



► Fostering is an ideal activity for people that love animals but cannot commit to having a lifelong pet in China.



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# JAR's

## Vaccinations for dogs

Lucky for us, there are vaccines to help prevent many illnesses that affect dogs. Vaccinating your dog has long been considered one of the easiest ways to help him live a long, healthy life. Not only are there different vaccines for different diseases, there are different types and combinations of vaccines.

Although vaccination has the potential to protect pets against life-threatening diseases, vaccination is not without its risks. Recently, there has been some controversy regarding the duration of protection and timing of vaccination, as well as the safety and necessity of certain vaccines. What does this all mean for your dog? Vaccination is a procedure that has risks and benefits that must be weighed for every dog relative to his lifestyle and health. Your veterinarian can determine a vaccination regime that will provide the safest and best protection for your individual dog.

Here are answers to some of your most frequently asked questions regarding vaccines:

### What Exactly Are Vaccines?

Vaccines help prepare the body's immune system to fight the invasion of disease-causing organisms. Vaccines contain antigens, which look like the disease-causing organism to the immune system but don't actually cause disease. When the vaccine is introduced to the body, the immune system is mildly stimulated. If a dog is ever exposed to the real disease, his immune system is now prepared to recognize and fight it off entirely or reduce the severity of the illness.

### How Important Are Vaccines to the Health of My Dog?

Bottom line - vaccines are very important in managing the health of your dog. That said, not every dog needs to be vaccinated against every disease. It is very important to discuss with your veterinarian a vaccination protocol that's right for your dog. Factors that should be examined include age, medical history, environment, travel habits and lifestyle. Most vets highly recommend administering core vaccines to healthy dogs.

### What Are Core Vaccines?

In 2006, the American Animal Hospital Association's Canine Task Force published a revised version of guidelines regarding canine vaccinations. The guidelines divide vaccines into three categories: core, non-core and not recommended.

- Core vaccines are considered vital to all dogs based on risk of exposure, severity of disease or transmissibility to humans. Canine parvovirus, distemper, canine hepatitis and rabies are considered core vaccines by the Task Force.

- Non-core vaccines are given depending on the dog's exposure risk. These include vaccines against Bordetella bronchiseptica, Borrelia burgdorferi and Leptospira bacteria.

Your veterinarian can determine what vaccines are best for your dog.

### What Vaccines Should My Puppy Get?

Puppies should receive a series of vaccinations with a combination vaccine product that protects against parvovirus, distemper and hepatitis. Your puppy must also be vaccinated against rabies.



## Jaiya's Animal Rescue

**Website:** <http://jargroup.doodlekit.com>  
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There are a variety of other vaccines that may or may not be appropriate for your pet.

### How Often Should My Adult Dog Be Vaccinated?

Your veterinarian can best determine a vaccination schedule for your dog. This will depend on the type of vaccine, your dog's age, medical history, environment and lifestyle. Some adult dogs might receive certain vaccines annually, while other vaccines might be given every 3 years or longer.

### When Should My Puppy Be Vaccinated?

If his mother has a healthy immune system, a puppy will most likely receive antibodies in mother's milk while nursing. Puppies should receive a series of vaccinations starting at six to eight weeks of age. A veterinarian should administer a minimum of three vaccinations at three- to four-week intervals. The final dose should be administered at 16 weeks of age.

### Are There Any Risks Associated With Vaccines?

Immunizations mildly stimulate an animal's immune system in order to create protection from specific infectious diseases. This stimulation can create mild symptoms, ranging from soreness at the injection site to fever and allergic reactions. Another less common side effect is the development of immune mediated disease following vaccination.

That said, it is important to realize that vaccines have saved countless lives, and play a vital role in the battle against canine infectious disease. Additionally, rabies vaccinations have saved

the lives of countless dogs - and many humans as well. In some developing countries, hundreds of people die each year due to rabies contracted from dog bites.

As with any medical procedure, there is a small chance of side effects. In most cases, the risks are much smaller than the risks of disease itself. But it is important to talk to your veterinarian about your dog's medical history before he is vaccinated.

### What Symptoms Should I Look For?

Most dogs show no ill effect from vaccination. Vaccine reactions may be minor and short-lived or require immediate care from a veterinarian. Clinical signs include:

- Fever
- Sluggishness
- Loss of appetite
- Facial swelling and/or hives
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Pain, swelling, redness, scabbing or hair loss around the injection site
- Lameness
- Collapse
- Difficulty breathing
- Seizures

It is best to schedule your dog's appointment so that you can monitor him for any side effects following administration of the vaccine. Similarly, if you suspect your dog is having a reaction to a vaccine, call your veterinarian immediately.



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