great wholecolor litters possible. But if both parents have parti color blood, will show up in the	

	litter	
Black n Tan to Black n Tan	May result in all four colors, if parents have parti color blood.	

If you are contemplating breeding your Cavalier with a different colored mate, you should check with your breeder. Also make sure both the dam and the sire are health tested.

2. *Do Cavaliers shed a lot of hair? If so, how much and how often? Does it just shed seasonally? If so, when?*

Cavaliers do shed but not a lot. They tend to shed more in spring and fall and you will find Cavalier hair all over your house in that period.

3. *My Cav is 16 months and weighs 9.5 lbs. He seems small compared to others the same age.*

The Cavalier weight can range between 12 to 18 lbs. but this does not mean that all Cavaliers must fall into this range. As long as your Cavalier is healthy and active, you should not worry.

4. *Are there any spaniels costing under 55 pounds?*

Cavaliers are an expensive breed and prices in the UK range from £300 to 500. Prices in the United States range from \$1000 to about \$ 3000. Breeders will charge a premium on pups that are show or breed quality. The price also varies depending on where you live.

5. *What dietary modifications can be done to help reduce heart murmur as our CKCS ages?*

If your Cavalier has a heart murmur, nothing will reduce it as he ages. What you can do, however, is to manage his diet and exercise regimen so that he lives a healthy enough life with his condition. He has inherited the heart murmur and as he ages, he will develop the other symptoms of Mitral valve Disease - that of shortness of breath, coughing and swelling in the abdomen.

You should remove the salt from his diet, make sure he gets regular moderate exercise (even going up and down the stairs is very good), reduce his weight and check with your vet for any medication he may require.

6. *What should you feed them?*

Good quality, commercially available food that has meat as the main ingredient. You could feed them a mix of home-cooked food along with pet store food. Many people are increasingly turning towards the BARF diet, which consists of raw meat, meat bones and pureed vegetables. Your adult Cav will need one meal a day of 180 to 200 grams.

7. *Do they require regular grooming to keep their coats healthy and shiny?*

Cavaliers do not require much grooming to keep them looking healthy. A regular brushing of the coat once a week and a bath every two months is recommended.

8. *Beyond running around my house, how much exercise does a Cavalier need?*

Cavaliers love to lie around the house, snuggling on cushions and getting cozy, but they are game for brisk walks as well. Exercise is very important for this breed, especially because of their predisposition to Mitral Valve Disease. Cavaliers should never be allowed to become overweight. A moderate size fenced-in yard in which to run, or a minimum of one good walk each day is definitely required. Even older Cavaliers should be encouraged to go up and down stairs.

9. *Are they exceptionally curious? Would I need a fenced yard or entirely enclosed space or will they want to stay close to home?*

Cavaliers are extremely curious dogs and they also love to chase. They will rush out at the smallest opportunity and you must keep them in a well-fenced in yard or on a leash whenever you are out.

10. *Will a Cavalier want to sleep in my bed?*

A Cavalier is an extremely affectionate dog and never tires of hugs and cuddles. He most certainly will want to sleep in your bed but it is up to you to decide whether you are going to encourage this habit.

11. *How long do they live?*

Cavaliers have a healthy life span of 12 to 15 years. They lead healthy lives if they are exercised, not over fed and if they are free from genetically carried health defects.

12. As an avid breeder of this wonderful breed I am concerned about this latest problem that has arisen of Syringomyelia. Is there no way one can enforce that if someone has a dog with this problem that it be made known so as to be able to avoid passing it on?

Syringomyelia is indeed a serious problem. But it has only recently been recognized as a condition that is threatening the breed. Most breeders are not even aware of how rampant the condition is and many try to pass it off, saying it is not their problem.

The only way to check the spread of this malaise is for breeders to report the incidence in their litters and to encourage owners to report as well, if their dogs develop the typical symptoms of neck scratching and howling in pain for apparently no reason that they can see.

