



## The Cost of a Breeding, Whelping & Raising a Litter

*A very rough estimate...*

<b>Pre-Breeding Health Screening:</b>	
Hip and Elbow Scores:	\$350.00
Thyroid testing:	\$70.00
ECG (Heart):	\$70.00

<b>Typical Pregnancy costs:</b>	
Progesterone tests:	\$300.00
Pregnancy Vitamins:	\$40.00
Stud Fee:	\$1,500.00
Artificial Insemination (AI) fee:	\$600.00
Ultrasound:	\$120.00
Caesar – if needed:	\$1,400.00
(If outside business hours or an emergency can be double)	

If you are going to <b>import Semen</b> from overseas, this can cost approx: \$3,500.00 to purchase, ship & store, sometimes more.	\$3,500.00
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<b>Whelping Area:</b>	
Whelping Box:	\$250.00
Vet Bed:	\$180.00
Heat mat/heat light + Power:	\$90.00
Whelping Kit: ( <a href="http://www.whelpingsupplies.com.au">www.whelpingsupplies.com.au</a> )	\$200.00

<b>Additional:</b>	
Oxy:	\$100.00
Bitch gets Mastitis:	\$200.00
Puppy formula, plus bottles as bitch cannot feed the puppies:	\$400.00

<b>Preparing puppies for their new homes:</b>	
Worming 2/4/6/8 weeks:	\$120.00
Vaccination x how many puppies:	\$45.00 each
Micro chipping x how many puppies:	\$25.00 each

<b>Food:</b>	
Dry food for 8 weeks:	\$500.00
Mince for 8 weeks:	\$200.00

LOVE IS A GREAT DANE!

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Plus – dew claws (if you will be doing this) and Bitch check up after litter + ANKC registration.	\$ Differs
<b>Approx total to Breed &amp; Whelp a Great Dane</b> (conservative amount)	<b>\$8,700.00</b>



Illustration from The Dog Owner's Manual, published by QUIRK BOOKS

## Dog years Calculator

Sadly, we are lucky to see our Danes head into double digits.

Due to their size they age more quickly than smaller sized dogs. An 8 year old Great Dane would be 66 years of age vs. an 8 year old Maltese who would only be 54 years old in dog years.

Some blood lines have longevity; however this is not a guarantee that your Dane will live into double digits. The length of a dog's life is related to so many different variables including; genetics, environment, diet, exposure to chemicals, mental health etc.

The risk of bloat is said to increase once a Great Dane turns 5 years of age so we can lose a number of Great Danes to this condition if the Bloat advances to Torsion from 5+ years of age.

Celebrate Pedigree Great Danes who lived until or past 10 years of age:

[www.greatdanes.net.au/double\\_digit.htm](http://www.greatdanes.net.au/double_digit.htm)



## Health Insurance for your Great Dane

Great Danes can cost a lot of money when things go wrong.

More and more dog owners are now signing up for health insurance for their pets even if they don't have health insurance for themselves!

Great Danes can cost thousands and thousands of dollars when something medically goes wrong.

Something as simple as a small bone fragment getting lodged in the intestines causing a blockage can cost you around \$2,000.00, or your dog could snap an anterior cruciate ligament when playing which could cost you approx. \$1,500.00 to much more if completed by a specialist.

Dogs usually like to have emergencies outside business hours or on public holidays so it will cost more going to an Emergency Vet.

With insurance you will still need to pay the initial bill and then you can put a claim into your insurance company.

To get the most out of your insurance company you need to **sign up for insurance before your dog goes to the Vet for the 1st time**, the reason for this is insurance companies can label previous visits as pre-existing conditions.

Word of warning: Some insurance companies do not cover bloat or have a withholding period.

Be sure to read all the Terms and Conditions before accepting the plan.

Side note: If your dog passes away you will be expected with most insurers to continue paying your monthly fees until the next renewal is due.



## Great Danes can be painful

Lethal tails being one of the dangers.

