Dog vaccines during the Covid-19 crisis

Overview

- Vaccinating your dog protects them from nasty diseases such as Parvovirus, Leptospirosis, Distemper and Infectious Hepatitis (canine adenovirus).
- Due to Covid-19 restrictions and social distancing guidelines, some veterinary practices (including PDSA), aren't able to offer vaccinations at present.
- While this unfortunately may put some dogs at a higher risk once their vaccine protection runs out, it's necessary to ensure the sickest pets can get the care they need.
- It's important to have your dogs vaccinated if possible, and to take steps to protect them if their cover runs out.

Why isn’t my vet offering vaccinations at the moment?

During the pandemic, vets are having to prioritise the sickest pets, which means that many routine services such as vaccines, are being delayed or cancelled.

During this challenging time, The British Veterinary Association (BVA) and Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) have asked vets across the UK to prioritise urgent/essential treatment for the sickest pets. Sadly, this means that some practices are unable to offer their routine procedures such as vaccinations and neutering. If
your vet is unable to vaccinate your dog, you may need contact a
different vet, and in the meanwhile, follow our guidance below to
keep them safe.

Continue checking your vet’s website for service updates, but please
keep in mind that they will be extremely busy adapting to the ever-
changing challenges of the pandemic. They will be doing their best to
care for some very sick pets and will really appreciate your patience
and understanding.

I am a PDSA client and want to have my dog vaccinated,
what do I do?

We at PDSA, are currently facing a huge demand for our services,
and at present, our priority is treating pets in need of urgent or
lifesaving treatment. Unfortunately, this means that we are not
currently able to offer preventive services such as vaccinations
and neutering. Although we hope to provide these services at some
point, it’s likely that a reduced service will continue into the
foreseeable future. For this reason, we recommend that our clients
find another veterinary practice for their pet’s vaccinations and
neutering. Try your local private practice, or use the RCVS website to
find vets in your local area. Don’t worry, even if your dog is
vaccinated/neutered elsewhere, they will still be registered with us
should they become unwell at any point. We really appreciate your
patience and support during this difficult time.

Click here for PDSA service updates.

Keeping unvaccinated puppies and dogs safe

Puppies
An unvaccinated puppy, or a puppy that has only had their first
injection, won’t be protected against parvovirus, leptospirosis,
distemper or infectious hepatitis (canine adenovirus).

- They are safe to go into your garden (as long as no
unvaccinated dogs have visited recently, and it’s secure from
foxes).
• Stay away from areas where there could have been rats, cows, foxes or other unvaccinated dogs, don’t allow your puppy to meet any dogs outside of your household, and don’t bring any new dogs into your home.

• You can take your puppy out but make sure you carry them.

• Don’t let them on the ground in public spaces and be aware that others may see your puppy and be tempted to come over to say hi, but please make sure you maintain a social distance of at least 2 metres for everyone’s safety.

Dogs
If your dog has had regular vaccinations throughout their life, they are likely to have some protection covering them for approximately two - three months after the date their vaccine was due. However, once this time has lapsed, they will be at risk of catching some of the diseases we vaccinate against. If your dog’s vaccines have lapsed, take the following precautions:

• Keep them away from other dogs and avoid walking in areas where many other dogs have been (perhaps consider walking on a quiet footpath instead of visiting the local park).

• Normally, it’s a great idea for dogs to play together, but during lockdown you need to keep them apart because many will have missed their vaccine boosters.

• Avoid places that farm animals and rats live such as farm fields, or ponds, stagnant water and rivers, as there is a higher risk of leptospirosis in these places.