

WHY YOU NEED TO VACCINATE YOUR DOG

Responsible pet care requires puppies to be taken to the vet for their initial course of vaccinations, but this cannot protect them for the rest of their lives. The immunity weakens over time and your pet can again become susceptible to disease. Should your pet become infected, treatment can require long periods in hospital and considerable expense. Not all cases *can be cured and disability or death may result. The only practical means of protection is vaccination!*



Dangerous infectious diseases that could affect your Dog

Canine Parvovirus

Canine Parvovirus is a disease that affects dogs of all ages but is more common and more serious in younger dogs. The virus attacks the intestines causing blood stained diarrhoea, uncontrollable vomiting and severe abdominal pain. Treatment is expensive and requires many days of intensive care in hospital. Dogs will often die despite intensive veterinary care.

It is not necessary to have direct contact with other dogs for the disease to be spread. Outbreaks occur regularly throughout Australia, especially in summer. (The Macarthur region of Sydney frequently experiences very high rates of Parvovirus infection and we strongly recommend the vaccination of all dogs in our area to combat these outbreaks).

Canine Distemper

Distemper is a highly contagious viral disease that can affect dogs of any age with young puppies being at highest risk.

Symptoms vary but can include fever, coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of appetite and depression. Muscle tremors, fits and paralysis usually occur later in the disease. Treatment is usually ineffective and the recovery rate very low. Dogs that do recover may have permanent brain damage.

Canine Hepatitis (Canine Adenovirus Type 2)

A viral disease which, like distemper is extremely contagious and often fatal. Dogs of any age can become infected, however severe cases are rare in dogs over 2 years of age.

Symptoms include high fever, depression, loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhoea and acute abdominal pain. In severe cases death can occur within 24 to 36 hours. Dogs that recover may develop long term liver and kidney problems and can act as carriers spreading the disease to other dogs for many months.

Infectious Bronchitis (Canine/Kennel Cough)

Infectious bronchitis (or canine/kennel cough) is a condition produced by several highly infectious diseases which can be easily spread wherever dogs congregate, such as shows, obedience schools, boarding kennels and public parks/streets. ALL DOGS ARE AT RISK, not just those that go into kennels, and this is the most common infectious disease we see in the Macarthur area. Among the infectious agents associated with infectious bronchitis is the bacterium known as Bordetella bronchiseptica (related to whooping cough), and the canine viruses parainfluenza, adenovirus and distemper. Affected dogs have a severe hacking/choking cough known to persist for several weeks. It is very distressing for pet dogs and their owners. Pneumonia can also be a consequence of infection.

Canine Coronavirus

Canine coronavirus is another contagious virus that causes depression, loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhoea especially in very young puppies. Coronavirus is a virus that is normally associated with 'puppy farms' It is likely that a puppy is already incubating the virus at the time of purchase (at which time it is too late to vaccinate them) or at a very low risk of picking up the disease when it is rehomed into the hands of responsible owners. Whilst adult dogs may be exposed to the virus they will recover without veterinary intervention. Macarthur Vet Group does not consider this an essential vaccination, for the majority of dogs.



Canine Leptospirosis

Canine Leptospirosis is not considered a risk in the Macarthur area. It is spread by the urine of rats and is usually transmitted to dogs by contaminated food and water, or by rat bites.

There is an increased risk where high rat populations exist such as rubbish dumps or green sugar cane cutting areas. Incidence can also increase under long periods of wet, when rat populations are forced to move or concentrate.

Leptospirosis is an animal disease that can be caught by humans who may then suffer a persisting "flu like" illness. Routine vaccination is only recommended for dogs in contact with rats or rat urine, so please ask your vet for advice.



New Canine Vaccination Range

- offering superior immunity and extended duration

Macarthur Veterinary Group uses a range of vaccines for dogs offering the greatest possible level of immunity against the common canine viral and bacterial diseases - distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus and infectious bronchitis (parainfluenza and bordatella).

A major advantage of these new vaccines is that we don't need to give as many vaccines every year. For adult dogs, these vaccines work on a 3-year cycle. **Some components still need to be given every year**, along with your dog's annual health check and heartworm injection. Other components of these new vaccines are only given once every 3 years. In addition, our new low-dose infectious bronchitis (canine cough) vaccine provides a superior level of immunity to the standard injections.

We believe this new range provides the best level of protection for your dog, whilst minimising the number of vaccines injected. This is in line with current international recommendations, and we have chosen a vaccine range with proven long-term results, both overseas and in Australia, to ensure the safety of your best friend.

What's more, although the new vaccines cost a bit more to get started the first year, **over 3 years you'll actually spend LESS than with the current vaccines.**

Your veterinarian will talk to you about these new vaccines when you bring your dog for your appointment, and will answer any questions you might

have. There's no need for you to do anything different until then. And if you don't want to spend the little bit extra in the first year, we still have stocks of our traditional vaccine range at the existing prices.

Some of these diseases particularly parvovirus and infectious bronchitis are very common in the Campbelltown/Macarthur region and vaccination is STRONGLY recommended for all dogs.

Is your dog protected?

When should your dog be vaccinated?

Most puppies will be temporarily protected against many diseases by antibodies received through their mother's milk. Unfortunately, these maternal antibodies may also neutralise vaccines. A puppy will respond to vaccination when these maternal antibodies decline sufficiently. See vaccination guidelines, below. At the completion of the initial course of puppy vaccinations an annual booster vaccination will provide the best protection for the life of your pet.

Vaccination Guideline

- Puppies need an initial course of 3 vaccinations:
 - First vaccination at 6-8 weeks
 - Second vaccination at 10-12 weeks
 - Third vaccination at 14-16 weeks.
- Thereafter an annual health check and booster vaccination is recommended every year to provide the best protection for the life of your pet. Your vet will advise you on which vaccine components need to be given each year.
- We recommend that you **not walk your puppy outside your own backyard until at least two (2) weeks after the 3rd/final puppy vaccination (given at 14 - 16 weeks of age)**, as full immunity is not gained until this stage. Safe socialisation is OK from 2 weeks after first vaccination (eg. Puppy Preschool, or interaction with fully vaccinated friends' dogs in a safe environment such as your own yard).

After Vaccination care

Most dogs experience no side-effects at all from vaccination. However, they may be lethargic and off their food for a day or two, or have some slight swelling or tenderness at the injection site. Access to food and water and a comfortable area to rest are usually all that is required for a quick recovery. However, if the response seems more severe, you should contact your veterinarian for advice.