Great Dane owners joke and say you're not a Great Dane owner until you've had one of the many common Dane injuries:

- Black eyes
- Split lips
- Chipped teeth
- Bruised feet
- Broken toes / fingers
- Blood nose

Some Great Danes have lethal tails, when they're happy they can really hurt you! Great Dane tails are at face height to young children and groin height to most adult males so beware!

Due to Great Danes being a very large dog that can really hurt you just by standing on your feet or running by you fast and knocking you, many a Great Dane owner has landed on their tooshie when a Dane who forgets their manners is about!

Children will be knocked over by Great Danes, they will get whacked in the face by their tails and they will get hurt from time to time.

Adults will get hurt by Great Danes, new Great Dane owners especially who haven't learned not to lean over a Great Danes head to give them a kiss.



## Coffee Tables and low lying objects

Just at the right height for a Dane's tail to knock everything flying!

The Great Dane tail is an awesome weapon.....a weapon for knocking items off tables and shelves!

When you own a Great Dane you learn very quickly to put valued items up high!

Great Danes can easily break TV screens or send them flying when their inside play gets out of control.

It's best to teach a Great Dane that when they are inside the house no craziness is allowed, you can teach your Dane this by gently taking them by the collar and putting them outside every time they get too much.

A Great Dane doesn't have to be in a crazy mood to knock things off tables though; a happy tail will do just that in a matter of seconds.

Your guests will quickly learn to watch their wine glasses!

It is also very important not to leave things on tables or bench tops that a Dane could swallow such as medication that you may have on the table / draws next to your bed.

If you have a dog with a very happy tail you will need to watch the end of the tail for splits, as a Dane who splits their tail can get it infected and end up needing part of it amputated.

You'll know when your Dane has split their tail because all the blood it can look like a murder scene!



## Slobber & Poo!

The joy of Danes!

### Slobber

The Great Dane is generally a dry mouthed dog except generally after drinking. They may also salivate when stressed or when they see food.

Not all Danes slobber; typically the ones with more flew (lip) are the droolers.

If you have a slobbery Dane you may find having a slobber towel in the living room / kitchen a good idea so you can wipe the dog's mouth after drinking.

When Danes shake their heads they will send drool flying if they recently had a drink etc, which can be quite shocking for your visitors not used to having slobber on their nice clothes!

You will be wiping your walls and ceilings down on a regular basis to clear them of dried slobber! It can be quite amazing how high up slobber can reach!

Windows are not safe either; they will usually be coated in a thick coat of slime if not washed down regularly if the windows are the ones your Danes like to look out of.

### Poo

A Great Dane is a large dog so as you can imagine what goes in must come out! A lot of new Great Dane owners are often shocked by the size – it is a 2 hander job if you're using a standard size poo bag!

Diet can contribute to poo size; lower quality food can create a larger output!

Digestion can be a problem in some Great Danes, so if the poo is always on the soft side, speak to your Vet. A diet change and or / dietary supplement may assist.



## Vehicles suitable for Great Danes

Your sports car dream may stay a dream!

Although Great Danes can be quite compact dogs when they want you'll need to consider if your vehicle is suitable for a Great Dane.

Many Great Danes do not 'comfortably' fit on the back seat. They'll generally need a wider area where they can curl up or spread out, in saying this there are plenty back seat Great Danes around!

People Movers, 4WDs & Station Wagons are popular choices for Great Dane owners.

It's not unusual to see Great Dane owners remove the back seats from their vehicles to fit in their Great Danes!

### **On the back of the Ute?**

Travelling on the back of a Ute can be dangerous for Giant Breeds, as their high centre of gravity means they are easily thrown off balance which really doesn't make them a suitable Ute dog.

If you do decide to put your Dane on the back of a Ute, ensure the dog is tethered correctly. There are systems that can tether the dog from both sides and keep the dog in the middle of the tray.

