

SHOULD I VACCINATE MY PET EVERY YEAR?

*The Dangers of Over-Vaccination in Dogs and Cats
and What You Can Do to Protect Your Pet*

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The subject of vaccination is one of most debated topics in veterinary medicine. A delicate balance exists between wanting to protect our pets from infectious, potentially fatal diseases and the real dangers of over-vaccination.

Still, many pet owners are unaware of the controversy or the danger that exists. They go to their veterinarians religiously each year, thinking that annual boosters will protect their pets from disease and that the vaccines are completely safe.

Few ask questions about the safety of annual booster vaccinations in pets, and they continue to administer vaccines until their pets are well into their senior years.

A growing number of veterinarians is questioning the safety of this practice. They point out that annual booster vaccinations overwhelm our pets' immune systems and they contend that these vaccines are unnecessary and dangerous, citing evidence that vaccine reactions are at an all-time high. They boldly claim that same vaccines that are administered to protect our pets are actually harming them.



CANINE AND FELINE VACCINE SCHEDULES

Recommendations for annual vaccination were put forth by the United States Department of Agriculture in conjunction with the drug companies more than twenty years ago.

Today most vets recommend that both puppies and kittens get their "core vaccines" at ages 6 weeks, 8 weeks, 10 weeks, 12 weeks, 14 weeks, and 16 weeks and then get boosters at one year and every year thereafter.

Indeed, at the time of this writing in 2017, many veterinarians recommend the following protocols established by the American Animal Health Association (AAHA) and the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP):

- [AAHA Canine Vaccine Recommendations for General Practice](#)
- [AAFP Feline Vaccine Recommendations for General Practice \(Table 2\)](#)



BUT ARE ANNUAL VACCINATIONS NECESSARY FOR YOUR PET?

In a word, no.

Veterinary immunologist Dr. Ronald Schultz published a research piece more than twenty years ago. He studied major vaccines in over 1000 dogs and concluded:

“Vaccines for diseases like distemper and canine parvovirus, once administered to adult animals, provide lifetime immunity” (Schultz, R., August 15, 1995, *JAVMA* , 421).

So why are our pets still receiving yearly boosters?

A BRIEF HISTORY OF VACCINATION PROTOCOL RECOMMENDATIONS

In the 1970’s dogs and cats were being vaccinated every year. This was not because the boosters were needed; it was because drug companies did not know how long the vaccinations lasted.

By the 1980’s there were 12 or 14 vaccines being delivered as combination products, and these vaccines were being delivered to pets every single year. Many vaccinated pets began to develop adverse reactions because their bodies were being overloaded by the number and frequency of the vaccines.

In 1995 Dr. Schultz became one of the first voices providing solid, scientifically-sound evidence that annual vaccination was not only unnecessary but resulted in dangers that resulted from over-vaccination.

It wasn’t until 2003 that the AAHA and AVMA (American Veterinary Medical Association) changed their vaccine guidelines. However, they only changed their recommendations from annual to every three years (a guideline that according to Dr. Richard Ford, Professor of Medicine at North Carolina State University and a member of the AAHA task force said was completely arbitrary and not based in science).

What is important to note is that these recommendations serve only as guidelines, and discretionary decisions on when vaccines are to be administered are left to individual veterinarians, the majority of whom continue to vaccinate on a yearly basis (see more on the profitability of vaccines later in this article).

KEY POINTS

- The core vaccines given to dogs and cats when they are young probably last *at least* seven years.
- They should not be given more than every three years.
- But revaccination guidelines give vets full control over when they want to vaccinate, and 60% of vets vaccinate annually.
- Giving your dog or cat a vaccine when it is already immune does not offer any additional immunity and it might actually be harmful.
- Vaccine critics believe that profits are at the root of the veterinary profession's resistance to update its protocols.



THE DANGERS OF OVER-VACCINATION

Veterinarians vaccinate pets with the same vaccine in the form of booster shots year after year.

There is a danger inherent in this practice because each vaccine triggers a firestorm of activity in an animal's immune system, and reintroducing these vaccines and triggering that firestorm can result in the erosion of the animal's immune function.

Vaccine manufacturers consistently deny the dangers of annual vaccination in our pet dogs and cats. They contend and report that there are less than 15 adverse reactions in 100,000 animals. However, a study of more than 2000 dogs and cats in the United Kingdom by Canine Health Concern showed a 1 in 10 risk.

