

# Information for owners



Certain dog breeds have exaggerated physical features which compromise their welfare. These dogs have special needs and require specific veterinary care to make them more comfortable. They include Pugs, French Bulldogs, English Bulldogs, Dachshunds and Shar Peis.

People who purchase dogs with exaggerated features are often unaware of the welfare problems associated with these breeds.

Early intervention is very important. You should consult your vet as soon as possible when the dog is a young puppy, and continue to do so throughout the dog's life. It's important to be aware that there are associated costs with owning these types of dogs, as a result of their special needs.

When you visit your vet for your puppy's vaccinations your vet will discuss treatments that may be required to minimise any discomfort your puppy is experiencing and to prevent future problems.

Dogs with short muzzles such as Pugs and Bulldogs often have severe difficulties breathing, sleeping, exercising and coping with warm weather. Vets recommend these dogs should be assessed early and if required, have corrective upper airway surgery at the same time they are desexed. By correcting these

primary abnormalities at 6 to 12 months of age you can avoid more severe problems, making your dog more comfortable in the long term and potentially increasing its life span.

Other common problems and treatments that you may need to discuss with your vet if you have a dog with exaggerated physical features include:

- ♥ **Intervertebral disc disease** is common in breeds such as the Dachshund, Corgi and Bassett Hound due to their short limbs and associated cartilage-development defects. They are at an increased risk of disc herniation, and associated paralysis.
- ♥ **Brachycephalic ocular syndrome** is a combination of disorders including protrusion of the eyeball, inability to close the eyelids and abnormally large eyelid openings. This is a direct result of selection for bulging, large eyes and excessive facial skin folds and is typically present in Pugs. Medical and surgical correction is commonly required.
- ♥ **Skin fold dermatitis** can occur on the face, body and legs of breeds selected for excessive skin wrinkle, such as the Shar Pei and Pugs (tail). The condition requires ongoing medical management and in many cases, surgical removal of excessive skin.

**Some breeds need more than unconditional love.**

Your click can help stop the suffering, [loveisblind.org.au](http://loveisblind.org.au)



**Love is Blind** is a joint initiative of the Australian Veterinary Association and RSPCA Australia. We're raising awareness of the animal welfare problems caused by exaggerated physical features and how these problems can be prevented.

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