### **Travel Harness / Strapped In / Cargo Barriers / Crate**

Dogs can become dangerous flying objects in car accidents so make sure your Great Dane is secure in your vehicle.

### **Hair on the Ceiling & Slobber on Windows**

With a Great Dane travelling in your car you will get their hair on the ceiling of the car, plus slobber all over the windows!





## Great Dane Beds

They can be a costly affair!

Great Danes need good quality bedding that cushions their weight / joints and prevents them from getting calluses on weight-bearing areas such as their elbows.

Great Dane bedding is not cheap! You'll be looking at least \$100.00 for a good quality Great Dane bed. One of the leading Giant sized beds is closer to \$200.00.

Many Great Dane owners use single mattresses for their Great Danes. This can be a cost effective choice!

Although you may be tempted to not spend the money you may find that better quality and longevity comes with a higher price tag so will be more cost effective in the long term.

[www.dogbedsgalore.com.au](http://www.dogbedsgalore.com.au) and [www.ebay.com.au](http://www.ebay.com.au) are good places to start your research.

Snooza [Futons](#) are a good product in all seasons and can be good beds for the ones you just scatter around the house, they warm in Winter and cool in Summer.

Snooza also have one of the biggest beds on the market called the [D1000](#) which many Great Dane owners use as it has a tough canvas cover and is a good size.

If you purchase this bed you'll want to put a quilt / blankets on it to lessen the noise from the canvas cover when it is new and to add extra comfort.



## A Safe place for your Great Dane Puppy / Adult

### **Dog Runs / Pens**

Great Dane puppies are very fragile whilst they are growing, so if you have other dogs you'll need to ensure your puppy is kept safe. This generally means separating the puppy from the other dog/s when you are not there to supervise.

Dog Runs can be made or purchased. If you purchase a Dog Run it may cost you anywhere from \$600.00 – \$2,000.00 depending on the size and quality. eBay is a great place to start your search.

Even if you do not have any other dogs, a dog run is a place you can put your puppy when you're not home that you know they'll be safe in.

A Dog Run should have a shed portion attached where the dog can get shelter and go to bed. The shelter should be placed in the shade, if no shade is available then you'll need to make some with shade sails etc.

If your dog is a digger you'll need to keep this in mind, you may need to put your dog run on concrete rather than grass / gravel.

If your dog is an escape artist you may need to put a roof on it.



## De-sexing your Great Dane

There are many schools of thought on this topic.

One of the most balanced views we've come across is by Dr Becker and you can watch her video here: <http://youtu.be/enPCZA1WFKY>

If you are not a registered breeder or are not going to put your Great Dane in the show ring, you may choose to de-sex your dog so you do not have to worry about unplanned matings, associated health and aggression problems.

There are a number of dogs across all breeds, usually males that **do not handle their hormones well**. They may become more aggressive when they reach sexual maturity, they may become pushier and they may suffer anxiety due to simply not being able to handle their hormones.

They are effectively teenagers with hormones surging through them which you may very well remember can be confusing and frustrating!

Many dogs **handle their hormones just fine** and you may not experience any problems what so ever.

Many Great Dane breeders prefer Great Danes are not de-sexed until they are physically mature. Some Great Dane breeders believe that the dogs hormones are necessary for the dog to fully mature physically.

However, Great Danes typically do not physically mature until 3-4 years of age; this may just be too long to wait for some Great Dane owners.

A number of Great Dane breeders agree that 9-12 months of age is a reasonable age to de-sex a Great Dane.

In saying this, if you are having a lot of problems with your Great Dane who is having difficulties handling their hormones or you simply do not want to deal with sexual maturity, then de-sexing before 12 months may be the most beneficial thing for all involved – ideally you'll speak to your breeder and Vet to discuss the pros and cons of this.

### **De-sexing is not a cure to learned behavioural problems.**

Some breeders believe that if you de-sex a male Great Dane prior to sexual maturity they will look more like a female Great Dane. Others believe that isn't factual and that the dog was going to look like that anyway given there are many different styles of Danes.