Unless owners and breeders work together, there will not be a full understanding of the extent to which the disease has spread. Right now, all that is known is that there are both clear and affected litters in all lines.

13. I am a working single and adore dogs, especially the Cavalier Spaniels. My problem is that since I work shift hours, I don't stay home at all times. I have a 4-month-old kitten with which the puppy can play. Is it fair (on the puppy) for me to get a Cavalier puppy? If yes, how do I go about training it?

If you are going to buy a puppy, leaving him with a four-month old kitten is like leaving one baby in charge of another - it just does not work out. The Cavalier is recommended only for families where there is someone at home to supervise and care for the animal. If, however, you get an adult Cavalier, he will love the company of your kitten while you are away. Cavaliers are extremely sociable dogs and are kind and caring with other animals.

14. Is it necessary to trim hair on the paws?

The Cavalier requires no other trimming except for trimming the hair that grows between the pads on the underside of the feet. This is necessary as otherwise the Cavalier picks up a lot of dirt on these hairs.

15. What heritable problem is there for Cavaliers?

Cavaliers inherit can inherit a number of genetically carried health defects, the most critical among them being Mitral Valve Disease. This can reduce the life span of your pet dramatically (many succumb at 5 years of age) and it affects the quality of his life

should he live longer. The other major condition is Sryngomyelia, a condition that affects the nervous system. Then they also are subject to Hip Dysplasia and Luxating patella, a common health problem in dogs of other breeds as well.

16. Is it normal for these dogs to be very attached to people? For instance, we just got her yesterday and any time we leave her alone, she cries and whimpers until we come back. My husband thinks its cute but I worry that she wont be able to cope with us being gone for most of the day.

Do not leave a puppy you have just brought home alone for any period of time. Try to work out your schedules such that at least one of you is with her. If your work schedule means that you are going to be away most of the day, you should make arrangements for her to be cared for in the day. Cavaliers do not fare well if they are left to themselves in the house everyday.

17. Would these dogs bark at intruders? Our little girl seems so docile that she would never do that. But she also seems intelligent enough to know if she was in danger.

Your Cavalier is not a guard dog. She is, in fact, your typical "friendly neighborhood dog". She may bark when she senses a stranger approaching but once they are in the house, she will leap and fawn over them as if they were old buddies.

Dogs do have a 'sixth' sense that warns them of impending danger. However, she will need to be kept on a leash at all times when you are out walking as her spaniel heritage makes her chase even a feather that is blowing along in the breeze. When she is chasing, she is not clued in to the threat to her life.

18. Is it true that a King Charles Spaniel is allowed into any public house regardless as to whether a "no dogs allowed" policy is in place?

Not really. You are probably referring to a historical event, during the reign of King Charles II in England. He was apparently so fond of the King Charles Spaniels that two or three of them always accompanied him wherever he went. Even at that time, there were public places where dogs were not permitted. But he was so besotted with his dogs that he decreed that this particular breed should be permitted in all public places, even in Parliament. While that decree is still in existence, it obviously would not be in force.

19. What are they like with bigger dogs or cats?

Cavalier make fiends with other animals with great ease, even cats. They love companionship and are extremely happy to frolic and play with bigger dogs and cats.

20. *Are purebred Cavaliers supposed to have a full black nose or can they have a black and white nose?*

The breed standard states that the Cavalier's nose must be uniformly black. Any pigmentation on the nose must be considered a fault. Do bear in mind, though, that this is a flaw in a show or breed quality puppy. If the puppy's temperament and overall health condition is good, there is no reason to be anxious about this kind of a flaw.

21. *King Charles Spaniels are usually sweet tempered but mine has been nicknamed "Satan" because she is so evil. Why is she so cross? She hates strangers, men especially.*

While the Cavalier is known and desired for its friendly, sporty temperament, you can have some that are not so welcoming and affectionate. First of all, did you buy the pup from a good breeder? If you have got your pup from a puppy mill or from a friend who decided to breed a litter or two from her pet, you can be sure that there was inadequate screening of the parents. Remember, temperament is also an important breed standard.