Vaccines can cause a wide range of health problems. Disruption of the immune system has already been mentioned. However, these same annual boosters can also lead to a plethora of other problems—from minor fever to anaphylactic shock, cancer and even death.

REACTIONS AND DISEASE

It is not surprising that our pets' bodies have innate immunological mechanisms designed to defend against pathogenic exposures to the skin, nose, respiratory system, mouth, and digestive tract. These are the pathways that harmful microbes enter their bodies. These organ systems work together to identify pathogenic threats and either neutralize them or create defenses against them. This is the natural way their bodies fight potential threats.

However, most all vaccines administered by vets are done via subcutaneous injection. This means the viruses (pathogens mixed with other toxins) are administered through the skin into the

tissues which underlie it. The body's natural defense systems are circumvented, and this can trigger chronic autoimmune disorders like inflammatory bowel disease, arthritis, skin rashes and more. The vaccines also caused the animals' immune system to turn against their own tissues, resulting in diseases such as autoimmune hemolytic anemia in dogs.

In addition, delayed reactions to vaccines include thyroid disease, allergies, arthritis, tumors and seizures in both dogs and cats.

To complicate matters, inflammatory reactions under the skin to vaccines have been linked to the development of cancer.

- In 1991 the lab at the University of Pennsylvania noted a connection between increase in sarcomas and vaccinations in cats.
- The University of California at Davis found feline leukemia vaccines linked to sarcomas (1 cat in 1000 or 22,000 new cases a year).

WHAT'S IN THAT VACCINE?

Thimerosal, mercury, and aluminum-based adjuvants are still permitted in veterinary vaccines, exposing your pet to potential antigens that could abnormally stimulate his immune system, last a lifetime, and cause chronic disease.

Common additives include:

- **Thimerosal** —contains mercury, an extremely toxic heavy metal. Mercury is a powerful neurotoxin and one of the most potent poisons known to man. It impairs the function of the brain, the central nervous system, the endocrine system, the kidneys, and other organs.
- **Aluminum** —another metal used in vaccines that has been implicated in neurological ailments in humans. It is added to vaccines as an adjuvant to enhance or boost the effectiveness of shots containing killed viruses.
- **Formaldehyde** —a probable carcinogen used as a tissue fixative in some vaccines.
- **Phenol** —highly poisonous, caustic substances derived from coal tar which are used as preservatives.
- **Viruses** —microscopic infectious agents containing genetic material. They can only replicate within the tissues of living organisms.
- **Animal organ tissue** — Cell tissue derived from all manner of animals, including monkeys, rabbits, cows, sheep and pigs, are used to culture viruses contained in vaccines.

NO ADJUSTMENT IN VACCINE DOSE

Also, there is no adjustment in vaccine dose in relation to the size of a pet. Chihuahuas and cats get the same dose their much larger cousins do. So a Maltese gets the same dose of vaccine as

a Great Dane. Adverse reactions of small breeds are ten times higher than larger breeds. This suggests standard vaccine doses are too high for smaller animals.

DAMAGE TO DNA

Dr. Patricia Jordan, author of the book *Vaccinosis: Hidden in Plain Sight* and one of the leading veterinarians researching vaccine damage, has discovered evidence that vaccines cause damage at a genetic level. This damage creates a ripple effect as it is passed down to offspring of animals damaged by vaccines. Inherited vaccinosis is a plague to future generations as well.

Earlier we discussed adjuvants. This quote about vaccinations and vaccine damage (vaccinosis) by Dr. Jordan brings new meaning to the dangers of damage to DNA:

Mercury and aluminum are PROTEIN MUTATORS in their own right and DNA is PROTEIN! Related genomes will respond in RELATED FASHION so breeds that have related genomes respond to the assault in the same fashion making it LOOK like a breed or tribe thing but it is in reality a RELATED GENE DAMAGE THING...chronic diarrhea, parasitism, leaky gut, food allergies, IBD, pancreatitis, pancreatic cancer, and anal gland sacculitis are all autoimmune issues and this means induced by the vaccines.”

For more information on this topic, please see [Natural Rearing Breeders Association](#).



THE PROFITABILITY OF VACCINES

Vaccines are very profitable for both the pharmacological companies and veterinarians. Both groups would generally like to sell or administer more vaccines than challenge the need for them. Some alarming statistics related to this contention follow.

