

BRIDGEWATER VETERINARY HOSPITAL

CANINE VACCINATION PROTOCOL

It's much easier to prevent disease than to treat it. We are fortunate enough to have modern vaccines to prevent the major illnesses of our canine friends. Below are explanations of the diseases and a basic guideline of the vaccination protocol.

DHPP:

Known as the canine distemper vaccination, it actually protects your pet against the diseases Distemper, Hepatitis, Parainfluenza and Parvo Virus. Distemper affects the respiratory and nervous systems and is often fatal. Hepatitis may lead to severe kidney and liver damage. Parainfluenza is a viral respiratory disease that can be especially severe in young puppies. Finally, Parvo Virus is a viral disease that affects the digestive tract, causing vomiting and diarrhea. These are all severe and highly contagious diseases that are airborne so it's important to vaccinate yearly, even if your pet spends most of the time indoors.

Rabies:

Caused by a virus that attacks the brain, rabies is almost always fatal. The disease can be transmitted to humans through the bite or scratch of an infected animal. After the initial vaccination, subsequent inoculations are considered protective for 3 years.

Lyme:

Lyme Disease is an infection caused by a bacteria spread primarily through the bite of an infected tick. In severe cases lameness occurs as a result of arthritic type joint pain. Treatment is generally long term, sometimes several months, so prevention is essential. After the initial vaccine series, yearly inoculation is required.

Bordetella:

Like colds in humans, the organisms that cause "canine cough" are airborne. It is caused by bacteria and Parainfluenza viruses. Your dog can catch this debilitating and persistent disease simply by being close to other dogs, such as in boarding kennels, grooming salons, dog parks or veterinary hospitals. This vaccine is given every 6 or 12 months, depending on the level of exposure.

Canine Influenza:

Similar to human influenza, canine influenza is a highly contagious viral disease that affects a dog's respiratory system and may cause serious illness. It is spread either by direct contact between dogs, via contaminated surfaces or through the air. Your pet may become infected at dog parks, dog shows, grooming facilities or boarding kennels. After the initial vaccine series, yearly inoculation is required.

Leptospirosis:

A potentially serious disease caused by the bacterium *Leptospira interrogans*. It affects dogs but can also infect domestic and wild animals as well as humans. It is usually spread through infected urine, but contaminated water or soil, reproductive secretions, and even consumption of infected tissues can also transmit the infection. The disease can cause fever, joint pain, lethargy, and even lead to kidney/liver failure which can be fatal. After initial vaccination, annual inoculation is required for dogs at sustained risk of exposure to the leptospirosis disease-causing organism.