

# Fact Sheet for Puppy and Dog Vaccinations



Vaccinating your puppy is one of the most important things you should do in your first few weeks as a dog owner. Regular vaccinations help puppies grow into dogs who remain free of infectious diseases, and also prevents them from passing nasty diseases on to other animals in the local area.

## When should puppies be vaccinated?

Puppies can be vaccinated around eight and ten weeks old (although they can be vaccinated as early as six weeks of age with some vaccines, please speak to the vet. We generally prefer doing the pups from 7 weeks) A second dose is then given two to four weeks later.

Your puppy will require a booster vaccination at 12 months of age and from then on, yearly. It is important to keep your dog's vaccinations up to date.

## What do vaccinations protect against?

- ❖ **CANINE DISTEMPER:** Spread by bodily secretions, e.g., saliva. Commonly spread by direct contact with an infected animal. Distemper can affect other species such as ferrets. Affects all ages of dogs and symptoms can vary from fever and depression, to coughing, vomiting and diarrhoea, discharge from eyes and mouth. Sadly, dogs with very severe symptoms often die, mildly affected dogs will recover, but some will go on to have neurological problems in later life. Symptoms can include muscle tics, difficulty walking or walking in circles and seizures which can be fatal. Other long term symptoms can be eye problems.
- ❖ **CANINE PARVOVIRUS:** Affects mainly puppies between six weeks and six months of age but can also affect older dogs which are unvaccinated or have not had regular boosters. Puppies affected at a very young age can suffer from heart problems and often die. Transmitted by contact with faeces from infected dogs this virus can survive in the environment for up to nine months. Symptoms are severe vomiting and diarrhoea, which can be extremely bloody (haemorrhagic gastroenteritis). Affected puppies often become dehydrated and lethargic. This virus also causes the white blood cell count to drop, leaving the puppy susceptible to other infections.

- ❖ **LEPTOSPIROSIS:** This is a disease caused by a bacterium and the main source of infection is via infected urine, or by contaminated water. If unvaccinated dogs swim or drink from stagnant water or canals, they are highly likely to contract Lepto especially in areas with high numbers of rats. In the UK the two major strains of lepto are carried by dogs and rats, however, it can also cause Weil's disease in humans. Lepto causes fever, lethargy, increased thirst, vomiting, bloody diarrhoea, and jaundice. In severe infections dogs develop kidney and/or liver failure and will often die. Less severely affected dogs can recover, but will carry the bacteria for months afterwards, so are an infection risk both to humans and other animals. Leptospirosis in humans can be fatal.
- ❖ **INFECTIOUS CANINE HEPATITIS:** Spread by contact with saliva, urine, faeces, blood or nasal discharge from infected dogs. Hepatitis is an infection of the liver and there are two variants of the virus. One causes a kennel cough type infection, whilst the other causes an infection of the liver (Hepatitis). Symptoms include lethargy, coughing, fever, vomiting, diarrhoea, jaundice and abdominal pain. The symptoms can be very similar to those of parvovirus.



KEEP ME VACCINATED KEEP ME SAFE

