



Vaccine Guide and Information for Dogs

Why does my dog need vaccines?

Vaccines help protect against disease by training the body's immune system to recognize and fight an infection. Without vaccination, many dogs would become seriously ill or die from preventable diseases. Some diseases can be fully prevented with vaccines. Vaccines also protect people from diseases that could be transmitted by dogs.

Why does my puppy need so many vaccine boosters?

Puppies receive some disease protection through their mother's milk in the form of "maternal antibodies". These slowly go away over the first five months of the puppy's life, but exactly when they stop working varies between individual dogs. The goal of vaccinating a puppy every month is to make sure they get a vaccine as soon as possible after these antibodies from their mother go away to minimize the amount of time that they are susceptible to disease.

How often does my adult dog need vaccine boosters?

This depends on your dog's age, previous vaccine history, health status, and lifestyle. Boosters are generally given a year after the puppy series is completed, and then every 3 years after that. If there is a gap in your dog's vaccination history, your veterinarian may recommend additional boosters.

What are the risks of vaccination?

It is common for pets to experience mild side effects after receiving a vaccine. These symptoms are considered normal since they mean the vaccine is working - your pet's immune system is being activated. These symptoms generally begin within a few hours of the vaccine and last for 1-2 days.

- Sometimes sensitivity and mild swelling at the vaccination site
- Sleepy or a bit lethargic for the day
- Decreased appetite sometimes, add some treats to their food today

Vaccine Reaction

Within 12-24 hours of the vaccine, normally within minutes to hours; Symptoms could include facial swelling, vomiting, diarrhea and collapse. If this occurs, splitting the vaccines (14 days apart often already recommended for smaller breed dogs) and premedicating with Benadryl will prevent this from happening; your Veterinarian will note this on your pet's file.

Which vaccines does my dog need?

Rabies Vaccine

Rabies is a fatal neurological disease with no treatment that can be spread from animals to people through contaminated saliva via a bite from an infected animal. Usually wild animals such as a raccoons, bats, or skunks here in Ontario.

Rabies is a "core" vaccine for all dogs. All dogs living in Ontario are required by law to be vaccinated for rabies. Puppies can be vaccinated for rabies as early as 12 weeks of age. The first adult booster is given 1 year after that. If your dog stays current on the rabies vaccination, boosters can be performed every 3 years. Vaccination Titers do not hold up in court if any implication with your dog.



DAPP (Distemper/Adenovirus/Parvovirus/Parainfluenza)

The DAPP vaccine (also called DHPP) is a combination vaccine that protects against four different viruses – distemper, adenovirus, parvovirus, and parainfluenza. Parvovirus is the one of the most important components of this vaccine. Parvovirus is a very contagious and often fatal. The virus causes a severe protein losing enteropathy (bloody vomit and diarrhea, lethargy, inappetance) and young dogs who may have missed a vaccine or has a lowered immune system. against this disease. Distemper is another serious virus that this vaccine protects against. Distemper is often fatal in dogs. The vaccine for distemper is very effective and an adult dog who has been vaccinated is very well protected against this disease.

DAPP is considered a "core" vaccine for dogs. Puppies can be vaccinated as young as 8 weeks of age. They then receive boosters every 4 weeks until 16 weeks (4 months) of age. The first adult booster is given 1 year after that, and then every 3 years.

Leptospirosis

This vaccine protects against leptospirosis, which is a bacterial infection that dogs can pick up via contact with urine contaminated water/wet ground from certain wildlife. Leptospirosis is a serious & often fatal disease that causes multiorgan failure. In the past it was not a concern for city dogs or small breed dogs with non-adventurous lifestyles, but with cases now increasing accross Ontario, it is now recommended that any dog who spends any time outdoors is vaccinated for the infection, even senior pets strolling in their suburban backyard. This is contagious to humans via your pets urine as well if they have it! *Wildlife include:Rats, Raccoons, Skunks, Opossums* The leptospirosis vaccine can be given on its own or as a combination vaccine with the DHPP vaccine. The leptospirosis vaccine is usually given initially at 12 weeks old and boosted in one month. After that the vaccine becomes annual like kennel cough. If there are missed vaccines of any lifestyle vaccinations annually, your veterinarian will require a booster in 3-4 weeks like it was the initial, and then annual thereafter.

Kennel Cough (*Bordetella*, Canine Adenovirus-2, Parainfluenza)

The kennel cough vaccine is a combination intranasal vaccine that protects against three causes of kennel cough (two viruses and one bacteria). Kennel cough is a respiratory disease spread between dogs like the common flu between humans. On your clothes, in close proximity and on shared objects like toys or bowls. Having this vaccine does not make your dog immune but if contracted, it will be less severe and have a lessened likelihood to develop into pneumonia.

Many boarding kennels, dog daycares, or groomers require that dogs are vaccinated against kennel cough to use their facility. This is also for dogs that go to pet stores or other higher traffic pet places.

This vaccine is optional and is recommended for dogs who have a social lifestyle with other dogs or go to doggy daycare, playtime or group dog walks. This vaccine is generally given at 10 weeks old and repeated annually for protection.

Lyme

The Lyme vaccine is NOT currently the best prevention for your dog, but if you live in an endemic area, this would be great to use in conjunction with prevention. If the weather is warmer than 4 degrees Celsius at any point, ticks are active! In Canada, prevention is now used all year round depending on the lifestyle with your pet.