If you did get her from a good breeder, check with them about the possible reasons for her bad temper. One reason can be the conditions in which she lives - is she alone at home for long periods? The Cav is prone to anxiety if left alone. A scared dog sometimes displays aggression as a defense mechanism. It is possible to overcome these defects in temperament with patient training.

22. *Why is it so hard to train them not to be on a leash? My daughter wants to know why are their eyes so big?*

The Cavalier has the hunter dog genes from his spaniel heritage. That means he just can't help himself when confronted by a moving object - he will give chase! You should never keep him off leash when you are outdoors. It is extremely dangerous as he could get run over or otherwise get hurt.

The Cavalier has been bred specially from dogs that had big round eyes. The earlier King Charles Spaniels had small almond shaped eyes - these are considered a fault in Cavaliers.

23. *Is this breed easy to mix (live) with neo mastiffs and rotties?*

This is a very friendly and sociable breed but you must be careful when you let him play with aggressive dogs. His sense of fun may not amuse the large dog, with potentially disastrous results for the Cavalier, as he is very small.

24. *I am concerned about the heart problems associated with this breed - does a vet check when they are puppies - so long as it is clear - bode well for the future? The heart ache of losing a loved pet is bad enough but my husband would grumble about the money also.*

It has been estimated that almost half the Cavalier population in America is affected by heart problems. It is not something that will show up in very young puppies, though. Cavaliers should be annually checked for heart murmur after they are 18 months old. A "clear" report at this test is no guarantee of his health, as he could develop a murmur two months later.

25. *How much Cavalier trait would show up in a mixed? She's mixed with a Springer Spaniel. Which traits are the Cavalier and which traits are the Springer?*

When breeds are mixed, there is never any guarantee what you are going to get. While many folks swear by the fact that mixed breeds are healthier, if both the breeds have a common health defect, it will definitely show up in the offspring.

26. *When a Cavalier puppy is to be walked how many times a day should it be walked and how far? Plus should the walk be build up gradually or straight away?*

Cavaliers make for great walking companions. They will readily accompany you on 5-mile treks, if that is your thrill. However, puppies need to be gently introduced to exercise. The walk should be of moderate length initially and once a day is more than enough. As the dog grows, you can gradually build it up till he is accompanying you without signs of fatigue.

27. *How many times a week do you have to walk them when they are puppies and when they are adults?*

Cavaliers must be exercised everyday. As they are essentially indoor dogs, they will become slack and put on weight if not exercised regularly. That only increases the

chance that they get a heart problem as they age. In a breed that is anyway threatened by heart disease, do not take his exercise routine lightly.

28. *How much do they weigh?*

The average Cavalier weighs between 12 and 18 pounds.

29. *My dog has problems with the ears, newly appearing problem. She has some wounds not looking nice in the ear. Don't like me to touch the ear. Is it a normal problem? She is 12 years old.*

Your dog has probably acquired an ear infection. It is obviously a painful condition, as she is not letting you touch it. This is definitely not a "normal" problem and you must consult your vet for medication at once.

30. *Where do you get them? Which countries?*

Cavaliers are extremely popular dogs and are available all over Europe as well as the US and Canada. They are thriving in Australia and New Zealand as well. There are excellent breed clubs and many of them are devoting large resources to funding research to investigate the extent of the health problem in the breed.

31. *My Cavalier is very intelligent. Are all Cavaliers known to be intelligent?*

The Cavalier is a very intelligent breed and responds very well to training.

32. *Are they really dumb dogs that are almost impossible to train?*

Cavaliers are not 'dumb' dogs in any way. They are an extremely intelligent breed that is faithful and caring, a delight to the family that owns one of its members. The difficulties most folk experience in training really reflect on their faulty training techniques or their lack of consistency and persistence. All dogs can be trained, some more easily than others. Cavaliers are one of the easiest breeds to train as the dog craves your love and affection. He is *dying* to please you, not because he is dumb but because he thinks you are a wonderful owner and he truly loves you.