The average pet owner is not fussed with the finer details of what their Great Dane looks like; they are more concerned with the temperament of their dogs.

Turn to Google, your Vet and your Breeder to find out what the latest research says about de-sexing as there are pros and cons to consider.

### Why can entire (undesexed) dogs fight?

Undesexed dogs generally fight for one main reason.....the right to reproduce.

Some entire bitches cannot tolerate other entire Bitches at any time; other entire bitches will only not tolerate other entire bitches when they are in heat / season.

Some are perfectly fine.

It is a similar case with entire males, however they seem to be known for being more toey, for example, they can become reactive just seeing other males.

Some don't have a care in the world.

Many agree that bitches fight worse than dogs (male dogs) and that bitches have been known to kill other bitches.

It is recommended that if you are going to keep undesexed dogs of the same sex that you have them separated when you cannot supervise and be prepared for the fact that they may not even be able to be around each other when you are home.

Some breeders have gone many years having their dogs out together with no problems and then one day out of the blue a massive fight breaks out that can be difficult to break up and can have devastating results such as serious injuries that could be permanent, or even death.



## Teething

It can a difficult time for the puppy & the owner

### Teething Schedule for Permanent Teeth (Adult Teeth)

<b>Incisors:</b>	<b>3 to 5 months</b>
<b>Canines:</b>	<b>4 to 6 months</b>
<b>Premolars:</b>	<b>4 to 6 months</b>
<b>Molars:</b>	<b>5 to 7 months</b>

Puppies start to get their adult teeth at about three to five months of age. This teething stage, during which adult teeth replace the deciduous or baby teeth, usually lasts about two to three months.

Just like human babies, puppies may have sore mouths and drooling during the teething period. If your puppy has a really sore mouth, it can contribute to going off their feed but usually not enough to affect their weight or growth.

Don't allow people to pat your puppy's head hard during teething as it can really hurt, puppies can suffer from headaches during teething so patting puppy on the head during these times can be quite painful.

Make sure you give your puppy suitable chew toys during teething periods. Frozen treats can really help soothe their gums. Destruction of house hold items can increase at this time, so make sure you watch your puppy and provide appropriate toys.

**Puppy's ears can do some very weird things during teething!** If your puppy is a show dog you may need to tape your puppy's ears, you'll need to ask your breeder how to do this.

Most of the time the ears will come right but sometimes they'll look like the Flying Nun's hat if you don't tape their ears....it really depends on how much you care about how their ears look.



## Allergies & Skin Disorders

Is your dog itchy?

Vets are seeing more and more allergic dogs. There are many theories as to why this is occurring such as:

More chemicals in our environments; more stress, defective skin barriers, preservatives & additives in commercial diets, immune issues & thyroid issues etc.

Great Danes as a breed are considered to be an 'affected breed' by some Dermatologists, therefore it would be recommended that you avoid purchasing a puppy from parents with allergies and / or pink/red skin to avoid any genetic pre-disposition.

If your Great Dane starts to show symptoms of allergies, please speak to your Vet. If your Vet and yourself are unable to get a handle on the Allergies within a couple of months it is recommended that you ask your Vet for a referral to a Dermatologist – the sooner you see a Dermatologist the sooner you can address the problem.

If your Great Dane is from a breeder be sure to let them know. They may be familiar with the condition and be able to give you some advice. You would also want to let your breeder know in-case there is a possibility of it being a genetic condition.

A common treatment for allergies is Cortisone. Long term treatment with Cortisone can lead to a number of different side effects depending on the dosage rate such as Cushings Syndrome, thinning of skin, liver problems, weight gain, predisposition to infections, diabetes, hair loss, lethargy and increased thirst & hunger.

If your Vet and Dermatologist are not able to control your dog's allergic reaction with other treatments / management systems you may end up turning towards Cortisone to provide the dog with quality of life. Be sure to speak to your Vet / Dermatologist about the effects of different dosage rates.

