



# Your Guide to the German Shepherd



## INTRODUCTION

### **Congratulations on your purchase of a Von Shap Haus German Shepherd puppy!**



Your puppy has been bred with the best possible genetics to give him the best chance of a long healthy and happy life with his new family-You!

In order to help make your puppy's transition into his new family as easy as possible and to answer some common questions that you may have about your puppy and his care, we have put together this exclusive guide for you.

Here you will find information relating to the German Shepherd Breed and more specific information on your puppy's heritage as well. Please take the time to read this booklet, and get ready to enjoy years of fun, love laughs and surprises, German Shepherd style!

At Von Shap Haus, we go the extra mile to provide our puppies with the best possible care and nutrition, starting with our breeding adults. All of our adult dogs are chosen for our breeding program based on strict criteria which includes not only health testing for common health issues associated with the German Shepherd breed, but also in depth pedigree research, temperament analysis, and finally the conformation and color of parents and grandparents. We feed top quality nutrition and supplements because a healthy puppy starts with him having healthy parents.

Birth is attended by one or more family members, and the new momma is given much love, special care and attention during the time she is nursing and caring for her babies. All puppies are handled daily from the moment they are born, and then exposed to new people, children of all ages, other animals and different locations around our family farm. All of this to help your new puppy develop his senses and confidence. Research has proven that puppies who receive early stimulation and learning (non-threatening) experiences grow up to be more confident, well adjusted and happier adults. This guide will explain how you should continue your new puppy's training and care to help him develop and grow. Each and every life is special and unique, and much loved. Because of this and because we care so much, we are particular about who can adopt one of our puppies. So accept our warmest well wishes on your new best friend and

**WELCOME to the Von Shap Family!**

## The German Shepherd in History

The German Shepherd was a medium sized dog developed in the late 1800's in Germany by Captain Max Von Stephanitz. Max desired a working dog that was intelligent and strong. He came across a sable sheepdog at a dog show in 1899 and was so impressed with the dogs intelligence, beauty and loyalty that he purchased him immediately and began selectively breeding to produce the ancestors of what we know as the German Shepherd Dog today. Included in the development of the breed were many sizes and colors of German Sheepdogs commonly found throughout Germany at that time and even wolf hybrids. Eventually the breed became standardized and called The German Shepherd Dog for its original purpose was to herd and defend the flocks of sheep in Germany. It is for this reason alone that the white variation of the German Shepherd was deemed undesirable due to the idea that a sheepdog was not supposed to be the same color as the animals (sheep) they were herding. It was just too hard for the Shepherds to keep track of the dogs as they blended in too well with the flocks. Other colors including solid blacks, sables, black and tans and both long and short coated varieties were however accepted and included in the establishment of the breed. There were even wolves used in the early years of the breeds development.

The breed fell out of popularity for a short time and was even re-named "Alsatian" after the first world war with fears the name "German" Shepherd would reflect an evil connotation to the breed.

When soldiers from World War 1 returned to the United States they spoke of an intelligent strong and fearless dog, and so it was soon after that the first German Shepherd dogs made an appearance here. The GSD jumped in popularity after the movie stars Rin Tin Tin and Strongheart made their appearance.

Poor breeding and anti-German sentiment once again hindered the breeds development here in the U.S. after World War 2 was over but after that brief decline the breed experienced a surge in popularity that has continued to this day. With his strong and versatile nature, the GSD of today embodies the spirit of his original creator with his superior working ability and intelligence. Today the GSD enjoys the #2 all time popularity slot above all other breeds. He is utilized extensively by Search and Rescue, Police, military, dog enthusiasts desiring a strong and agile competition obedience or agility prospect, and as a herding and guard dog. But his most coveted position is still family protector and companion.

The German Shepherd was a breed originally designed to do many jobs, and should have the conformation and character to do this,. Here at Von Shap we do not breed for extremes in angulation, nor extremes in temperament/drive. Our dogs are bred primarily for the purpose of fulfilling a valuable role, and that is to be your confident, healthy, beautiful companion and protector. They are equally at home snuggling on the couch with you, running through the fields of your farm beside your atv/tractor, keeping a vigilant eye on your children as they play, or hiking, boating, camping, swimming...etc etc. ....

