

Vaccine Information - *What You Should Know*

Minimize vaccines where possible. Pets should not be overvaccinated. Vaccines should be used judiciously and are effective in controlling diseases in populations. Vaccines have the potential to cause adverse effects and reactions. Vaccines stimulate and stress the immune system. Overvaccination may contribute to immune system problems and other chronic systemic conditions. This is why we will not vaccinate animals that are too young, or too old, and we never vaccinate an animal that is ill.

We recommend separating vaccines - give one injection at a time, and wait 10 -14 days before the next vaccine (ie. do Rabies 3 year then do Distemper combo in 2 weeks).

The only vaccine required by law for an adult dog in Illinois is a 3-year **rabies vaccine**. The 3-year and the 1-year are poured out of the same vat, but are just labeled differently. The reason for this is that the first vaccine must be boosted before it lasts 3 years, so there has to be a vaccine labeled 1 year to make sure that boosting takes place in a puppy or for the first time a pet gets the rabies vaccine. After that, the vaccine lasts 3 years. There is even research being done to prove that the 3-year vaccine lasts 5-7 years. We'll keep you posted.

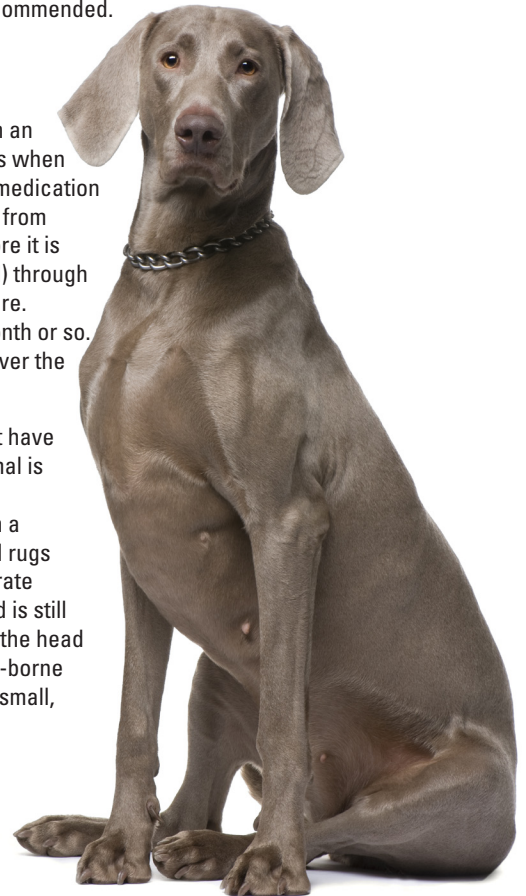
Other vaccines are given based on the age, and condition of the animal, and the possible risk of exposure.

- **Distemper combination vaccines** are given as puppy series. There can be a booster given at a year of age, or pets can have blood tests to help determine if there is still immunity to avoid having to give the vaccine again. This blood test is called a vaccine titer. The distemper combination vaccine is now considered at least a 3-year vaccine and may last longer than that. Many kennel facilities and dog parks may have their own requirements. Often, if a distemper vaccine is required, the facility will accept a blood test to prove that the animal still has immunity to the disease.
- **Annual Bordatella** is required (we recommend nasal drops best) for most boarding facilities and dog parks.
- **Leptosporosis vaccine** is an annual vaccine that we often see adverse reactions with and try to avoid if possible. The vaccine may be needed in very congested urban areas with exposure to rats and rat urine or if an animal swims where there may be diluted rat urine. Ask your veterinarian to assess your animal's risk of exposure to this disease.
- **Lyme vaccine** should only be given to animals who live in a lyme disease area, or when pets travel to locations that have a high lyme risk.
- Vaccines for **Giardia** are not necessary in this area and vaccines for **Corona virus** are not recommended.

PREVENTIVE MEDICINE

● **Heartworm** disease is carried by mosquitoes and the first stage of the disease happens when an affected mosquito bites a dog. This stage itself does not pose a health threat; the problem arises when these develop into worms that lodge in the heart (about 50-60 days after infection). Heartworm medication given monthly prevents heartworms that may have infected the dog in the previous month or so from becoming worms embedded in the heart. This is why we say that it protects for "the month before it is given." This is also why we give the medication from June (to protect for May and some of April) through December (to protect for November and some of October) during any possible mosquito exposure. There is no need to give the medication if there is no mosquito exposure during the previous month or so. If you travel where there are mosquitoes, it is important to give the heartworm medication to cover the months that there was exposure. Some breeds do better on Interceptor rather than Heartgard.

● **Flea and Tick Control.** If there is significant risk of fleas or ticks, there are several brands that have very few side effects. We tend to recommend Frontline for routine use (once a month) if an animal is exposed to ticks (usually worse in springtime) or has contact with fleas (usually worse in late summer). If an animal not on prevention gets fleas, the treatment is to bathe off the flea dirt with a good shampoo, then use Frontline once monthly for 3 months, wash bedding, vacuum floors and rugs well. Usually that is all you need to do. Ticks on an animal should be pulled off with slow deliberate tension. Do not use matches or topical chemicals. Make sure to check the tick to see if the head is still intact (they are very small). If you need help, you can save the tick for identification or to check the head at your vet. Identifying the tick can be useful to see if it is a carrier of Lyme disease or other tick-borne diseases, depending on the geographic location where it was contracted. Deer ticks are VERY small, and are different than dog ticks, that are easily found.



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Dr. Barbara Royal