



What to Expect With a New Puppy: Preventatives and Vaccines for Puppies

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From puppy vaccinations to flea and tick medicine for puppies. There is a lot to learn when you get a new puppy. When you get a new puppy, one of the first things you should do is schedule a new puppy vet visit. At your puppy's first vet visit, your vet will likely ask many questions and you will likely have many questions. As Revival's

Director of Veterinary Services and as a practicing veterinarian, I've included my recommendations, to give you something to think about before your first vet visit or after in cases where you weren't able to discuss a certain topic with your vet.

Since there are lots of topics to cover with a new puppy, we've broken them up into several smaller articles. This particular article will address vaccinations, dewormers and heartworm, tick and flea protection for puppies.

What Vaccinations Do Puppies Need?

At most first puppy vet visits, vaccines are given. It's important to know which vaccines your puppy has already received so your vet can vaccinate accordingly. We do not vaccinate more often than every three weeks. Depending on your puppy's lifestyle, your vet will recommend certain vaccinations. All puppies need to receive a rabies vaccination. The first rabies vaccination is due between three and five months of age, depending on what the laws require where the puppy lives. This first vaccination is "good" for one year. One year later, the puppy-turned-dog will be due for a rabies booster. Depending on the laws where the puppy resides and the product used, this vaccination will be good for one to three years. This cycle will continue throughout the life of the dog.

Nearly all puppies should receive a series of distemper/parvo vaccinations. This combination vaccination series will begin between six and nine weeks of age, and will be repeated every two to four weeks until the puppy reaches sixteen weeks of age or older. Your veterinary professionals will provide you with details, based on their recommended protocols. Leptospirosis may be recommended at or after twelve weeks of age based on lifestyle and exposure. At one time, Leptospirosis was considered a disease of outdoorsy, large breed dogs. However, Leptospirosis has re-emerged as a disease seen in all dogs, even small breed dogs who spend little time outdoors. Additionally, the leptospirosis vaccine has a reputation of causing reactions. In more recent years, this vaccine has been purified, making the vaccine safer than ever.

Other vaccines will be recommended based on the puppy's lifestyle and where the puppy lives. For puppies

who go to daycare, boarding, training classes, grooming, dog shows, or other activities where they will be directly exposed to other dogs, vaccinations to protect them against respiratory diseases will be recommended. The vaccines currently available are to protect against bordetella, parainfluenza, adenovirus, and two strains of canine influenza. Influenza vaccination is always given as an injection. Bordetella and adenovirus may be given as nose drops, an injection, or oral vaccine. The strain of parainfluenza that protects against respiratory disease is given as nose drops.

Lyme disease vaccinations are recommended for dogs who spend time in areas known to be tick-infested. The most common way this disease is spread is by the bite of a deer tick or similar vectors. The same ticks may also spread other tick-borne diseases, such as anaplasmosis and Ehrlichia, for which there is no vaccine. The New England and Upper Midwest states are where most Lyme disease cases are found. Dogs who live or travel to these areas should not only be vaccinated for Lyme disease but should also be protected using tick-control products.

If you are unsure which vaccine your dog needs, use the Revival Vaccine Finder to help choose the right vaccines for your dog.

When to Deworm Puppies

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Companion Animal Parasite Council recommend that all puppies be dewormed at two, four, six and eight weeks unless their mother was on fenbendazole during her pregnancy and nursing. If your puppy hasn't already been dewormed, pyrantel pamoate is a safe and available non-prescription dewormer that can easily be used. Starting at eight weeks of age, your veterinarian can start your puppy on a monthly heartworm preventative. This medication, available by prescription, not only will prevent heartworm disease but will also help manage intestinal parasites such as roundworms, hookworms, whipworms, and in some cases tapeworms and includes birth control for fleas.

Flea, Tick and Heartworm Prevention for Puppies

If you've seen fleas or ticks on your puppy, you'll want to get that under control right away. I suggest contacting your veterinary professionals for assistance in finding the right products. There are three general categories of flea and tick preventives. These include oral medications (a chewable tablet), topicals (a tube of liquid applied to the back of the puppy) and collars. Each have advantages and disadvantages, which can be discussed at your veterinary visit. These products may also control mites including ear mites and lice. Be certain to use these products as directed on puppies over eight weeks of age and of the appropriate size. If you plan to use your new puppy for breeding, be cognizant of the label directions pertaining to these products. Even though it may be over two years before he or she is bred, you still want to use only products labeled for this special category of pet.

It's important to talk to your vet about finding the best option for heartworm, flea, and tick preventives. There are two general categories of these medications. There is an oral chewable tablet that can be administered every 30 days. And there is an injectable product that is given by your veterinary professional every twelve months. These are recommended in all 50 states in the US for year round use to achieve optimal parasite control.

Remember, not all flea and tick preventatives are the same. Be sure to check out Revival's Flea and Tick Finder to help you find the best flea and tick preventative for your dog.

For more tips on raising a puppy or if you have a specific question about your new puppy's vaccinations or preventatives, reach out to your veterinarian or call our Pet Care Pros at 800.786.4751.

-Dr. Greer

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