



Newbies News: Choosing a Vet Are They All The Same? Part 2

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Warren Johnson & Gir von Hause Milsped
Pictured winning
2011 USRC SC Regional Sieger at 9.5 years old

Newbies' News: This section of TTRM is dedicated to the continual elementary education of those who are "new" to the Rottweiler breed.

We concluded our last article with the recommendation that you check with the Veterinary Medical Board to find out if there are complaints registered against a veterinarian you may be considering. If it is a large practice that has been in business for a long time, it is understandable that there may be a few registered complaints. After all, we are pretty particular about our pets and sometimes

we may even be unreasonable. However, there should not be an abundance of complaints filed by previous customers. An important thing to remember is that many veterinarians are the equivalent to general practitioners in human medicine. They may limit their practices to small animals such as dogs and cats, but will cover a wide range of services including annual physicals, vaccinations, diagnosis and treatment of common health issues, x-rays, and routine surgeries like spaying and neutering. It is important to know what your frequent needs will involve. If you are a breeder, you may want a vet who is a specialist in reproduction. If your dogs have skin allergies, then you need a specialist in dermatology. Your dog may have health problems that would benefit from a certified specialist in orthopedics. It could be an advantage to select a larger clinic or hospital that has a large panel of specialists in house.



place where they keep animals who are hospitalized for extended treatment. These areas should be separated from

Once you have narrowed your recommended list down to a handful, it is now time to visit these vet establishments. It is a good idea to bring your dog along so you can have a "meet and greet" time with the vet and his staff. It will help your dog to have positive first impressions of a friendly and pain-free encounter at the vet. Trust me-they remember the sights, sounds, and smells of a negative experience. When you visit, ask to see the overnight boarding facilities and the

one another. It is also best if canine and feline housing is separate. These housing areas should be clean and set up to avoid cross-contamination by urine and feces. Ask if there is a staff member present 24 hours a day for when your pet is required to stay overnight for treatment. Ask about policy and procedure for daily exercise. As a Rottweiler owner, it is also important for you to verify that all hospital staffers understand the tendency for this breed to be animal aggressive, and that proper precautions are taken by all who handle your dogs not to allow them to come into contact with other dogs, especially those of the same gender.



Treatment room

Once you have chosen a vet, begin building a good working relationship. You will want to provide the vet with your pet's medical history. You will usually be asked to complete a form that will be kept on file. It is important to provide full and accurate information. This data will help the vet measure your pet's growth and future health. It is not only important that the vet be good at his job, but you as the owner must also be good at your job. When you schedule an appointment, make sure you are on time. Tardiness puts the rest of the day's office schedule behind. That is rude and very frustrating to the medical staff. Bring your pet to the vet at the first signs of sickness. Do not delay and complicate matters. It is tragic when an animal dies from an illness that could have been treated successfully if professional treatment had just begun sooner. In serious health matters, do not be embarrassed to ask to get a second opinion. Your pet is worth it and they depend upon you to get them the best possible treatment. If at any point you are not satisfied with the care your pet is receiving, talk courteously but frankly with the vet about your concerns. If, after your communications, you still do not feel comfortable with the situation then by all means switch to a different vet. If you have problems concerning a treatment dispute or cannot resolve matters regarding what you believe to be unwarranted fees, then you may contact the ethics and grievance committee of your local or state veterinary association and/or the American Veterinary Medical Association. For serious issues of medical competence, you may file a formal complaint with the Veterinary Licensing Board in your state. Most people will never have to go to these extremes. You will find that most veterinarians are extremely qualified in their field and have a great love for animals. Just do a little research and you will find that special one with whom you can form a team for the good of your dog's lifelong health.