Because so many breeders utilize the genetics from one type of GSD over another, it has created a disparity among the breed. Hence, there are now several distinct variations of GSDs which we will attempt to explain here.

### **German Shepherd Types**



Sascha, East German Red Sa-

#### **East German /DDR Dogs-**

The East German dog was a GSD bred specifically to work. Very high drive, he has a high pain tolerance, heavier bone and shorter in stature with a straight backed appearance, this dog **MUST** have a job. Colors are typically sable, solid black and black and tan. They are the dog of choice for most police and protection work. They thrive on activity. Their high prey drive and activity level make this a dog best suited to a very experienced handler or someone who has the time and resources to channel the boundless energy into productive activities. This is the dog of choice for schutzhund and ring sport enthusiasts. This is not a dog suited for the average pet owner without extensive training, and in the wrong hands can be a very destructive and even dangerous canine. We do not breed for this level of drive, but a more moderate activity level.

West German lines—The West German dogs are divided into two categories, working and show.

In the show lines, emphasis was placed on the dogs looks more than its working ability and there developed a dog that was taller, leaner, with a roached backed appearance.

In the West German working lines, the dog was expected to maintain a higher level of drive and ability similar to what was seen in the East German DDR lines.

These dogs are typically black and red, black and tan, and can be solid black and sable..

We incorporate genetics from top German lines in our breeding program,, with carefully planned matings to ensure puppies will maintain a moderate conformation and activity level.



## American show lines-

The American show lines have been bred to be show dogs, They have a heavily angulated rear, sloped back, and their gait is highly exaggerated.

Although they may look stunning trotting around the ring at a dog show, the effects of this body style are devastating to the breed. The hip/joint/hock structure is so weakened that a American style dog would never be able to keep up with their owner in outdoor physical activities or perform any of the jobs the breed founder intended.

It is for this reason some breed clubs have condemned the AKC show line GSD standards and changed or adopted their own in an effort to promote a healthy body style in the German Shepherd. Sadly, the majority of AKC judges continue to perpetuate the further demise of the integrity of this breed here in the United States.

## Old fashioned American lines-

The Old fashioned, or farm style GSD was a movement created by breeders in the U.S. who desired a large calmer Shepherd suitable for living on the farms and in the homes of families. The Old fashioned style of GSD is often oversized, has a straight back, calm enough to be with other pets and livestock without undue excitement, and gentle enough to be a great home and family companion. Colors can range from traditional black/tans, black/reds to solid blacks, solid whites, sables, and the more exotic blues, fawns and livers. Much of our current breeding program incorporates these colorful and versatile GSD lines.



Although there has been much dissent and discussion over the GSD and its color variations, the founder of the breed himself was quoted as saying “no good dog can be a bad color.” In fact all the colors considered non traditional have been a part of the development of the German Shepherd breed from the beginning.

That means, **color is secondary to all the other factors** which must be taken into consideration when looking at the GSD breed. We at Von Shap Haus love the many colors of the breed. We do not breed exclusively for a single color or pattern, but rather welcome this diversity as part of an in depth and responsible breeding program.

The GSD is a breed with varying levels of Drive and Energy. While most of our litters tend to be a moderate energy level some litters may be a lower to medium drive and energy. It is neither possible nor desirable to breed German Shepherds without some drive and a desire to do some type of job even if their only job is playing ball with the family and protecting the household. That being said, it is **EXTREMELY IMPORTANT** to ensure your new puppy has adequate training and socialization in his

young formative months. A critical time period is now to 5 months where he should be exposed to a variety of safe activities including friendly dogs, cats, people of all ages, and noises and objects.

## **GSD Coat Length, Patterns and Colors**

The German Shepherd should have a thick double coat. The double coat is important in a working dog to ensure protection from the elements. The outer coat may be short, plush, or long. A short coat is very short, laying close to the body. A plush coat is the desired coat type for conformation events, being fuller and thicker than a short coat. The long coat is much fuller than a plush, and is characterized by long tufts of fur around the dog's ears, "trousers" on the hind legs, a very full tail, and longer hair over the entire body. The long coat is not allowed in AKC conformation events, but recently has started being permissible in Germany after decades of this coat style being disallowed. It is thought the long coats are important to help maintain the proper coat texture and fullness in the GSD breed.

