

TGDS on: **VACCINATIONS**



Vaccinations have been the topic of contention for the past decade in the dog world. For years, pet owners have been bombarded with propaganda telling that vaccines make pets safer. However, recently studies have shown that this might not be the case. In fact, over-vaccination might be just as risky as not being protected.

The team at The Good Dog Spot cares about keeping your pet healthy, and we make it our top priority - both while they're here in our facility and even when they go home for the day. To this end, we have molded our vaccination policy to reflect current concerns about vaccination, with the goal of keeping your pet as healthy as possible.

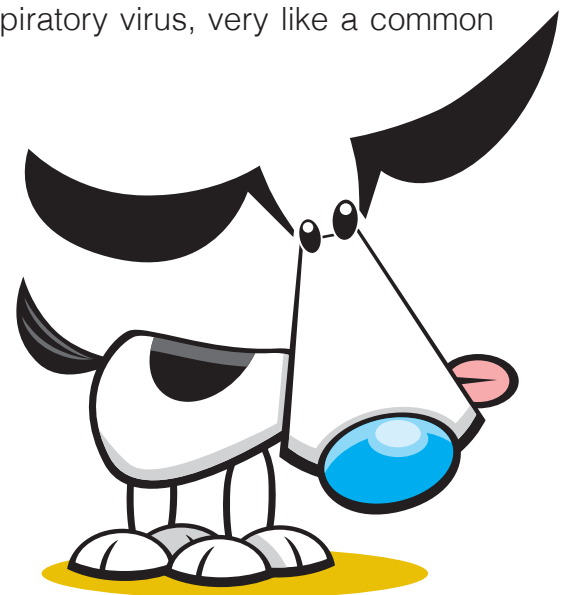
TGDS Vaccination Requirements

To attend daycare, your dog must be vaccinated against Rabies, per Massachusetts state regulations. Beyond this core vaccination, we require your pet to be current on the protocol prescribed by your vet. This could include deciding not to vaccinate beyond Rabies, or an annual titer test to determine what is needed for your pet's system.

Other vaccinations, referred to as non-core vaccinations, that might be recommended by your vet are ones like...

Bordetella (or Kennel Cough). Kennel Cough is an upper respiratory virus, very like a common human cold, that can be treated with basic supportive care.

If exposed, your dog may get kennel cough regardless of having the Bordetella vaccine. We do not accept dogs at The Good Dog Spot who are exhibiting symptoms of kennel cough. To date, we have not had an outbreak at our facility (although there have been a few isolated incidents). We hope to continue this good fortune, just as you hope that your child will not be exposed to a common cold at school.



Leptospirosis: Dogs have the potential for exposure to Lepto contamination through water and wild animals (specifically their urine). It is most commonly found in tropical climates or flood areas. The duration of the immunity typically conveyed by the lepto vaccine is generally less than one year, so to convey optimal protection from this disease, it must be given at least twice a year, every year. The vaccine used must contain all four strains of the disease that are currently available to vaccine makers, because the strains do not provide cross-protection. And where it is more common, there have been recent reports of new strains emerging, for which there are no vaccines yet. All of this suggests that administering the vaccine would benefit only those dogs living in an area with a current, high rate of infection – and only if they are properly vaccinated at frequent intervals with all the available strains.

Distemper: due to its potentially fatal results, this is considered a core vaccination by most vet experts, who recommend that puppies should be vaccinated against distemper at 12 weeks of age. Typical vaccination protocol calls for annual boosters of distemper to ensure immunity. However, recent studies have suggested that most dogs are immune for three to six years after their initial vaccination. Instead of going with annual vaccination protocol for distemper, instead opt for a titer test to determine your dog's levels of immunity still present.

Since we understand that not everyone is an expert in dog vaccines, we've put together a list of five tips to go by when discussing a vaccination protocol for your dog with your vet...

Acknowledge the benefits and risk of vaccines

As we've mentioned, over-vaccination in some cases can be just as risky as not vaccinating. To evaluate the risks and the benefits, consider the need for a vaccine each time it is due. Vaccines should not be routine. Understand that even the core vaccines may not be appropriate for a specific dog, at a specific time. Factors such as age of the dog should be taken into consideration

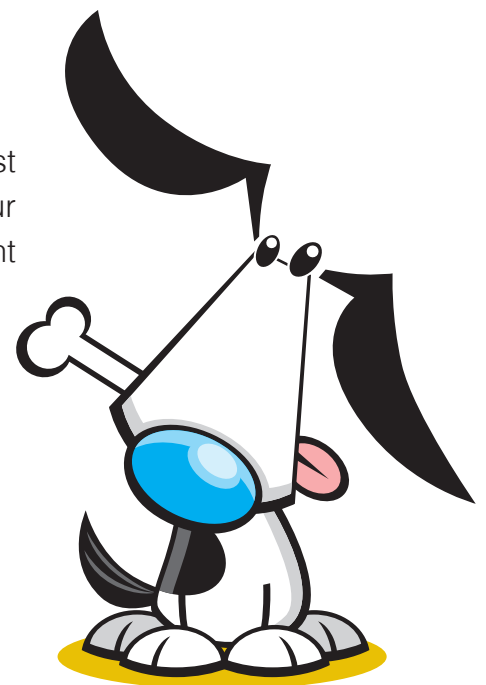
Team up with your Vet

A discussion with your veterinarian will help you make the best decisions. They will know the diseases present in your area, your dog's overall health, genetic risk factors, and more. You may want to ask your vet...

What vaccines do you recommend, and why?

Are there disease risks that are unique to your area?

What are the possible side effects of each vaccine?



Consider your dog's lifestyle

Where you bring your dog and the area you live in can influence disease risk (or lack thereof!).

Check out Titer tests

Titer tests can tell you whether your dog had a positive immune response to a recent vaccine (whether it did its job, basically) or whether your dog has antibodies present still from a previous vaccine (showing immunity).

Alternative methods to keeping up a healthy immune system

There are many natural alternatives to vaccinations that will help boost your pup's immune system. Feeding a healthy and high quality food is the key to a dog's health. Homemade chicken broth is an easy supplement to enhance your dogs diet. Probiotics also provide a natural way to keep up a healthy system.

