

VACCINE EDUCATION

What are vaccines, and why do they matter?

Vaccines are products designed to trigger protective immune responses and prepare the immune system to fight future infections from disease-causing agents. Vaccines stimulate the immune system's production of antibodies that identify and destroy disease-causing organisms that enter the body.

What to expect after vaccination?

It is common for pets to experience some or all of the following mild side effects after receiving a vaccine, usually starting within hours of the vaccination.

If these side effects last for more than a day or two, or cause your pet significant discomfort, it is important for you to contact your veterinarian:

- Discomfort and local swelling where the injection happened
- Mild Fever
- Decreased appetite and activity
- Sneezing, mild coughing

More serious, but less common side effects, such as allergic reaction may occur within minutes to hours after vaccination. These reactions can be life-threatening and are medical emergencies.

- Vomiting and/or Diarrhea
- Difficulty breathing
- Itchy skin breaking out in hives
- Swelling of the muzzle around face, neck or eyes
- Collapse



Vaccines provide immunity against one or several diseases that can lessen the severity or prevent certain diseases altogether.



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Experts agree that widespread use of vaccinations within the last century has prevented death and disease in millions of animals. Vaccinations protect your pet from highly contagious and deadly diseases and improve your pet's overall quality of life.

5 reasons to vaccinate your pet:

1. Vaccinations prevent many pet illnesses.
2. Vaccinations can help avoid costly treatments for diseases that can be prevented.
3. Vaccinations prevent diseases that can be passed between animals and also from animals to people.
4. Diseases prevalent in wildlife, such as rabies and distemper, can infect unvaccinated pets.
5. In many areas, local or state ordinances require certain vaccinations of household pets.

Do vaccinations ensure protection?

For most pets, vaccination is effective in preventing future disease and only rarely will a vaccinated pet have insufficient immunity to fight off the disease. It is important to follow the vaccination schedule provided by your veterinarian to reduce the possibility of a gap in protection.

How often will my pet need to be vaccinated?

Many vaccinations provide adequate immunity when administered every few years, while others require more frequent schedules to maintain an acceptable level of immunity that will continually protect your pet. Your veterinarian will determine a vaccination schedule that's appropriate for your pet.

What are antibody titers, and do they replace vaccinations?

Antibody titers are blood tests that measure the amount of antibodies in the blood. While antibody titers do not replace vaccination programs, they may help your veterinarian determine if your pet has a reasonable expectation of protection against disease.

Many factors are taken into consideration when establishing a pet's vaccination plan. Your veterinarian will tailor a program of vaccinations and preventive health care that will help your pet maintain a lifetime of infectious disease protection.

