

## Many Pet Parents Now Demand This, Saving Their Pets From Potential Agony

In fact, it could be one of the best ways to protect your pets from harmful communicable diseases. It's a shameful tragedy that vets don't normally offer this first. So it's up to you to demand it, for the safety and well-being of your pet - and possibly to prevent a lifetime of grief.

Analysis by [Dr. Karen Shaw Becker](#)

### STORY AT-A-GLANCE

- A growing number of pet parents are leading the charge against over-vaccination. It's very important to distinguish between an "anti-vaxxer" and an "anti-over-vaxxer"
- These pet owners are requesting titer tests from their veterinarians, which should ultimately increase their availability and decrease their cost
- Vaccines should never be viewed as "harmless preventive medicine," as they can trigger vaccinosis and very significant disease in pets
- Every animal's immune system is different, so there's no way to predict, unless your pet has had a reaction in the past, how much danger he is in from exposure to the ingredients in a given vaccine
- If you suspect your pet is suffering the effects of over-vaccination, find a homeopathic or holistic veterinarian to create a vaccine detox protocol

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Recently I ran across an article written by an informed dog parent titled "When You Should Consider NOT Vaccinating Your Pet." The author, Lisa Spector, explains that she's not an anti-vaxxer, just a pet guardian concerned about the risks of over-vaccination. When she receives vaccination reminder cards in the mail from her veterinarian, instead of taking her dogs in for boosters, Spector has them titer tested instead.

*"A titer test shows if they are already protected from the disease [for] which they had been once vaccinated," she writes. "If the titer test comes back positive, then there is enough of the vaccine still in their system. If a titer test comes back negative, then it's a good time to consider getting them vaccinated."<sup>1</sup>*

Spector is one of a growing number of pet parents pushing back on the veterinary industry's vaccine guidelines, and it's wonderful to see. The current industry recommendation for boosters for canine core vaccines (parvo, distemper and adenovirus) is every three years.

However, the industry also acknowledges that immunity lasts at least five years for parvo and distemper, and at least seven years for adenovirus. I believe — as do many in the veterinary community, including Dr. Ronald Schultz, one of the preeminent experts in the field of veterinary vaccines — that well-timed puppy shots followed by titer testing to

confirm immunity protects dogs for life.

Also making lots of headlines right now are veterinary interest groups confusing responsible vaccination with anti-vaccination, which is unfortunate. Responsible vaccination is what Lisa is doing; providing baseline protective immunity via well-timed puppy vaccines, followed up with responsible titering.

Anti-vaxxers are individuals that refuse all vaccinations for all diseases. That isn't Lisa or most people out there asking their vets for more information before they make an informed decision. People who request titers are not anti-vaxxers, they're smart-vaxxers (aka "titer-ready").

## Availability of Titer Tests

Fortunately, antibody titer tests are gradually becoming more widely available and less costly in the U.S. as more and more pet owners request them in lieu of automatic revaccination.

It's worth noting that passionate pet parents and proactive vets in other parts of the world have developed much more progressive titering protocols that I hope one day we can institute in North America. In the Netherlands and Belgium, for instance, many vets titer puppies and kittens before their first vaccines to determine if there are maternal antibodies present.

This allows the animals to receive one perfectly timed vaccine. These animals are titered four weeks later to assure they were adequately immunized. Integrative vets in this country understand convincing clients to titer once after young animals have received their initial vaccines has taken many years to accomplish. Convincing owners to titer before and after a vaccine is absolutely the best medicine, but may prove to be a difficult protocol to institute for economic reasons.

Let's hope the demand for titer tests continues to increase among pet parents, along with access to affordable testing. The great news is my friend Dr. John Robb has arranged for a rabies, parvo and distemper **titer package for \$55** (that you can submit yourself if your vet won't do it)! If your own vet isn't offering titers at a reasonable cost, shop around. Any veterinarian truly concerned about the health of pets should happily offer affordable titer testing in lieu of automatic revaccination.

## Why Vaccines Are Not 'Harmless Preventive Medicine'

Many pet parents, even if they are concerned about over-vaccinating their animal companion, don't know exactly why and how vaccines can harm a pet's health.

The biggest danger of vaccines is their ability to trigger vaccinosis in some animals, which is a condition most conventional veterinarians don't even acknowledge. To admit vaccines could have negative long-term physiologic consequences in some animals means acknowledging there could be safety issues, and that's a liability that will never be accepted in veterinary medicine. To understand vaccinosis, it's important to know what it is not. It isn't an acute, often immediate adverse reaction to a vaccine.

Adverse events, or hypersensitivities, whether mild (such as lethargy, flu-like symptoms, etc.), or severe (such as anaphylactic shock), that are clearly linked to a recent vaccination are widely accepted (but not necessarily reported) by the conventional veterinary community.

Vaccinosis, on the other hand, is a problem only **holistic veterinarians** are willing to acknowledge. It is a reaction of a pet's body to vaccines that have been injected without the animal having experienced a notable adverse event or hypersensitivity.

