

Vaccine Schedule

There is an increasing concern among some Veterinarians that dogs and cats are being vaccinated far too often. Manufacturer's vaccination schedules are still satisfactory for most primary immunizations. The number of actual vaccination injections required for primary immunization will vary depending upon the age of the pet when you first start the vaccinations. In general, two vaccinations given approximately 2 to 3 weeks apart after 12 weeks of age will be sufficient. A booster dose is recommended a year later.

The question that still remains is how often should we booster vaccines after the pet has received their primary immunizations. The answer will vary somewhat due to different reasons such as age, risk of exposure, breed, gender, health status, and previous vaccinations. We certainly do not want to under vaccinate our beloved pets, but we also do not want to cause undo stress or possible harm from over-vaccinating them either.

Some Veterinarians are recommending a booster be administered every 3 years rather than annually in adult dogs and cats.

Suggested Vaccine Schedule For Puppies

	3 weeks*	6 weeks	9 weeks	12 weeks	16 weeks	20 weeks **
Measles		✓				
Distemper		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Parvo		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Corona (Optional)						✓
Adenovirus Type 2		✓	✓	✓	✓	
Parainfluenza		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Leptospirosis				✓	✓	✓
Lyme Disease			✓	✓		✓
Kennel Cough *	✓ (or older)				✓ (or older)	
Rabies					✓	

*Injectable Kennel Cough Vaccine (i.e. Bronchicine) requires two, 2-4 weeks apart.

**An additional 20 week vaccination is recommended for muscular breeds of dogs, (i.e. Rottweilers, Dobermans.)

*Intranasal Kennel Cough Vaccines can be used in puppies 3 weeks of age or older.

Injection Areas

Intramuscular Injection (IM)

An intramuscular injection is administered into the muscle. This is usually the thigh muscle. The muscle can be grasped with one hand and the needle inserted with the other hand. The vaccine is then injected.

Subcutaneous Injection (SQ)

A subcutaneous injection is usually administered on the side of the neck. Some veterinarians recommend giving subcutaneous injections in the rear limbs (thigh area) for cats. Simply pick up the skin and insert needle. If no blood appears while pulling the plunger back, inject the vaccine.