There are many dogs that have lived their entire lives on Cortisone without any major issues; the dosage rate is what is the deciding factor in a number of cases.

As an alternative to Cortisone there is another product called Atopica. Atopica still has side effects however is safer to use on a long term basis. Unfortunately it is a very expensive drug and may be financially out of reach for many Great Dane owners.

Anti-histamines may also assist, although it is important to note that they work differently in dogs than they do in humans. The main side-effect from anti-histamines is drowsiness. This is uncommon, and can be remedied by decreasing the dose. Anti-histamines work better with evening

primrose oil than alone. Some anti-histamines to try include: Phenergan, Periactin, Polaramine & Teldane. Obtain dosage rate from your Vet.

Hydro Therapy is the most under-utilised treatment; this is where you bath/rinse the dog as much as daily if that is what helps the dog. Using a product like Human QV Shampoo and finishing with dabbing on QV Oil can also assist some dogs.

## Testing

Once the allergy diagnosis has been made, there are a few options to determine what they are reacting to. Your Dermatologist will choose an option that is best suited.

- 1) **Blood test**, there 2 types:  
SPOT which has no Cortisone withholding period, although the food allergy results are thought to be unreliable by Dermatologists.  
  
HESKA which has a Cortisone withholding period. The HESKA is more expensive and is said to be on par with results from Intra Dermal testing.
- 2) **Saliva test**  
Only available through Hemopet in America <http://nutriscan.org/> however you can order the test and send it back to them as it is a mouth swab.
- 3) **Intra Dermal**  
Dog must not be on Cortisone at the time, there is also a withholding period.
- 4) **Elimination food diet**

### Desensitising Injections

After having the SPOT / HESKA or Intra-Dermal testings, the Lab can prepare Desensitising injections for your dog if required. The results are varied

### Elimination Diet

You will speak with your Vet / Dermatologist for your prescribed diet. You will find it unproductive and money wasting to switch to different types of kibbles in a hope of making your dogs condition better as there are too many variables of ingredients in Kibbles to know which one is causing a problem.

Food allergies are rare. Food intolerances are more common and can have results such as vomiting & digestive issues.

An Elimination diet consists of feeding your dog a protein it has never had before such as Kangaroo, Goat, Horse etc. You feed this generally with potato for a 6 week period and you must not feed any other product/protein for treats etc. After 6 weeks under the guidance of your dogs health professional you will start to add other proteins/foods to the diet.

## Suggested products for irritated skin



### Micro-TEK Pet Shampoo

Provides leave on protection which continues to work for over 24 hours. Promotes healthy skin and coat while adding protein to strengthen damaged areas. This formula offers leave on protection. Will not burn or hurt open wounds. Non-steroidal. Environmentally friendly. **NON-TOXIC**. For best results, use with Micro-Tek Medicated Spray.

Contains EQyss's trademarked formula developed from NASA research on the decontamination of astronauts. Combines ingredients to create the healthiest environment for healing. Use with Micro-Tek Spray. Stops odour.

<http://www.eqyssaustralia.com.au/products/EQyss-Micro%252dtek-Shampoo-.html>



### Micro-Tek Spray

SOOTHES ON CONTACT

Rated #1 in horse journal test

Micro-Tek Spray – A fast acting, spray that soothes irritated skin on contact, and continues to work over a 24 hour period. It promotes a healthy skin and coat and strengthens damaged areas. Leave on protection.

<http://www.eqyssaustralia.com.au/products/EQyss-Micro%252dTek-Spray-.html>



Animal Naturals True Colors Shampoo is the first non-prescription dog shampoo designed to fight inflammation, plus produce new levels of shine and health.

