

Vaccines:

We are an emergency facility and can not offer routine vaccinations. We do carry rabies vaccines for those who are bitten by unknown wildlife. However we believe strongly in preventative care to help protect your pet and your family from diseases.

One of our core beliefs includes giving vaccinations to help protect your pet from potentially life threatening diseases. Some vaccines are legally required by the state of Maine (rabies) while others have been chosen due to our geographic location or life style of your pet (lyme, leptospirosis, boredetella) or due to the devastating effects of the disease (parvo, distemper, parainfluenza, Adenovirus). Please speak with your regular veterinarian about vaccines for your pet but please read the following summary below.

Core Canine Vaccines For Dogs In Maine:

Rabies:

This vaccine should be given when your pet is 16 weeks of age, at one years of age, and then every 3 years. Rabies booster vaccine should be given to all animals with a bite wound of unknown origin or if contact with a rabid animal is suspected. Rabies is a fatal disease that can be passed from infected animals through a bite wound. This disease can be contagious to you and your family. This vaccine is legally required by the state of Maine and is strongly recommended except in very rare diseases where an exemption can be applied for.

Distemper/Parvo/Parainfluenza/Adenovirus (combination vaccine, DA2PP)

This vaccine is often referred to as the “distemper shot” but is a combination of 4 different viruses that can cause potentially fatal diseases. This vaccine is typically given at 8, 12 and 16 weeks of age. This vaccine is then repeated at 1 years of age and can be repeated anywhere from every 1 to 5 years.

Canine Distemper Virus:

Distemper is rarely seen in our pet population thanks to effective, routine, preventative vaccination. Distemper virus affects the respiratory, gastrointestinal and neurologic systems. Prior to the availability of vaccinations, Distemper was one of the leading causes of death in young dogs. Distemper can infect other animals such as wolves, ferrets, foxes, and weasels. This disease is NOT contagious to people.

Parvo Virus:

Parvo virus is another potentially lethal disease that is still very common in inner cities and shelter dogs. It is less common in the Hampden area but can still affect unvaccinated dogs. Parvo

virus kills cells that rapidly divide such as your white blood cells in the immune system and your gastrointestinal cells. Dogs with Parvo virus will have bloody diarrhea with sloughing of their intestinal tract as well as a very low white blood cell count and an inability to fight off other infections. Most puppies can do well with supportive care and survive but the cost and critical nature of the patients often make this disease lethal. This virus can live in the environment for a very long time and can be easily picked up at the dog park or on a hike.

Parainfluenza Virus:

Canine parainfluenza virus is a highly contagious respiratory virus and is one of the most common pathogens of infectious tracheobronchitis. This is a different virus than canine influenza. This virus is transmitted through the respiratory tract (coughing and sneezing) and can spread rapidly in kennels or shelters. The most common clinical signs include coughing, fever, nasal discharge, and lethargy/loss of appetite. Dogs that go to doggie daycare, dog parks, grooming, dog shows, or are boarded are at higher risk of exposure to this disease. Shelter dogs also have a higher risk than household pets.

Canine Adenovirus:

Canine Adenovirus causes infectious canine hepatitis (liver disease). Clinical signs can range from a slight fever, decreased white blood cell count and compromised immune system, excessive bleeding, seizures, and death. This virus can be killed by dilute bleach but can live in the environment for months and can be shed by an infected dog in their urine for up to 6 months. Long term side effects include cloudy eyes and chronic kidney disease.

Leptospirosis:

Leptospirosis is a worldwide disease that can infect both people and animals. The spirochete bacteria can be found in pools of water (puddles in cities to ponds to water accumulation under your flower pot) and is carried in the urine of animals such as rodents, raccoons, and opossums. Animals infected with this disease have the potential to shed this bacteria for several months or years! People are susceptible to all the different types of leptospirosis carried by domestic (dog) and wild animals. Clinical signs range from fever, lethargy, decreased appetite, to liver and kidney failure and death. Puppies, small children, the elderly, and immunocompromised pets and people are at a higher risk for this disease. Pets who live near water and or have a high population of wildlife are also at higher risk of contracting this disease.

Lyme disease (Borreliosis):

Lyme disease is a tickborne disease that can infect domestic animals and people. It was originally seen in Lyme Connecticut in 1975 but has slowly spread to the greater New England area and to Maine. In the United States, Lyme disease is caused by a spirochete bacteria called *Borrelia burgdorferi* and is transmitted by a tick bite. Clinical signs of the disease can range from lethargy, anorexia, fever, joint swelling, kidney failure and death. At HVC we recommend vaccinating your dog prior to tick exposure. The vaccine is typically given after 8 weeks of age and a 2nd booster is required in 3 to 4 weeks. After that, annual vaccination is recommended. We typically test all our patients for Lyme disease before the first vaccine. If your dog tests positive the veterinarian will discuss the pros and cons of treating for the disease with antibiotics. We recommend vaccinating your dog against Lyme disease even if they have previously had the disease since immunity is not built like in other diseases. This vaccine can cause soreness and a mild fever. We typically give this vaccine alone and will space it out from the other core vaccines. We have seen an increase in number of Lyme positive dogs every year in Maine. Although Lyme disease was not a common disease 5 to 10 years ago it is a newly emerging disease and vaccination is strongly recommended due to the high tick population in this area. It typically takes the tick 24 hours of feeding to transmit the bacteria to the dog so brushing your dog after walks in the woods and using veterinary quality tick control products can lower your dog's risk of acquiring this disease as well.

Non-Core Vaccines

Bordetella:

Bordetella Bronchiseptica may act as the primary trigger or pathogen for infectious tracheobronchitis (kennel cough) in dogs less than 6 months of age or dogs who have a higher risk of exposure to different pathogens at grooming, daycare, or boarding. Dogs with kennel cough typically have a harsh, dry cough that may be followed by retching or gagging. Light pressure on their trachea (wind pipe) will induce a cough. Some dogs will recover from this infection with no treatment while others can develop a secondary infection and pneumonia. Puppies and older dogs are especially susceptible to this disease. This vaccine can be given either in the nose, in the mouth, or as an injection. Dogs who board, go to doggie daycare, grooming, shows, or dog parks should be vaccinated every 6 to 12 months.