These are chronic reactions to not only the altered virus contained in the vaccine, but also to the chemicals, adjuvants and other components of tissue culture cell lines as well as possible genetic changes that can be induced by vaccines. Dr. Richard Pitcairn, who holds a Ph.D. in immunology and authored the bible of holistic health care for pets, "Dr. Pitcairn's Complete Guide to Natural Health for Dogs & Cats," defines it this way:

*"Vaccinosis is to be understood as the disturbance of the vital force by vaccination that results in mental, emotional, and a physical change that can, in some cases, be a permanent condition."*<sup>2</sup>

## **Vaccines Can Create Chronic Disease**

According to Dr. Pitcairn, vaccines intended to protect pets against acute natural diseases actually create chronic conditions with features of the disease the vaccine was supposed to prevent. This transformation begins in the laboratory, where natural viruses are modified in order to make vaccines.

Whereas the natural virus would trigger a strong immune system response, the modified lab-created virus in the vaccine doesn't elicit much of a reaction by the animal's immune system. Instead, it creates chronic disease. The delivery of a vaccine is also very different from how a natural disease develops in an animal's body.

Vaccines contain a number of toxic substances, including viruses, mutated bacteria, immune irritants, foreign proteins, heavy metals (including mercury and aluminum) and chemical preservatives. All of these toxins are delivered by injection directly into the blood and lymph, bypassing the usual first line of defenses, including the skin, mucous membranes, saliva and so forth.

So not only is the virus in the vaccine unnatural, the way it enters a pet's body is also very unnatural. When you look at the situation from this perspective, it's easy to see how abnormal immune reactions might be triggered by vaccinations.

Most importantly, the decision to repeat vaccinations annually was not based on duration of immunity research, it was an arbitrary practice veterinarians adopted to keep clients coming back on a yearly basis. The Rabies Challenge Fund and titering vets know many vaccines last for several years and some for the lifetime of the pet.

In fact, I'm so convinced animals will not need "boosters" after their initial core vaccines that if my clients are wavering about titer testing, my policy is that if the titer comes back low (meaning the animal is "unprotected"), I will "boost" their pet for that virus free of charge. I've given away less than a handful of vaccines in my 20-year career.

## **Symptoms of Vaccinosis**

Common vaccine reactions include:

- Lethargy
- Stiffness
- Hair loss

- Lack of appetite
- Hair color change at injection site
- Conjunctivitis
- Fever
- Sneezing
- Soreness
- Oral ulcers

More serious reactions:

- Immunosuppression
- Granulomas and abscesses
- Behavioral changes
- Hives
- Vitiligo
- Facial swelling
- Weight loss
- Allergic hypersensitivity
- Reduced milk production (females)
- Respiratory disease
- Lameness
- Allergic uveitis

Very severe illness:

- Injection-site sarcomas (cancer)
- Glomerulonephritis
- Anaphylaxis
- Myocarditis
- Autoimmune arthritis
- Encephalitis or polyneuritis
- Polyarthritis
- Seizures
- Hypertrophic osteodystrophy
- Abortion
- Autoimmune hemolytic anemia
- Congenital abnormalities
- Autoimmune thrombocytopenia

- Embryotic (fetal) death
- Thyroiditis
- Infertility

## **Veterinary Vaccines: The Importance of Exercising Caution**

Since the introduction of dog and cat vaccines, the traditional view of their use has been that they are unequivocally safe and can be given as frequently as once or twice a year for a lifetime with no detrimental consequences. This approach, tragically, has caused a tremendous amount of suffering for millions of pets.

As the truth about the potential dangers of vaccines slowly emerges, even traditional veterinary organizations and practitioners are beginning to acknowledge that vaccines are not the benign, "better safe than sorry" veterinary tools they were once thought to be. While I'm thankful the profession is realizing there could be consequences to over-vaccinating, it's a shame they are still referring to inquiring clients as "anti-vaxxers."

The strength and balance of every animal's immune system is different, so there's no way to predict, unless your pet has had a reaction in the past, how much danger he is in from exposure to the modified virus contained in any given vaccine or the many toxic ingredients and heavy metals it contains. That's why I never recommend automatic revaccinations for any animal.

The most logical approach, in my opinion, is to find out if an animal needs the vaccine before giving it. This is common sense. It's too bad this proactive, health-conscious movement is occurring as a result of empowered, knowledgeable owner-advocates instead of from veterinary professionals, but at least it's happening.

If you believe your pet could be suffering from the negative effects of over-vaccination, I strongly recommend you work with a homeopathic or holistic veterinarian to create a tailor-made vaccine detox program to assist your pet's body in recovering from vaccinosis, as every patient (and therefore their protocol) is different. If your pet is healthy but due for "annual vaccinations," ask your vet to find out if more shots are even necessary by performing a simple titer test.

### **Sources and References**

[Journal of the American Holistic Veterinary Medical Association, February-April, 1997, Vol. 16, No. 1, Page 19](#)

<sup>1</sup> [Care2, May 29, 2017 \(Archived\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [DrPitcairn.com](#)

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