Ultra thick, hair-hugging lather that is so gentle True Colors Shampoo can be used daily. Use with K9 Show Stopper supplement for the ultimate in coat and skin health

<http://animalnaturals.com.au>





## Plants that can cause irritation to dogs



Bolivian Jew Turtle Vine



Commelina-Cyanea



Itch Plant



Moses in a Boat Rhoeo



Purple Heart



Scurvy Weed

## The Biggest Culprits of Contact Itchies!

Wandering Jew / Dew, this weed comes in a number of different varieties, it's hard to kill!



## Buffalo grasses that irritate skin



These microscopic photos of Buffalo Grass reveal the barbs which caused the old style Buffalo grasses to be both scratchy and irritating to the skin. Equally as amazing is the clear PROOF that these photos provide as to why the new Soft Leaf Buffalo grasses are indeed so soft to touch, walk on and play on.

**Sapphire** Near Leaf Tip



**Palmetto** Near Leaf Tip



**Sapphire** 1cm From Leaf Tip



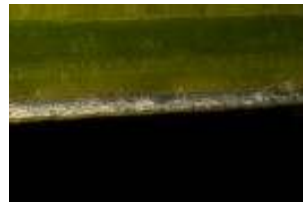
**Palmetto** 1cm From Leaf Tip



**Sapphire** Down The Leaf



**Palmetto** Down The Leaf



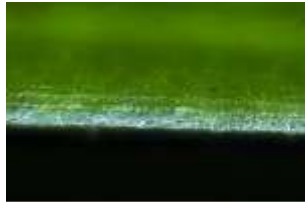
**Matilda** Near Leaf Tip



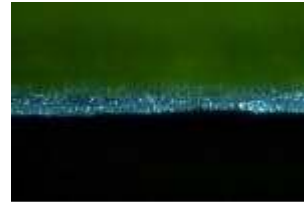
**Sir Walter** Near Leaf Tip



**Matilda** Down The Leaf



**Sir Walter** Down The Leaf



**Old Sydney** Near Leaf Tip



**Old Sydney** Down The Leaf



### **Why is Buffalo Grass Scratchy?**

Buffalo grass has been in use as a home lawn for a very long time, and has always been known in the past for its scratchy feel which irritated kids of all ages.

**So the question remains, what is it about original Buffalo grass that makes it scratchy?** By looking at these microscopic photos, we can see the leaf of all Buffalo grasses have an abundance of tiny barbs which are invisible to the naked eye.

### **About Soft Buffalo**

When Buffalo is regularly mowed, even these very soft and mild linear barbs are totally removed from the leaf tip when the grass is cut. After mowing, true soft Buffalo grasses will have no barbs left on the leaf. However, those same highly irritating saw-tooth barbs on Old Sydney still remain – even after mowing, because the barbs continue to grow down the length of the leaf blade.

*Old Sydney buffalo grass is the name used to describe the old style scratchy and irritating Original Buffalo grasses which were widely used throughout Australia prior to the introduction of new quality soft leaf varieties such as Palmetto.*

### **Proven to be true soft leaf Buffalo grass types:**

Palmetto – Sapphire – Sir Walter – Matilda

### **Proven to be scratchy and irritating Buffalo grass types:**

Original Sydney Buffalo



A common household chemical that is often overlooked is No-Vac Carpet Sprays:



### Management Options for itchy and inflamed skin...

- 1) Look at what your dog is being fed – could you swap to a diet with higher quality ingredients with less fillers. Kangaroo is a low allergen meat however is lean so you will need to feed more of it.
- 2) Medicated Washes such as Malaseb can help although you should speak to your vet about the frequency in which you should use them as they are very drying to the skin.
- 3) Re-asses what chemicals you are using in your house which your dog could be coming into contact with.
- 4) Even if you don't see Fleas on your dog, all it takes is 1 Flea to bite your dog to cause a flare up so ensure your dog is on an effective and regular flea preventative treatment.
- 5) Use cotton sheets/blankets over your dogs bedding which is usually synthetic fabrics that could cause your dog to get itchy.
- 6) Start your dog on Evening Primrose Oil capsules (1 capsule per 10 kilos of weight).
- 7) Start your dog on Omega oils such as Fish Oil (1 Capsule per 10 kilos of weight) or a canine specific product called Megaderm – search online for the best prices. When you give Fish Oil you need to check if it has Vit E included, if not give Vit E capsule every 2<sup>nd</sup> day.
- 8) Apple Cider Vinegar (Organic) – 1 tablespoon in each meal.
- 9) Place equal parts of Apple Cider Vinegar (Organic) and Water in a spray bottle and spray on effected areas.
- 10) Make up a pot of Calendula Tea, allow to cool and sponge on dog.
- 11) Put dog on Pro-Biotics daily.



