

VACCINES FOR YOUR DOG

Every dog is unique and Ellington Center Animal Clinic takes your dog's lifestyle into account when we recommend vaccines. Not every pet should receive every available vaccine. Talk with our veterinarians and decide which vaccines are right for your pet.

🐾 *While vaccines are a very important part of good health, routine physical exams are the BEST strategy to keep your pet healthy.*



CORE VACCINES

▣DISTEMPER: (D) A highly contagious and often fatal viral disease. It affects the respiratory and nervous systems. The vaccine doesn't affect your dog's temperament or demeanor.

▣HEPATITIS: (H) A contagious viral disease of the liver and can also cause severe kidney damage

▣PARVOVIRUS: (P) A highly contagious and often fatal disease that causes severe vomiting and bloody diarrhea leading to dehydration and death.

▣PARAINFLUENZA: (P) This virus is highly contagious and causes a dry hacking cough.

Together, these 4 vaccines are given in a single injection known as the DHPP vaccine. This is considered a core vaccine, since all dogs are at risk. Puppies and unvaccinated adult dogs are at greatest risk. Vaccinations begin at 6-8 weeks of age and continue every 3-4 weeks until the puppy is 16 weeks old. The last vaccine is considered effective for 1 year. After the first year, DHPP vaccine is boosted every 3 years.

▣RABIES: Connecticut state law requires all dogs and cats to be vaccinated against rabies. Pets are exposed to rabies by a bite from an infected animal. The rabies virus attacks the brain. There is no treatment available so the disease is always fatal. An infected animal can transmit the disease to a human. Puppies receive their first vaccine at 3 calendar months of age (this is not the same as 12 weeks old). The first vaccine is considered effective for 1-year. After the first year, rabies vaccines are boosted every three years.

NON-CORE VACCINES

▣LYME DISEASE: This bacterial disease results from a bite of an infected deer tick. Lyme disease can cause permanent and painful disabilities, including kidney failure. It can cause lameness, joint and muscle pain, fever and depression. Due to the high prevalence of Lyme disease in Connecticut, we recommend vaccinating most dogs and using a monthly tick prevention on all dogs. The Lyme vaccine requires an initial injection, and a booster injection 3-4 weeks later. After the initial series, a booster vaccine is administered annually.

▣LEPTOSPIROSIS: This bacterial infection is carried by many wild animals and transmitted to dogs through contact with infected urine. This disease causes liver and kidney disease and can be fatal. It is zoonotic, which means, like rabies, it can be transmitted from your pet to you. Vaccination consists of an initial vaccine and a booster 3-4 weeks later. After the initial series, a booster vaccine is administered annually.

▣BORDETELLA: This bacterium contributes to the disease known as kennel cough. Dogs are at risk when exposed to other dogs in kennels, grooming salons, training classes, and dog parks. Symptoms include severe coughing sometimes followed by vomiting and gagging. Some dogs may also have watery eyes and a nasal discharge. Vaccination helps reduce the severity of clinical signs, but is not 100% effective in preventing disease. The vaccine requires 10 days to be effective, so we recommend planning ahead before kenneling your dog. We use an oral (mucosal) vaccine that is given every 12-months. Some kennels require 6-month vaccinations.

▣INFLUENZA: This highly contagious respiratory infection can have a significant impact on dogs. There are two known strains of canine influenza that have been reported. There has never been a reported case of human infection. However, several high-profile incidents documented the devastating effects as the virus decimated nearly every dog in affected kennels. The influenza vaccine available (H3N8) is a precaution for only one of the strains. It is administered every 12-months.

It is not uncommon for pets to experience mild side effects after being vaccinated such as soreness or local swelling at the injection site, usually starting within hours of the vaccination. A mild fever or decreased activity and appetite may be observed. If these side effects last more than a day, or cause your pet significant discomfort, it is important that you contact us.

More serious, but less common side effects could occur. These allergic reactions involve facial swelling or hives that develop within hours after vaccination. Anaphylactic life-threatening emergencies are very uncommon but may occur.

Contact us immediately if your pet experiences:

- Swelling of the muzzle, neck, eyes or ears
- Itchy skin that may seem bumpy ("hives")

Seek immediate care if your pet experiences:

- Persistent vomiting or diarrhea
- Severe coughing or difficulty breathing
- Collapse

A small, firm swelling under the skin may develop at the site of a recent rabies vaccination. The mass will start to disappear within a couple of weeks. Always inform your veterinarian if your pet has had prior reactions to any vaccines or medications.