



Vaccinations and your puppy

Vaccination against infectious diseases is one of the most important things you can do for your new puppy to ensure a long and healthy life. As well as protecting your puppy from unpleasant or fatal diseases, bringing your puppy to the vets allows us to examine your puppy's health, including eyes, ears, coat and skin, limbs, heart and lungs and general condition.



A vaccine is a harmless form of the viruses or bacteria which cause certain diseases. The vaccine stimulates your puppy's immune system to produce antibodies against these diseases, which will then protect him/her if they encounter the real thing later in life.

The antibodies produced in response to the first vaccination only last a few weeks, so your puppy must have a second dose 2-4 weeks later. The second dose produces a much stronger and long-lasting response, giving full protection for at least 12 months.

After this primary course, an annual booster vaccination will be needed to maintain protection. We will send you a postal reminder when your puppy is due.

Your puppy is not fully protected until at least seven days after the **SECOND** dose. Until then, you should not let him meet any unvaccinated or unwell dogs, and should not allow him on the ground in public areas.

At Riverside, we use a modern vaccine that provides full protection much earlier than older products – your puppy will be safe from as young as 11 weeks old. This gains precious time for the all-important socialisation.

Puppies may occasionally be a little quiet or off-colour following vaccination. If you are concerned, please telephone your vet for advice.



What diseases do we vaccinate against?

Distemper

This viral disease is now uncommon due to widespread vaccination. Affected dogs suffer damage to the brain, lungs and bowel and rarely survive. Dogs that live may be left with permanent brain disorders and tremors.

Parvovirus

A very serious form of viral sickness and diarrhoea, with bleeding into the gut. Parvovirus is often fatal. It is still seen commonly in this area, as the virus can survive in the environment for long periods, and needs specialised disinfectants to destroy it.

Coronavirus

This enteric virus only causes mild diarrhoea by itself, but if caught in combination with Parvovirus, makes the illness much worse.

Infectious Canine Hepatitis

An uncommon infection of the liver, usually resulting in death in 2-3 days.

Leptospirosis

There are two forms of this spirochaete bacterium – one is caught from rat urine, is often fatal and can be passed to humans. It is similar to Weil's Disease. The other form is only contagious to other dogs, and causes kidney damage. This can cause kidney failure either during acute outbreaks of the disease, or a more chronic form later in life.

Parainfluenza

This virus causes a prolonged, hacking cough. It can be part of the 'Kennel Cough' complex. It can be very debilitating in very young, old or sick dogs.

What other vaccinations are available?

Kennel Cough (Bordetella)

Bordetella (a bacterial infection) is one of the most common causes of Kennel Cough- a contagious hacking cough, which can be debilitating in very young or very old dogs. Many reputable boarding kennels will ask for dogs to be vaccinated prior to their stay. The vaccine is administered as drops into the nostrils. A single dose provides 12 months protection, and must be given at least 4 days prior to going into kennels.

Rabies

The UK is free of the Rabies virus, so vaccination is not routinely required. However, if you plan to emigrate with your pet, or would like to take your dog abroad on holiday under the PETS Travel Scheme, vaccination is essential. Speak to your vet if you would like any more information.