

Country Pet Inn Required Vaccinations:

Rabies

Rabies is a virus that may affect the brain and spinal cord of all mammals, including dogs, cats and humans. Annually, rabies causes the deaths of more than 50,000 humans and millions of animals worldwide. Once symptoms appear, the disease results in fatality.

How Would My Dog Get Rabies?

Since animals who have rabies secrete large amounts of virus in their saliva, the disease is primarily passed to dogs through a bite from an infected animal. It can also be transmitted through a scratch or when infected saliva makes contact with mucous membranes or an open, fresh wound. The risk runs highest if your dog-or any pet-is exposed to wild animals. The most common carriers of the rabies virus in this country are bats, raccoons, skunks and foxes.

What Are the General Symptoms of Rabies?

Initially, a dog who's become infected may show extreme behavioral changes such as restlessness or apprehension, both of which may be compounded by aggression. Friendly dogs may become irritable, while normally excitable animals may become more docile. A dog may bite or snap at any form of stimulus, attacking other animals, humans and even inanimate objects. They may constantly lick, bite and chew at the site where they were bitten. A fever may also be present at this stage.

As the virus progresses, an infected dog may become hypersensitive to touch, light and sound. They may eat unusual things and hide in dark places. Paralysis of the throat and jaw muscles may follow, resulting in the well-known symptom of foaming at the mouth. Disorientation, incoordination and staggering may occur, caused by paralysis of the hind legs. Other classic signs of rabies include loss of appetite, weakness, seizures and sudden death.

DHLPP (Distemper, Hepatitis, Leptospirosis, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza)

The DHLPP vaccine prevents canine distemper, which is an infection caused by viruses. The infection can attack the intestinal tract, the respiratory tract and the central nervous system of the pet. The canine distemper is highly contagious and can be caught through the contact with bodily fluids such as nasal secretions. The virus may also be airborne and contracted in this way; dogs in kennels and animal shelters are more likely to catch the infection.

The canine hepatitis is an infectious disease caused by the adenovirus type 1. The virus can be transmitted through bodily fluids. The disease can be fatal and may manifest through the hepatitis blue eye, which is the formation of a cloudy-bluish pellicle on the surface of the dog's eye. Vaccination can prevent the contraction of the disease.

Leptospirosis is a condition that may affect canines and humans alike. There are several types of leptospirosis and the DHLPP vaccine will prevent the occurrence of canicola and icterohaemorrhagiae. Other types of leptospirosis may be potentially dangerous for the dog, even if he receives the DHLPP vaccine. The infection manifests through elevated fever, chronic vomiting, diarrhea and dehydration. Some canines may be allergic to the DHLPP due to the leptospirosis antibodies.

The parvovirus causes a condition that affects the gastrointestinal tract and will affect most often puppies. The virus may be deadly, especially in immunocompromised pets or puppies that don't have a fully developed immune system. The presence of the virus will cause diarrhea, vomiting and weight loss. The parvo can be transmitted through feces or direct contact with a contaminated area.

Parainfluenza is not a deadly disease, but it may cause a lot of discomfort and is a contagious condition. Parainfluenza manifests through dry coughing and breathing problems. The condition will go away without treatment. However, it's best if vaccines are administered to protect the dog.

Bordetella (a.k.a kennel cough)

Kennel cough is a highly contagious respiratory disease among dogs. As the name suggests, it is typified by inflammation of the *trachea* and bronchi. This disease is found throughout the world and is known to infect a high percentage of dogs at least once during their lifetime. It is also sometimes referred to as bordetellosis.

Symptoms

A persistent cough is the most common symptom. Sneezing and watery nasal discharge may also be present. In mild cases, dogs are often active and eating normally. In severe cases, symptoms progress and can include pneumonia, *inappetence*, fever, *lethargy* and even death. Dogs often develop clinical signs associated with kennel cough 3-4 days after exposure to a large number of other dogs (e.g., at a boarding facility or show).

Diagnosis

The diagnosis of this disease is largely based upon the type of symptoms that are present and a dog's history with regards to exposure to other dogs. You will need to give a thorough history of your dog's health and onset of clinical signs. Your veterinarian may

order some combination of blood chemistry tests, a complete blood cell count, a *urinalysis*, fecal examinations, and chest X-rays. If a dog does not respond to treatment as expected, additional testing (e.g., bacterial cultures) may be necessary to identify the microorganisms that are causing kennel cough.

Treatment

Treatment depends on the severity of the infection. If your dog is alert, active, eating well, and has only minor symptoms, your veterinarian may only prescribe general supportive care like rest and good hydration and nutrition. More severely affected dogs benefit from medications that reduce inflammation and coughing. If a bacterial infection is present, antibiotics may help shorten the course of the disease. Dogs with pneumonia often need to be hospitalized for more aggressive treatment.

Living and Management

In order to prevent the spread of this disease, dogs with kennel cough should be isolated until they are better and no longer contagious. Dogs who are at high risk for infection (e.g., those who attend shows or spend time in boarding or day care facilities) should be vaccinated against *Bordetella bronchiseptica* and canine parainfluenza virus. All dogs should be vaccinated against canine adenovirus.

Even after being vaccinated, dogs may still acquire kennel cough (although usually a less severe form than they would have otherwise). It is best to be observant and prepared.