33. *Is it true that Cavaliers are the best breed of all breeds?*

If you are looking for an "indoors" dog that is cheerful, affectionate, has a sporty spirit and is great with children and with other pets you may have around the house,

the Cavalier is certainly a great choice. They are easy to look after, as they retain their devastating good looks with minimal grooming. They need to be fed just once a day and are excellent companions on walks.

34. How can you prevent a Cavalier from developing a heart murmur?

The heart murmur is an inherited problem and you cannot prevent a Cavalier from developing it, if he has the genes. What you can do is reduce the chances of a pup getting it by screening the parents and grandparents for MVD. If all of them are clear of MVD at age 5 or 6 years, chances of getting a "clear" litter are very high.

35. Do Cavaliers need to be alerted when you want to pat them or can you just pat them from the behind without showing them that you are there?

Any dog is alarmed if you suddenly come up from behind them, even with the most benign intentions. He may be wagging his tail, allowing you to believe he is in a great mood, but that does not mean he wants to be patted.

If you want to pat the dog, speak to him and allow him to come up to you. Your Cavalier responds to affection with abandon and he will certainly not deprive you of a desire to pat him. Just take care and ensure that he knows, don't make him jump out of his skin by stealing up on him from behind!

36. What is the optimum age for breeding female Cavaliers? My female went into heat at 5 months and then again at 8 months - I don't want to make the mistake of breeding too early.

Females can come into season in the first year itself but their young bodies are not ready for pregnancies just yet. Also, considering the high incidence of heart disease in this breed, you should wait until she is well over 3 years old and has been screened annually for heart murmur from the time she was 18 months old.

37. How well do Cavaliers metabolize BARF diet? What's your personal opinion about it? Are supplements recommended?

There are a number of Cavalier owners who have reported improved health as a result of switching to the BARF diet. It is best if you decide on your dog's diet based on what suits him, and what is going to be possible for you to sustain. Do not experiment

with your pup's digestive system by trying one and then another type of diet. There are certain supplements recommended and they are listed in the chapter on Grooming and Nutrition (Chapter 6)

38. Should their slippers or fur between the toes be clipped if you live in areas where heavy snowfall is experienced in winter? Or should they be introduced to booties earlier on?

The hair between the toes, on the underside, should be trimmed, as otherwise they will collect "snowballs" on that hair. The Cavalier fares quite well in cold climates and will not need booties if you keep that hair well trimmed.

39. They are different personalities. One can open cupboard door and help herself if I am physically disabled. Sequoia is ruby.

Cavaliers are essentially very inquisitive creatures and will try and get into baskets, lower drawers of a chest of drawers or even the garbage. While it does seem like she is independent, in actual fact, you should not encourage this habit. She has no way of knowing what is safe and what is not. She could get locked in to a cupboard and that would scare her out of her wits. She may swallow something lying in there and it could be poisonous for her. Else, if she swallows something small and round, she could even choke on it. Cavaliers need supervision and should not be given the run of all your shelves and cupboards.

40. What are all the types of colors?

Cavaliers come in four colors: Black and Tan, Blenheim (rich chestnut markings on pearly white), Ruby and Tricolor (black and white with rich tan markings over the eyes, on the cheeks, underside of ears and tail).

41. My Cavalier has deformed tear ducts. I have tried removing the tearstains with a proprietary stain remover and I have also used warm water but the stains remain. Any ideas?

Stain removers should cause the tearstains to fade if not go away. Once they have faded, dabbing the channel with Vaseline will prevent their developing again. More than the cosmetic care, it is important that you keep you pet comfortable and make

sure there is nothing that is causing aggravation to the eye and causing more tears to be shed.

