

# VACCINATIONS FOR DOGS



Beaconsfield

Veterinary Centre

Dr Steve Wait B.V.Sc and Associates  
14 Wood Street Beaconsfield, Victoria 3807  
Telephone: (03) 9769 8777 (24hr contact)  
[www.beaconsfieldvet.com.au](http://www.beaconsfieldvet.com.au)

## Why should I get my dog vaccinated?

There are several diseases that dogs can pick up from their environment that can cause severe illness and even death. Vaccination against these diseases is the best method of protection. Vaccinations are relatively cheap compared with the potential costs of treatment, should your dog contract one of these diseases.

We would recommend that you routinely vaccinate your dog for:

### Canine Distemper

This is a highly contagious viral disease which is fatal in a high proportion of affected dogs. Those that survive may have permanent brain damage. The typical symptoms are fever, coughing and sneezing, vomiting and diarrhoea, and eventually fits and paralysis.

### Canine Hepatitis

This is also an extremely dangerous and contagious viral disease. Death can occur within 24 to 48 hours, and dogs that recover may have ongoing liver and kidney problems. Symptoms of fever, vomiting, diarrhoea and severe abdominal pain, are commonly seen with this viral disease.

### Canine Parvovirus

This is a serious disease that can affect all dogs, but is particularly nasty in puppies. Outbreaks of parvovirus do still occur, and it is very easily spread as it is not necessary for dog to dog contact to occur. Parvovirus can live for up to two years in the environment. The virus attacks the dogs intestines causing blood-stained diarrhoea, vomiting and acute abdominal pain.

### Canine Cough (Kennel Cough)

The name "kennel cough" is misleading, as this group of infectious diseases can be contracted from any contact with an infected dog. There are several strains of this virus, and we can vaccinate against two types:

***Bordetella bronchiseptica***  
***parainfluenza***

These diseases are not as serious as the others mentioned, but canine cough is a common and irritating problem. Symptoms can include a dry hacking cough, and worse case, can develop into pneumonia.

## How often should my dog be vaccinated?

Puppies: 1<sup>st</sup> vaccination at 6-8 weeks  
2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination at 12-14 weeks  
3<sup>rd</sup> vaccination at 16-18 weeks

Adult dogs: booster vaccinations required annually.

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## What is the difference between a C3 & C5?

The C3 vaccination is given routinely at the 6-8 week puppy vaccination, and is the basic immunisation to protect your dog against distemper, hepatitis & parvovirus. The C5 vaccination also includes the two strains of kennel cough, and will be given at the 12-14 week and at the 16-18 week vaccination.

If your adult dog is currently vaccinated with a C3 and you are considering upgrading to a C5, please ask us for more information.

## Other infectious diseases

It is also possible to vaccinate your dog against canine coronavirus and canine leptospirosis, however these are not routinely given. Please ask us if you are concerned that your dog may be at a high risk, or if you have any questions about these vaccinations.

## When is my puppy allowed out?

In theory, your puppy will not have full immunisation until 1 week after the final puppy vaccination. However, puppies go through their socialisation period from 6 - 16 weeks of age and benefit tremendously from interaction with other dogs and people. This is a critical time which will heavily influence the personality and behaviour of your dog. It is important to give your puppy these experiences (eg; puppy school, friends with vaccinated dogs, car rides, etc) whilst minimising high risk situations (eg; parks or places where unknown dogs have been, or sniffing other dogs faeces, etc). If you take your puppy out on a lead, just keep to concreted footpaths and stay off the grass.

## What happens at the vaccination consultation?

When your dog comes into the clinic for its vaccination, the vet will give him or her a full physical check-up. This is also the time to ask any questions that you may have about your dog's general health and behaviour.

## Vaccination Reactions

The chances of any complications with the vaccine are rare. Occasionally reactions do occur and are usually quite mild, sometimes causing lethargy, or pain at the injection site, but this is very unusual. If any of these symptoms occur, you should contact the clinic.

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