## Managing your Great Dane to avoid accidents and injury

They can be a fragile breed especially when growing.

### Floor Boards / Tiles / Slippery Floors

You will need to take care that your Puppy and Adult Great Danes do not slip regularly on Slippery floors.

The action of slipping can injure the dog, it may end up with a pinched nerve or put its back out or even tear muscles.

Dogs don't like to express their pain due to instinct so you may not know your dog is injured or has its' back out unless it's a noticeable injury.

With light-moderate pressure, press your fingers down your dogs back next to its spine. Your dog may have muscle flinches – this is generally showing you your dog's back maybe out / muscle is hooked on the vertebrae / muscle injury and you may need to see a Doggy Chiro / Muscle Manipulator.

It is normal to see flinches in one or two places including their necks, however if it's a bad one or left too long you may find it will be very difficult to correct.

To find a Doggy Chiro / Muscle Manipulator you can contact your Vets and / or Greyhound Breeders / Race Tracks and they should be able to guide you.

You can also ask for recommendations on online communities such as:

[www.dolforums.com.au](http://www.dolforums.com.au)

Depending on the surface of your floors there are products you can put on them that can make the floor less slippery. There are also products such as sprays and waxes you can put on the dog's pads to prevent them from slipping.



## Choosing a Vet

Not all Vets are familiar with Great Danes.

**Not all Vets are familiar with working with giant breeds such as Great Danes.**

Vets not used to this breed may give incorrect advice in regards to diet and supplementation.

For example, some Vets recommend that Calcium supplements should be given to Great Dane puppies, however this can create growth abnormalities; they may also recommend the type of food they stock in their clinic even though it does not have the suitable ratios for the breed.

If in doubt, contact your breeder and / or do some research. If you get really stuck and you don't know who to ask you can contact your State's Great Dane Club.

[www.dogzonline.com.au/breeds/community/great-dane.asp](http://www.dogzonline.com.au/breeds/community/great-dane.asp)

### **Bloat/Torsion & your Vet**

Your Vet needs to understand the critical importance of dealing with Bloat / Torsion immediately, it's not something you stay at home and watch or sit in a Vet clinic waiting room with, waiting to be seen.

Ask your Vet on their emergency procedures relating to suspected Bloat/Torsion.

### **Emergency Vets**

Be sure to know where your Emergency Vet is for after hours treatment.



## Visits to the Vet

Making it a positive experience for your dog...and Vet!

*Written by Shannon Haynes, Vet Nurse & Great Dane Owner, Pennant Hills Vet Clinic, Sydney.*

At some point in your Dane's life, they are going to require a visit to their Vet. For some, this may be quite a daunting experience, being prodded and probed by a stranger.

There are many things you can do at home, however, to make this experience as relaxed as possible.

Firstly, let's look at the types of things that are likely to happen during your consultation. Your Vet will want to give your Great Dane a thorough examination which includes:

- Examining inside their mouths
- Looking down into the ear canals
- Examining the eyes
- Listening to their hearts and lungs
- Taking their temperature
- Feeling joints
- and more...

These are all things you can do at home with your Great Dane to get them used to being handled in such a way. Remember your Vet is going to need to get very close to your Dane's head to do many of these things, so it's important your Dane is calm and relaxed.