Whatever your preference, all of these coat types must have present the soft downy undercoat, characteristic of a true double coated breed. Dogs without this undercoat have a serious breed fault and should not be used in breeding programs.

### **Coat Patterns**

The GSD can exhibit several coat patterns which include saddle, bi-color, solid, and sable.

The saddle pattern is the most widely recognized and dominant color pattern. Here the dog has a darker saddle over the back, and usually black markings on the legs and tail.

The Bi-color has the darker color, all over the body so it appears almost completely black except for lighter color under the tail, on the toes, and facial markings.

The sable pattern is a type of pattern with darker and lighter hairs mixing to create a distinct wolf-like color all over the body.

The GSD can also be solid color, most commonly solid white or solid black.

White markings— It is common for the GSD to exhibit some white markings on the body, on the chest and toes usually, but never on the back or sides.

### **Colors of the GSD**

The German Shepherd can surprisingly come in many different colors other than the classic Black/Tan most people are familiar with.

Degree and hue of color in the coat.

Exotic colors-

The following colors are not common in the breed, but are cropping up more and more as their popularity grows with GSD enthusiasts and breeders.

Blue— a recessive dilution gene, this causes the ordinarily dark parts of the GSD body, i.e., the saddle, mask, cape, etc., to take on a dusty , faded appearance. can range from barely noticeable light dusting to pronounced grey/powder blue hues. Usually the eye color is also affected and is very blue for a long time gradually fading to amber or paler than the normal brown GSD eye.

Liver— This color also recessive, causes the black in the GSD coat to turn brown. Also affects eye color and nose leather.

Isabella— This rarest of all GSD colors occurs when the puppy inherits 2 copies of the Blue gene and 2 copies of the Liver gene from its parents. Puppies are a golden color where the normal black would be in the coat. Noses are brown and eye color is a vibrant blue at birth gradually fading to a beautiful amber color.

Now that you know a little about the different types of GSD you can easily see from our breeding program that we have carefully selected the traits we see as the most desirable and incorporated bloodlines from many sources always breeding towards the betterment of the breed and with the philosophy “Healthy minds in a healthy body” .

Too much angulation and too much drive is not desirable. Neither is a complete lack thereof. Temperament is of utmost importance and the traits of confidence, loyalty, and the willingness to work for his human master desired above all else.

Although we began our breeding program with the traditional colors and patterns of the GSD, we have since become educated about and developed an appreciation of the GSD in all his beautiful colors and coats.

I have seen breeding programs ruined by breeders who continuously strive to breed for one trait over another, for example, breeding for that extra-long reach in the GSD trot, or for that intense shade of blue. Oftentimes they sacrifice other just as desirable traits, and can amplify problems hidden in these lines sometimes with disastrous results.

At Von Shap, we realize the importance of maintaining soundness and integrity in the bloodlines of our dogs. Color is just the icing on the cake :)



Some of our dogs.....Past and Present



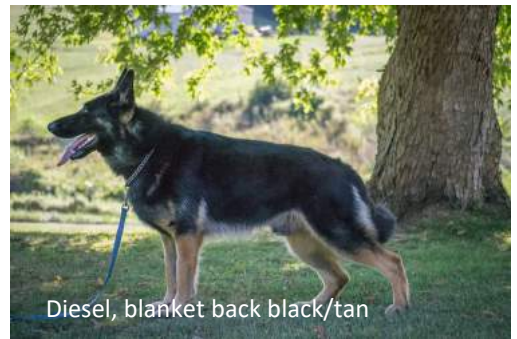
Lexus saddle back long coat black/tan



Bo, plush coat black/tan



Buzz- Long coat solid black



Diesel, blanket back black/tan



Nahla- short coat blue and tan



Stella, Red and Black long coat



Shadow, black and silver bi-color and Brandi, cream sable

Short coat



Solid blue longcoat puppy



## Health Problems in the GSD

Although the GSD breed is a relatively easy to care for and healthy breed, as in any other breed, it is also pre-disposed to certain conditions many of which are hidden recessively in all lines that originated from the very founding of the breed.