- 42. My spaniel is extremely affectionate which is lovely but he sits on my lap at every opportunity, even when I am cleaning the floor. Should I discourage this and how is the best way to go about it?***

The Cavalier is naturally inclined to a lot of cuddling and will occupy an inviting lap for indefinite lengths of time. But you have a life to lead that involves activities other than babysitting him. If you do not discourage his habit, his dependency on you will be far too high and it will make him nervous and aggressive every time you are away.

When you have chores to do, do not let him sit in your lap. Initially, you can pat him a little and then put him down firmly. So that he doesn't get anxious, keep talking to him in a soft voice, but be stern if he tries to leap into your lap again.

Keep him in the room with you, if that is possible, so that he doesn't feel he has been rejected outright. You could also engage him with some playing with his toys and when your chore is done, reward him for his good behavior with lots of kind words and hugs and cuddles. If you observe this routine persistently, he will understand very quickly that he is still loved but he must let you do certain things that do not involve him.

- 43. At about what age should you expect your Cavalier's hair to grow in? My Cavalier's hair is beautiful but not as long and as full as I see in pictures. My Cavalier is about 5 months old.***

Your puppy is still a baby and he will not grow into his adult coat for a while yet. Cavaliers acquire that luxurious, glossy coat between the age of one and two years.

- 44. How many baths should a Cavalier get in a month? How many baths are too many?***

A Cavalier is essentially a very clean dog and does not require frequent bathing. In fact, bathing him more than twice a month will cause his skin to become dry and his coat will lose its shiny gloss. Most owners find a bath every two months is quite adequate, in fact.

- 45. How long can they hold their bladder?***

When the Cavalier is still a puppy, he will need to go out as often as every two hours. However, as they grow, they can "hold" for up to 4 hours. Most Cavaliers will go through the night (at least 6 hours) without any problem, especially if they have been taken out just before bedtime and the first thing in the morning.

46. Should we get a cat for a companion?

Cavaliers love other animals and if you are going to away from the house, it is nice for them to have some company. But take care to restrict the area in the house where you leave them to roam free and don't leave them alone for too long.

47. Is there a big difference in the temperament between a male and a female?

No. While there are some breeds in which the male or female may have a distinctly different temperament, in Cavaliers there is no evidence to show that the male or female is sweeter of the two. There are people who personally prefer one or the other, but that is individual opinion, not necessarily based on fact.

48. How long is the pregnancy for this breed?

Pregnancy in all breeds last 63 days.

49. How do you begin to wean Cavalier pups from the moms and at what age?

A puppy can be put on to small feeds of baby cereal by the time he is four weeks old and at 45 to 50 days, he can be weaned away from his mother.

50. What is the most common color and size?

Blenheims (red and white) were the most common colors earlier. Then the tricolors became very popular as well (black and white with rich tan markings). The whole colors (as the ruby, black or tan Cavaliers are known) are only slowly gaining recognition and popularity. The Cavalier is a small dog, between 12 to 13 inches high.

51. How do you go about putting your dog in stud and how long does he have to go for?

If you want your dog to breed, you must first have him health tested, in the interests of the Cavalier breed. He should be clear of MVD, Hip Dysplasia and Syringomyelia. He should be of champion quality, otherwise there is no point considering him to sire a litter, as any flaws he has will be passed on.

If he is a top quality dog, you should inform your breeder, as he will be best placed to find a dam of suitable pedigree. Your breeder will be aware of your dog's history and will recommend a dam, whose owner's you may contact. You can decide whether you want to ship him or you can have the dam brought across when she is in heat.

In either case, she will allow him only when she is ready, which is usually between the 10th day and the 13th. But some dams are in the mood as late as the 18th day, so you should be prepared to a good couple of weeks for the tie to occur.

52. Are they really kind and affectionate?

The hallmark of this breed is its affectionate nature. They leap into your lap and will proffer doggy kisses with great abandon. Cavaliers are active, energetic and cheerful dogs - they will light up your life with their sunny disposition.

53. How often do they need their nails clipped and what is their favorite food?

Cavaliers will need their nails clipped once a month. They are generally fond of food and will be happy with commercially prepared dog food and snacks as also with raw meat and marrowbones.