Taking a favourite treat or toy with you to your appointment can also help to make the experience a happy one.

These can help take the focus off that sharp needle and are also great to reward after standing still for the examination. Don't forget to ask your Vet to give praise too!



### **What about Vaccinations? Are they necessary?**

Absolutely! Vaccinating your puppy / adult is incredibly important as it will protect them from deadly diseases like Parvovirus.

There are several diseases you can chose to vaccinate your Great Dane against, but the most important ones are Canine Distemper, Hepatitis and Parvovirus.

These viruses can be deadly. Kennel Cough is another you can vaccinate against and your Dane will likely require this for boarding kennels and some training clubs. For the following information, we are referring to the Core Vaccine, also known as a C3, which covers Distemper, Hepatitis and Parvovirus.

Puppies generally require a series of vaccines in order to gain immunity. This is because pups are born with some immunity from their mums, known as maternal antibodies. These maternal antibodies not only help to protect the pup from disease, but they'll also fight the vaccine and make it not work.

The maternal antibodies will eventually disappear, but the age at which this happens can vary. For some pups, these antibodies will be gone at around the 6-8wk mark.

For most puppies, they have gone around the 12wk mark but some can last until the pup is 16wks. This is why we give puppies a series of vaccines, because it's important to try and 'catch' them at a time when the maternal antibodies are gone, without leaving too much time for them to be vulnerable to disease.

There are some newer vaccines which allow your pup to finish its regime earlier than 12wks. Your Vet and breeder will help you determine the best protocol for your pup, taking into consideration his or her age and the area you live.

**Adult Danes** with an unknown vaccination history do not require a series of C3 vaccines like puppies do. One shot is generally sufficient to gain immunity.

Following their first adult vaccine, the duration between subsequent vaccines can vary. Newer research has shown that the vaccines once given annually (C3), actually have a duration of immunity of at least 3 years and possibly even longer.

There are now C3 vaccines available with a 3 yearly registration which means your Vet can sign a certificate stating they have coverage for 3 years from the date it was given.

More and more Vets are also offering Titer Testing, which is a simple blood test which can test the level of antibodies your dog has to diseases, which will let you know whether or not they require vaccination.



## Great Danes & Stairs

Care needs to be taken.

You will probably hear along your travels that Great Danes should be kept off stairs. Many people wonder why this is and the most common answer you'll get is that it is not good for growing puppies to be placing so much pressure on their joints.

Some breeders are concerned that Hip & Elbow Dysplasia may occur as well in Dane puppies that overdo stairs.

There is a very real danger in any dog of any breed going up stairs that have gaps between the run or the dog can slip and their leg/s can go through the gaps causing them to get stuck and then panic, in turn causing great injury.

There have been reports in Australia of Great Danes falling going up stairs and then getting their head stuck between the runs.

If you have stairs and a Great Dane it is recommended that you build a ramp over the top of the stairs or block the stairs off.

Some Danes are great with stairs, they go up and down them slowly and carefully, whereas other Danes do it at a million miles an hour and can jump off them....doing things at a million miles an hour is where accidents happen as well.

The general rule of thumb is keeping your Great Dane puppies off stairs and making sure your adult Danes go up and down carefully.

If you have multiple dogs, this makes stairs even more dangerous as they run and push past each other on them.

### **Something to keep in mind**

If you don't have stairs at your home, it is recommended you find some to teach your Dane how to go up and down them as there is nothing worse than a 60+ kilo dog not knowing how to go up and down stairs when they need to in the future.



## The Online Great Dane Community

A Great Place to learn, research and network

There are a number of online communities that you can join to learn, research and network with other Australian Great Dane owners, here are the two main ones.

### **Danes Downunder**

[www.facebook.com/groups/ozziedanes](http://www.facebook.com/groups/ozziedanes)

### **Aussie Danes**

[www.facebook.com/groups/aussiedanes](http://www.facebook.com/groups/aussiedanes)