Some of the more serious conditions I will describe here: Hip and Elbow Dysplasia—probably one of the most prevalent health issues affecting the breed today. Hip and elbow dysplasia affects the joint in the ball and socket joints and causes the dog to be unable to do normal physical activity at a young age, and can be extremely painful and crippling in severe cases resulting in the dogs euthanasia. Thought to be hereditary in nature, but can also be a result of poor nutrition, too much exercise and stress on joints at a young age, or as a result of accident /injury . New research suggests that heredity plays a key role but that environment and nutrition can be the trigger factors determining if a dog or puppy will develop hip or elbow dysplasia during its lifetime.. All Von Shap breeding dogs are xrayed and OFA evaluated for Dysplasia.

Mega-esophagus— This is a known hereditary defect which causes the throat/esophagus to be larger than normal. Food is unable to travel properly down into the stomach when swallowed, and also may not be able to stay in the stomach properly. Signs of this condition usually show up when puppies begin eating solid food and vomiting immediately after they eat. There may also be a sloshing sound heard from the throat when the dog runs around as there is food/liquid trapped in the esophagus itself. Severe cases often result in euthanasia. Milder cases can be managed with the use of special diets and feeding bowls.

Degenerative Myelitis— This is a disease with a strong hereditary component. Typically it does not present itself until age 5-7 or even later in the dogs life. It begins with a gradual weakness and paralysis of the hind limbs, and once it starts there is no halting it. Eventually the dog becomes completely paralyzed in its legs and unable to move and must be put down. There is a simple DNA saliva test available and all breeding animals should have this done to ensure the genetics for this heartbreaking disease are not passed on. Sadly, because symptoms do not show up until a dogs middle or golden years, careless breeders have perpetuated the spread of this disease in the German Shepherd. All Von Shap dogs are either tested or clear by parentage (both parents negative for the gene that causes) D.M.

The GSD breed can be afflicted by many other health conditions such as heart defects, blood disorders, and autoimmune disease. We do not have any known heart issues in our lines, and only breed parents that are healthy. However, even healthy dogs from excellent lines can develop issues as they age into their golden years. This is why it is very important to start out with a pup that has healthy parents from proven lines, and to provide a healthy, nutritionally sound environment.

Proper nutrition is vital to your pups development.

## **Nutrition**

In order for your pup to grow and thrive properly, a balanced and healthy diet is a must.

Many good dogs have been ruined by their owner feeding a mediocre diet including cheap pet foods and treats. Not only does this retard the proper growth of your pup but can lead to digestive and bone disorders. For example, if you purchase and feed a cheap food such as Purina puppy chow, Old Roy, Pedigree, etc., you are feeding them soy, cheap fillers, artificial colors and flavors loaded with carcinogens and empty calories.

Would you feed your child a diet consisting of McDonalds cheeseburgers daily?

I would hope not! An occasional cheeseburger will not do harm, but a diet consisting of mostly fast food would have serious and long lasting health effects.

Proper nutrition is vital to your new puppy growing into a healthy adult, and for your healthy adult to live a long and healthy life as possible.

We feed primarily Victor food and Taste of the Wild. This food is free from chemical additives, contains only natural protein sources and is GMO and soy free. Puppies are started on the high pro plus Active Dog and Puppy formula then we recommend switching to a formula with lower protein such as the Performance Blend. We do Not recommend Grain Free foods unless your puppy is diagnosed with a food allergy. Slow controlled growth rate is important to minimize bone and joint issues.

Note : If your puppy or dog begins exhibiting signs of allergies such as excessive scratching, hair loss, dry flaky skin, we recommend switching to the Taste of the Wild Ancient Stream, or Victor Yukon Salmon or Pacific Fish formulas. . This has worked excellent with those dogs that develop a food allergy on the other foods.

In addition to providing a wholesome kibble, we feed Raw beef bones weekly to our dogs. NEVER cook them as this changes the bone into a food not able to be broken down properly by the dogs digestive system. RAW bones should be given in moderation as too much can upset your dogs digestive tract. A raw bone given once or twice a week is a healthy treat your dog will love. Since they are messy it is recommended to give them outside or in a crate. We get ours directly from the butcher shop and freeze them for at least 24-48 hours which kills any parasite present in the raw meat.

Treats– Please read the bag and purchase only treats made in the USA from wholesome ingredients. many dogs have been sickened by treats from China & elsewhere.

