

Return your dog's affections with the gift of good health

The incredibly-glad-to-see-you, tail-wagging friendliness of most dogs is what makes them such delightful and beloved companions, but it also brings them into frequent contact with other animals, exposing them regularly to the risk of infectious diseases.

Almost all dogs will be exposed to a serious or even fatal infectious agent or organism (not disease) at some time in their lives. It is important to make sure that your dog's wellbeing is protected throughout its life.

Vaccination is the best protection available against infectious disease, helping assure quality of life. It is also far less costly than treating a sick animal.

Unvaccinated dogs are at high risk of contracting a serious or even fatal disease.

Make sure your dog is properly protected.



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Vaccination and your dog

> Their health and wellbeing depends on you.



Is your dog properly protected?

Vaccines recommended by vets

Veterinarians often recommend vaccinations to prevent the following infectious diseases in dogs:

Canine parvovirus

Canine parvovirus (viral diarrhoea) is a highly contagious and often fatal disease causing sudden bouts of vomiting and diarrhoea. The loose, watery stool of an infected dog contains millions of viral particles, so the disease spreads easily via the environment. The loss of fluids in puppies causes severe disease and can often be fatal.

Canine distemper

Infection with canine distemper virus (CDV) is usually severe and can result in death. Common signs are fever, respiratory disease with coughing, nervous symptoms such as muscular twitches or seizures, and gastrointestinal effects such as vomiting and diarrhoea.

Canine hepatitis

Infectious canine hepatitis (ICH) may cause a serious or even fatal disease and is caused by canine adenovirus type 1. The hepatitis virus causes a variety of symptoms including fever, signs of liver disease, inflammation, clouding of the eyes, vomiting, diarrhoea, seizures and coma.



Canine respiratory disease/canine cough

Canine cough can cause severe coughing, is highly contagious and is transmitted through coming into contact with secretions from an infected dog. Animals kept at boarding kennels, shelters, pet shops and veterinary clinics are at higher risk, as are those going to grooming shops, dog shows and dog parks.

Leptospirosis

Leptospirosis is caused by leptospira bacteria and can affect dogs of any age, damaging the kidneys, liver and other organ systems. Leptospirosis can also be transmitted to people.

How does vaccination work?

A vaccine has been specially altered so it doesn't cause disease. Instead, it stimulates your dog's immune system to produce substances called antibodies, which work against the virus or bacterium that causes the disease. Then if your dog is exposed to that organism, the antibodies destroy it and infection does not occur. The protection provided by a vaccine may gradually decline after vaccination, so regular booster vaccinations are often recommended, along with regular health checks.

Why do puppies need more than one dose?

A nursing puppy receives antibodies from its mother's milk ('maternal antibodies') that protect it from disease during the first months of life, but these antibodies may also interfere with the vaccine. Your vet will recommend the best course of vaccinations for your puppy, taking your puppy's lifestyle into account. The primary course of vaccinations normally begins in puppies at 6 - 8 weeks of age, with a series of doses given at 3 - 4 week intervals. The primary vaccination course finishing age for your puppy may be up to 16 weeks.

A word about general health care

While vaccines provide your dog with important protection against infectious organisms, other aspects of your pet's health are equally important – especially exercise, housing, nutrition and parasite control. Your veterinarian is your partner in ensuring that your dog receives the best possible preventative care. Many aspects of your dog's health depend on you. By taking your dog to your veterinarian for regular health checks and vaccinations, you will help ensure that your dog receives the optimum advice and care available.

After vaccination care

Your dog may be lethargic and off its food for a day or two after vaccination or have a slight swelling or area of tenderness at the injection site. If the response seems to be more severe, you should contact your veterinarian for advice.