If the one-year rabies vaccination and office visit for dogs alone were removed from the normal small-practice veterinarian's schedule, it would decrease that vet's income from \$87,000 to \$25,000. Keep in mind that those figures include just dogs and don't include other vaccines. It is staggering the amount of money that vaccines alone bring into veterinary practices.

In fact, the majority of appointments at many veterinary hospitals are specifically for vaccines. James Schwarz who wrote *Trust Me, I'm Not a Veterinarian* stipulates that 63% of canine and 70% of feline vet office visits are for vaccinations.

Vets make money on vaccines, but they make even more as a consequence since animals' health deteriorates because of over-vaccination.

TITERS INSTEAD OF VACCINES

Just like humans, dogs and cats can be vaccinated early in life and protected for a lifetime. There is absolutely no need to vaccinate on a yearly basis, and doing so could actually be doing a disservice to your dog or cat.

Indeed, core vaccines could probably last for at least seven years (and possibly much longer) and should not be given more than every three years. Researchers have found no increase in disease rates among dogs who have vaccines every three years over those who have them annually.

There is a simple test to tell whether a vaccine is needed or not. This blood test is called a titer, and results from this blood test can tell whether an animal protected, thus potentially eliminating an unnecessary vaccine.

In the past these were inconvenient tests because the blood had to be drawn and then sent to a lab for testing, and the tests were expensive. But today there are in-house titer tests that cost about the same as a vaccine.

WHAT ABOUT THE RABIES VACCINE?

Rabies vaccines are required by law. Many people do not realize that the one-year and three-year vaccines are exactly the same. Please opt for the three-year vaccine, if possible.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MY PET?

Of course, always talk to your veterinarian about all these things. However, these are points worth considering as you make decisions about your pet's medical care:

1. Wellness visits should be done at least yearly at your veterinarian's office. This way your vet can check for any abnormalities. Blood tests can be run (especially for older or at-risk animals) to determine if any levels are indicative of an impending or current problem.
2. Consider doing titer tests instead of getting annual vaccinations for your pet.
3. Always ask your vet the benefits of administering a specific vaccine. Many times risks far outweigh benefits, and many vaccines have possible side-effects.
4. Indoor housecats should not be getting annual vaccines. They are not exposed to the infectious diseases these vaccines are supposed to guard against.

5. Talk to your veterinarian, voice your concerns, and work together for the welfare of your pet.

MORE VETERINARIANS QUESTION THE SAFETY OF ANNUAL VACCINES

Before closing, it is important to mention that despite the profitability of vaccines, more veterinarians are questioning the safety of vaccines and addressing the issue of over-vaccination.

Dr. John Robb has spoken extensively on the dangers of over-vaccination. Listen to him speak in this powerful video: [Dr. John Robb](#)

CONCLUSION

In 1995 the Journal of American Veterinary Medical Association concluded that “There is little scientific documentation that backs up label claims for annual administration of most vaccines.”

Dr. Will Falconer summarizes:

Suffice it to say that if your dog or cat is an adult who has had vaccinations, there is no immunologic need to continue vaccinating annually: the immunity is present from the early vaccines and will not get any better through yearly repetition ([The Dapper Dog](#)).

There is an old adage that states that we are our own best advocates when it comes to the decisions we make about our health. As pet owners, caring for and protecting our pets involves standing up and being their advocates as well.

All pet owners must take the initiative and learn about the risks involved in getting annual vaccinations for pet dogs and cats.

Drug companies and veterinarians have a huge monetary interest in the administration of vaccines, and scientific evidence supports the fact that yearly vaccination of dogs and cats is dangerous and can cause them harm.

Talk to your veterinarian and voice your concerns. Ask for proactive ways to protect your pet’s health without annual vaccines.

There are many methods of protecting animals from disease. Exploring avenues such as better nutrition to boost the immune system and natural, wholesome supplements to keep our pets healthy are just some of the ways all of us can fulfill our responsibility as caring and loving pet guardians.

For more info:

- [When It Comes to Vaccinating Your Pet, Less is More](#)
- [What Your Vet Didn't Tell You about All Those Puppy and Kitty Vaccines](#)
- [Titers: Avoiding Over-Vaccination in Dogs](#)
- [The Truth about Pet Vaccines You Won't Hear from Your Vet](#)
- [Dosage Chart](#)
- [The Dangers of Vaccine Overloading Pets \(VIDEO\)](#)
- [The Dapper Dog](#)