## Vitamins and Supplements:

We feed and recommend NuVet vitamins for our dogs. Even though you are feeding a balanced, healthy kibble, sometimes your puppy may not be getting all the nutrition he needs due to being a fussy eater, during growth spurts, and or when the pain of teething may cause him to go off his diet, etc. In addition, we like to promote healthy bones and joints in our puppies which tend to be oversized and grow quickly so supplementing with the proper nutrients can protect those areas from damage. In our grown dogs we want to maintain their activity level and then keep them comfortable into their senior years .

There are many products on the market , however, we only recommend those products which we ourselves use and have found to be healthy and effective.

Signs of potential nutritional related health issues includes diarrhea , dull coat, excessive shedding and itching, hot spots and hair loss,

Pano– this is a disease of the long bones most often seen in rapidly growing large breed puppies. It is characterized by intermittent lameness usually in the front legs, may seem to go away then return. Pano is no joke and can become chronic if not treated properly. The only cure is proper nutrition and rest. Pano is always a possibility if your GSD puppy suddenly becomes lame. This is especially prevalent in oversized, fast growing puppies. **Our customers that have used victor food have had few issues with Pano. If Pano does develop please switch to the victor High energy (red bag) formula. This has lower protein and higher carbs and should correct the growth issues. We have also used the Taste of The Wild Ancient Grains Formula with success.**

The GSD breed can be prone to sensitive stomach issues. Although this is more common in the heavily inbred and linebred west German and American show lines, it can occur in any GSD and is characterized by repeated bouts of diarrhea, vomiting, (with no fever or illness)and inability to tolerate new foods or treats. Once again, proper nutrition is the key to heading off any issues in this department.

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If at any time you have questions or want advice regarding foods, supplements or treats you may contact me and I will do my best to help answer your questions.

**Helpful Tip:** If your puppy/dog develops diarrhea, give raw canned pumpkin . A few tablespoons mixed in with some food and you can feed it twice a day for a few days as needed to help correct an upset tummy from dietary issues. Of course severe diarrhea can be a sign of serious illness and should always be addressed by a veterinarian. But soft stools or loose stools can be corrected with pumpkin.

## Exercise

Your new puppy has fragile joints that are easily damaged by too much exercise at a young age. It is important to not let your new puppy overdue it and any roughhousing with other dogs/puppies should always be monitored. Normal acceptable activity for a puppy aged 8 weeks to 6 months should consist of backyard supervised playtime sessions and walking on leash for short distances. NEVER take a young pup jogging, attempt to do agility exercises involving jumping, or allow him to run up and down stairs excessively. Do Not allow young puppies to be constantly pounced on by older or bigger dogs, always supervise play time activities and if puppy is getting tired then he should be made to rest.

As he grows you can gradually increase his activity level to include longer play sessions and walks.

Use common sense, remember his joints are sensitive to injury, and wait until your pup is **over a year old** before jogging, long walks, or intense exercise of any sort.

Supplement with NuVet hip and joint vitamins to help protect from any damage.

Keep your puppy at a healthy weight. Don't allow him to become too thin and especially not too fat as this puts strain on his hips and joints.

**\*Once damage is done, it can never be undone.\***

**Important NOTE on Dog Parks-** Von Shap does not recommend taking your puppy to dog parks. The reasons are this- There is no way to know if the other dogs running around there are properly vaccinated, carrying parasites, etc. With the prevalence of more and more strains of drug resistant parvo and dog flu cropping up, you are taking a chance to allow your dog around so many other potential sources of infection. And even worse, your puppy may be hurt or attacked by another dog or dogs as many owners do not have control of their pets. **If your puppy is attacked by another dog, he will be mentally damaged for life.** From that point on he will be aggressive to other dogs as he will think he must be defensive to protect himself from strange dogs.

A much better option is supervised play sessions with friends or families known non-aggressive pets.

In a pack, it is the adult dogs responsibility to keep the puppy safe. Your puppy will look to you for protection from other unknown dogs or people. This is normal and natural part of a puppy's instinct. As he grows he will gain trust and confidence and soon the role will be reversed and he will be YOUR Protector. It is your job to not let him down during his early vulnerable growth period.



## **Puppy Care and Training**

All puppies should be crate trained. Crate training is important for a several reasons.

First of all, it makes housebreaking so much easier. A puppy instinctively does not want to soil his crate. If he is put into his crate during times he is not watched you will have fewer accidents to worry about.

