



Vaccinating your dog

How do vaccines work?

A vaccine is a liquid containing bacteria or viruses that is used to stimulate an immune reaction. Because the immune system has memory, it will produce a quicker and stronger response to subsequent contact with the infection being vaccinated against. The bacteria or virus in the vaccine is killed or altered so that it stimulates an immune reaction, but does not cause disease. Killed vaccines are less likely to cause disease, but also produce a weaker immune response.

What vaccinations can I give my dog?

Rabies

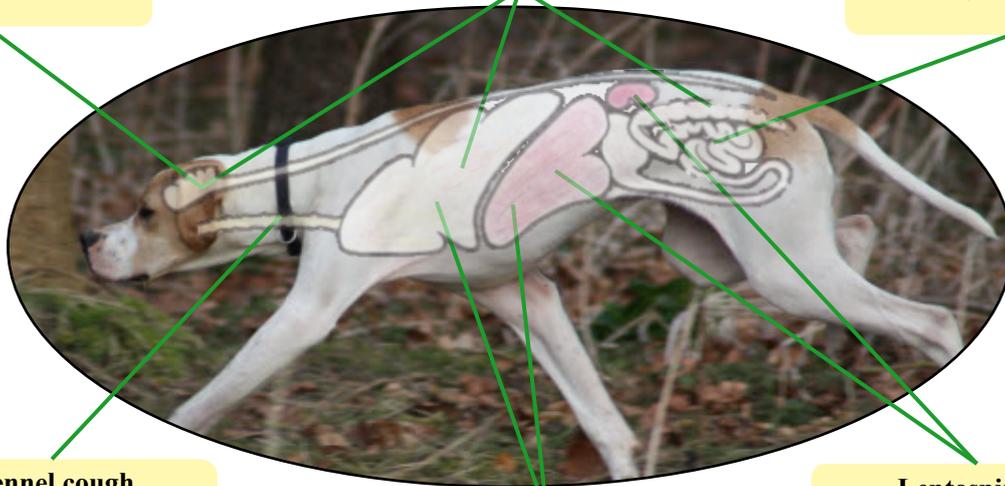
Not given routinely in the UK, However is required as an integral part of the Pet Passport Scheme. Vaccination given every three years

Distemper

Causes respiratory and gastrointestinal disease (vomiting / diarrhoea) and can also cause nervous symptoms such as fitting. Vaccination every three years

Parvo

Very contagious virus causing diarrhoea and vomiting, especially in puppies. Vaccination as a puppy and first booster then every three years.



Kennel cough

A combination of bacteria and viruses causing a cough, spread by close contact between dogs, not just in kennels. Annual vaccination, given "intranasally" (a liquid up the nose).

Infectious hepatitis

Viral infection, mainly affecting the liver, but can also involve lungs, intestines, and nervous system. Vaccination every three years.

Leptospirosis

The bacteria causing "Weil's disease" in people, spread by rats and dirty water. Causes kidney and liver disease. Annual vaccination necessary.



Core and non-core vaccinations

“Core” or essential vaccines are those vaccines that are advisable for any dog, no matter what the circumstances, due to the ease of spread and the seriousness of the diseases they protect against. Non-core vaccines are considered individually, based on age, life style, and contact with other dogs.

Core vaccines

Parvo
Distemper
Canine hepatitis
Leptosporiosis

Non-core vaccines

Kennel cough
Coronavirus
Rabies

When can I get my puppy vaccinated?

All dogs will require an initial vaccination course of two injections, given three to four weeks apart. Puppies can start the vaccinations at six weeks, with the second vaccination at ten weeks. A final parvo booster is recommended at 14-16 weeks, as some puppies fail to respond fully to the earlier vaccines.

Are yearly boosters necessary?

After the first annual booster, parvo, distemper and canine hepatitis boosters are given every four years. Due to the short immunity of the leptospirosis vaccine, it is recommended that annual boosters are given for this. The kennel cough vaccine, if given, also needs repeating annually. While vaccines can be given less frequently, this increases the risk of infection. Strict adherence to the recommended vaccination frequency is also necessary for dogs going into kennels

The booster consultations also provide an opportunity to discuss any healthcare issues you may have and to give an annual health and weight check.

What risks are there?

Side effects of dog vaccinations are uncommon. Some swelling at the site of injection may be seen, especially at the first vaccination. This is not normally painful. Sometimes puppies may be quiet for twenty four hours following vaccination.

Vaccinations are generally very safe, and provide important protection against diseases that can be expensive to treat, and are potentially fatal