54. Is it true that Cavalier breed was recreated with Papillon's blood?

No, this is not true. The Cavaliers were a popular breed and were depicted in paintings of the 16th and 17th century masters. However, as the deep domed, short nosed King Charles Spaniels (called the English Toy Spaniels in America) became more popular, this breed almost disappeared. But some breeders took up the challenge and from the "throw-outs" of the litters of the King Charles Spaniels (puppies had longer noses and no dome and would be culled as they were undesirable) this breed was revived. They were named the Cavalier King Charles Spaniels.

55. Why are they so difficult to train?

Cavaliers are not difficult to train at all. They are very intelligent and as they crave your approval (which if you show by lots of praise and cuddling), the Cavalier is trained in no time. When you train your Cav, bear in mind that you should be

consistent - do not scold him for something he has done and then let him get away with it the next day. He is confused and will soon start ignoring the scolding altogether.

Secondly, if you must correct him, do it immediately, when he has broken the rule. If you come home and find he has run through an open shelf that was low enough for him to rummage through, chances are he will have no clue what you are going on about. He may have run amok a couple of hours ago, and may have been napping on a cushion when you came in - he will not get your message at all!

Thirdly, you must have patience and time to devote to training. If you are not around at home much, he will be up to all sorts of mischief as he is a playful and inquisitive pup. At least for the first few weeks of his life in your home, you must make the time for him. If you train him in fits and starts, it's not his fault that he doesn't learn.

56. How do they react to children? Other dogs?

Cavaliers are wonderful with children because they are affectionate and will never harm your child. But it is the child who needs to be educated about the dangers to the Cav from too much pulling or pushing, of dropping him or of leaving things around that he could swallow and choke on. As a rule, breeders do not sell pups into families where the children are still very small.

Cavaliers are great with other dogs. They are playful and will thrive in the company of another canine.

57. Would this be a good breed for a first time dog owner?

The Cavalier is one of the best breeds for a first time dog owner. The advantages are many - they are sociable dogs, they do not require too much grooming, they are small and easier to manage. They are intelligent and train very easily too. They fit in well into the family too.

58. What age should my children be when I get my Cavalier?

Ideally, your children should be over five years of age. Even then, they must be repeatedly told to be careful with the pup, as this is a small breed and cannot join into the rough and tumble activity of a child. Puppies also need a lot of quiet and rest when they are young and the sudden bursts of activity and noise that small children are capable of are terribly frightening for the Cavalier. A scared pup is likely to grow in to a shy and nervous dog, quite different from his original temperament.

59. *We have a ten-month-old Cavalier and he is lovely and really well behaved. But in the evenings he gets really hot and bothered and seems very highly sexed, not sure what to do as we want to breed when he is a little bit older.*

There may be a bitch in heat in your neighborhood, which is what is getting him very excited. You would have to keep him firmly on a leash if you take him for a walk in the evenings. If you can figure out where she lives, change the route you take on your walks. If you want to breed him, you will need to be sure that he is kept in check, as you would be as responsible as the owners of the bitch, for any unwanted litters.

The Cavalier is a noble, beautiful and extremely desirable animal. His temperament endears him even to those who shy away from dogs. Dog lovers are obviously smitten beyond redemption. But when you acquire one, be sure that you are doing so for the right reasons.

Dogs have their own needs and insecurities. They are also completely and totally dependent on you for their care and nurture. Do not do him the injustice of a hasty purchase. This dog needs your love and affection - he needs you to be present in his life. Only then will he thrive. Be sure in your heart that you are buying a Cavalier because you want him as an integral part of your life.

If you invest time in training him, he will reward you for years to come with his boundless energy and his undying devotion. He will be your true companion, in times of happiness and distress. His soul will shine through his eyes as he looks at you adoringly and your family will be blessed with many wonderful moments with your Cavalier.

Cheers for selecting the Cavalier - enjoy!