Second, your puppy will learn less bad habits as you can crate him anytime you are not able to watch him. This means less chewed up shoes, rugs, etc.

Finally, a crate is a safe and comforting place for your pup. Although he will initially scream his head off in protest when you crate, soon he will learn to relax and be calm when placed in his crate.

Here are some helpful tips to help crate train your pup:

1. Keep a matt or blanket over the crate so it feels like a dark safe sanctuary and position the crate so it is nearby but not in the middle of everything.
2. Provide a safe toy such as a Kong, Nyla bone, etc. to help keep him entertained while crated. This should be a special toy he only gets to have when he is in the crate.
3. Offer your pup a treat each time he goes into the crate, this gives him a positive association to being crated.
4. Don't cave in if he is crying and having a tantrum. Instead, wait until he calms down and quiets before letting him out. The exception to this is if he is crated at night and wakes you hours later as he may have to go potty.
5. Crate him during the day for short periods to help him get used to it and it is easier on you as he is not waking you up in the night crying.
6. Be patient, he soon will learn to accept his crate time and you will be glad you have trained him so well.

A note about Puppy Mills...

**Puppy mills** are breeders who typically have many dogs of different breeds and often housed in cages. These poor dogs spend their life in small cages and live for only one purpose, to produce puppies, lots of them! They are usually not health tested, little care is given to pedigree, and they have no quality of life. Once they are too old to produce puppies they are usually put down. In Ohio and PA there are numerous Amish and Mennonite puppy mills although they are not the only ones who fall into this category. They sell these puppies frequently at Flea Markets, craigslist, and other markets. They also sell many to pet stores and brokers who market them online to unsuspecting customers. I once knew a person who worked as a dog transport for a major pet Store. Her job was to pick up puppies from the Amish puppy mills and haul them to the pet stores where the store charged an outrageous price for the puppies. Unsuspecting customers paid top dollar for these puppy mill dogs.....

**Backyard Breeders-** A backyard breeder typically has a small number of breeding adults and also differs from a puppy mill in that they may be able to produce pedigrees that look good to the untrained eye. In reality, they are simply breeding two dogs of the same type and have no idea of the genetic potpourri they are creating. They often do not spend the effort to health test and definitely have not titled any of their dogs in conformation or working events.

Anyone who purchases a pup from either of these types of breeders is taking a huge risk. You may end up with a great dog for cheap. You also can just as easily have a pup with health and temperament issues and spend a lot of money on vet bills, and trainers in order to deal with the problems these poorly bred puppies have.

At Von Shap, we take great pride in our breeding program. We only keep a small number of adults on site. Through our Fosters program, young prospects for our breeding program are placed in approved homes where they live out their lives as part of a family.

This means our dogs are not "Kennel Dogs". Also we have an excellent program for our retired dogs that are not in the Foster Program. Our females are retired around 6, and adopted out to loving homes where they will continue to receive love and care through their golden years.

This is just one of the reasons that Von Shap stands out among other breeders. We go the extra mile to ensure the health and well being of our breeding dogs is always top priority.

Please, only buy from a reputable breeder and encourage your friends, family and neighbors to do the same., no matter what breed of dog it is.

Don't fund a puppy mill, REPORT TO YOUR LOCAL HUMANE SOCIETY!!!

## EARS

Your GSD pups ears may stand and fall several times before they stay up. Some pups will have ears standing at 8 weeks while others may take up to 5-6 months. Factors affecting how quickly your pups ears stand include nutrition, stress, teething, and size of the pup and the ear. Larger pups and pups with a wider ear base typically take longer before their ears stand. However a large pup with a smaller ear may stand before a smaller pup with a larger ear.

Helpful tips:

1. Feed a tablespoon of cottage cheese daily while your pup is teething as this draws calcium from the body and causes the ears to fall. Don't feed more than this as excess calcium can be harmful to your pups proper growth.
2. Do not pet the ears back and be careful not to damage the cartilage in the ears, If the cartilage is broken in the ear it will never stand, not even with forms.
3. The ears may stand and fall several times. If your pups ears have not stood AT ALL by the time he is 5 months old he may need ear forms to help them stand. Some pups from oversized lines may need a little help especially if it is a really big pup with large ear set.

