

Vaccination Schedules for Dogs and Puppies

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Vaccines are now being divided into two classes. 'Core' vaccines for dogs are those that should be given to every dog. 'Noncore' vaccines are recommended only for certain dogs. Whether to vaccinate with noncore vaccines depends upon a number of things including the age, breed, and health status of the dog, the potential exposure of the dog to an animal that has the disease, the type of vaccine and how common the disease is in the geographical area where the dog lives or may visit.



The AVMA Council on Biologic and Therapeutic Agents' Report on Cat and Dog Vaccines has recommended that the core vaccines for dogs include [distemper](#), [canine adenovirus-2](#) (hepatitis and respiratory disease), [canine parvovirus-2](#) and [rabies](#).

Noncore vaccines include [leptospirosis](#), [coronavirus](#), canine parainfluenza and *Bordetella bronchiseptica* (both are causes of 'kennel cough'), and *Borrelia burgdorferi* (causes [Lyme Disease](#)). Consult with your veterinarian to select the proper vaccines for your dog or puppy.

AVMA Vaccination Recommendations for Dogs

Component	Class	Efficacy	Length of Immunity	Risk/Severity of Adverse Effects	Comments
Canine Distemper	Core	High	> 1 year for modified live virus (MLV) vaccines	Low	
Measles	Noncore	High in preventing disease, but not in preventing infection	Long	Infrequent	Use in high risk environments for canine distemper in puppies 4-10 weeks of age
Parvovirus	Core	High	> 1 year	Low	
Hepatitis	Core	High	> 1 year	Low	Only use canine adenovirus-2 (CAV-2) vaccines
Rabies	Core	High	Dependent upon type of vaccine	Low to moderate	

Respiratory disease from canine adenovirus-2 (CAV-2)	Noncore	Not adequately studied	Short	Minimal	If vaccination warranted, boost annually or more frequently
Parainfluenza	Noncore	Intranasal MLV - Moderate Injectable MLV - Low	Moderate	Low	Only recommended for dogs in kennels, shelters, shows, or large colonies; If vaccination warranted, boost annually or more frequently
Bordetella	Noncore	Intranasal MLV - Moderate Injectable MLV - Low	Short	Low	For the most benefit, use intranasal vaccine 2 weeks prior to exposure
Leptospirosis	Noncore	Variable	Short	High	Up to 30% of dogs may not respond to vaccine
Coronavirus	Noncore	Low	Short	Low	Risk of exposure high in kennels, shelters, shows, breeding facilities

Lyme	Noncore	Appears to be limited to previously unexposed dogs; variable	Revaccinate annually	Moderate	
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A possible vaccination schedule for the 'average' dog is shown below.

Dog Vaccination Schedule	
Age	Vaccination
5 weeks	Parvovirus: for puppies at high risk of exposure to parvo, some veterinarians recommend vaccinating at 5 weeks. Check with your veterinarian.
6 & 9 weeks	Combination vaccine* without leptospirosis. Coronavirus: where coronavirus is a concern.
12 weeks or older	Rabies: Given by your local veterinarian (age at vaccination may vary according to local law).
12 & 15 weeks**	Combination vaccine Leptospirosis: include leptospirosis in the combination vaccine where leptospirosis is a concern, or if traveling to an area where it occurs. Coronavirus: where coronavirus is a concern. Lyme: where Lyme disease is a concern or if traveling to an area where it occurs.
Adult (boosters)§	Combination vaccine Leptospirosis: include leptospirosis in the combination vaccine where leptospirosis is a concern, or if traveling to an area where it occurs. Coronavirus: where coronavirus is a concern. Lyme: where Lyme disease is a concern or if traveling to an area where it occurs. Rabies: Given by your local veterinarian (time interval between vaccinations may vary according to local law).

*A combination vaccine, often called a 5-way vaccine, usually includes adenovirus cough and hepatitis, distemper, parainfluenza, and parvovirus. Some combination vaccines may also include leptospirosis (7-way vaccines) and/or coronavirus. The inclusion of either canine adenovirus-1 or adenovirus-2 in a vaccine will protect against both adenovirus cough and hepatitis; adenovirus-2 is highly preferred.

**Some puppies may need additional vaccinations against parvovirus after 15 weeks of age. Consult with your local veterinarian.

§ According to the American Veterinary Medical Association, dogs at low risk of disease exposure may not need to be boosted yearly for most diseases. Consult with your local veterinarian to determine the appropriate vaccination schedule for your dog. Remember, recommendations vary depending on the age, breed, and health status of the dog, the potential of the dog to be exposed to the disease, the type of vaccine, whether the dog is used for breeding, and the geographical area where the dog lives or may visit.

Bordetella and parainfluenza: For complete canine cough protection, we recommend Intra-Trac II ADT. For dogs that are shown, in field trials, or are boarded, we recommend vaccination every six months with Intra-Trac II ADT.

Researchers at the Veterinary Schools at the University of Minnesota, Colorado State University, and University of Wisconsin suggest alternating vaccinations in dogs from year to year. Instead of using multivalent vaccines (combination vaccines against more than one disease), they recommend using monovalent vaccines which only have one component, e.g., a vaccine that only contains parvovirus. So, one year your dog would be vaccinated against distemper, the next year against canine adenovirus-2, and the third year against parvovirus. Then the cycle would repeat itself. Other researchers believe we may not have enough information to recommend only vaccinating every 3 years. Manufacturers of dog vaccines have not changed their labeling which recommends annual vaccinations. Again, each dog owner must make an informed choice of when to vaccinate, and with what. Consult with your veterinarian to help you make the decision.