There are forms available for purchase online which are easy to use in this instance. Please contact us if your pups ears have NOT STOOD AT All by 5 months old and we will give you instructions for purchasing and using the forms to train the ear.

## Vaccinations

Your new puppy has been vaccinated for the 5 main puppyhood diseases- Parvo, Distemper, Adenovirus, Parainfluenza, and Hepatitis

**We do not vaccinate for Lepto**, and it is recommended that unless your veterinarian indicates there is an urgent need for this vaccine, that you avoid it. The Lepto vaccine has been associated with **serious side effects** and even death in puppies.

Your puppy should be on a vaccine schedule like this:

7-8 weeks– DHAPP- (Given by Breeder)

10-11 weeks– Repeat DHAPP

12-14 weeks– Final DHAPP and Rabies Other vaccines to consider include Lyme, Coronavirus, and Bordetella with these being optional. **Lyme disease is a growing problem in our area. Talk to your vet to determine if you should be giving the lyme vaccine.**

After your pup has received his/her initial vaccinations you will need to repeat the Rabies vaccine in one year. It is now recommended that you do not over vaccinate your pets. Research has shown many negative effects from over vaccination and a condition called vaccinosis. Vaccinosis occurs because the immune system is overstimulated and can result in a host of issues from skin problems, autoimmune disorders, and even serious illness/death. So although the old way of thinking was to re-vaccinate every year with the combo DHAPP shot and every three years with a rabies vaccine, now it is recommended that instead of this you should not re-vaccinate more often than every three years and/or have a blood titer test done to check your dogs immunity.

Titer tests can be done every few years in lieu of annual vaccinations.

It has been discovered that the immune response lasts much longer than originally thought with the average immunity from parvo being 5-6 years and from the Rabies vaccine up to 10 years.

It is thought that over stimulation of your dogs immune system from too many vaccinations can lead to a host of problems including autoimmune disorders, aggression, sickness, etc.

If you live near a Pet Supplies Plus or Rural King or Tractor Supply, a mobile veterinary clinic usually will come by every two weeks and offers low cost vaccination. They also will do titer tests. This can save you the cost of the exam fee charged at your local vet office.

## **Spay and Neuter**

Your puppy comes with a contract requiring him/her to be fixed. This is for several reasons.

1. To protect the integrity of our breeding program.
  - We have worked very hard and spent thousands of dollars and time in developing our lines. Many of the lines we use are exclusive, that is to say, they are not available outside of a select few breeding programs. The breeders we work with expect us to protect their lines and not offer for sale dogs that may be indiscriminately bred by backyard breeders with no cares regarding health, temperament or soundness. Even though all our puppies are sold with non-breeding AKC registration, that is to say, no offspring may be registered, some dishonest people will purchase a pup and sell it with phony papers to backyard breeders or even Amish puppy mills.



A. Your puppy will be a much happier pet and you will not have to deal with the hormonal issues of a male wandering off looking for receptive girls or the messiness of a females heat cycle and having to keep her under lock and key 3 weeks at a time twice a year.

B. AGE to spay and neuter:

It used to be accepted that your dog should be spayed or neutered as soon as possible, even as early as 4 months old. However, new research has shown that altering your puppy at too young of an age can have serious health effects and even predispose them to develop certain cancers. Von Shap recommends waiting until after a female has ran her first cycle (typically around 9-12 months of age) and 12-18 months for a male. This allows the body time to mature and grow properly.

### Summary

Now that you know a little about the German Shepherd, where it originated, how the breed has grown and diversified, and how our breeding program seeks to strive for excellence in character, health, and beauty, it is important for you to know that we have placed our confidence in you, to love and cherish your new puppy, to provide for him and help him learn and grow.

We appreciate hearing from you, and love updates and pictures! Please feel free to post on our Von Shap Facebook Page :)

If you should have any questions or concerns as your puppy grows, you may contact me on my cell number 740-213-3992 email: [Laverne@vonshap.com](mailto:Laverne@vonshap.com) or message me through my Facebook page.

**All our buyers are strongly encouraged to attend basic obedience training class, S.T.A.R puppy and/or CGC classes. Your puppy needs the structured training these classes offer to help him develop into a happy healthy well adjusted adult dog that you will be proud to take out into your community with you.**

