

To the dog owners of Rochester Vet Practice:

### **Change of vaccination protocol**

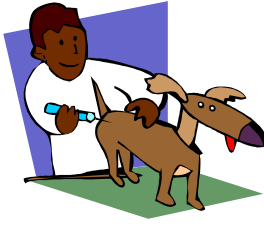
In recent years there has been a shift to developing a vaccine that lasts greater than one year in dogs. The reason behind this research includes trying not to overvaccinate dogs and to reduce the incidence of reactions. We believe that there has now been enough research done and appropriate vaccinations made to warrant changing to three yearly vaccination of dogs for the 3 main diseases: Hepatitis, Distemper and Parvovirus. However, Kennel cough vaccinations for Bordetella bronchiseptica and parainfluenza viruses still need an annual vaccination as no vaccine that lasts for 3 years has been developed for these diseases yet.

Despite the simplicity of the action of vaccinating a dog, what happens inside the dog to produce the desired effect is quite a complex process that requires conditions in the dog's body to be just right. If a dog has other health problems, this can impede the effect of the vaccination. If a dog does not mount an appropriate response to the vaccination then he/she will either be protected against the diseases in a reduced way or maybe even not at all. It is important, then, to make sure a dog is healthy and in an immunologically stable condition in order to effectively vaccinate him/her.



You might notice that we ask how the dog has been recently before we vaccinate. What you tell us helps us look in the right places for possible problem areas. Because dogs cannot speak for themselves, what you observe forms a very important part of our assessment. We check eyes, ears, teeth and gums, lymph nodes, skin, heart, lungs and abdomen in order to pick up problems that may be starting. If something is of concern we may investigate further with a temperature reading, further questioning, blood tests and other tests.

The disadvantage of three yearly vaccinations is that there is a good chance the dog will not have a health check for 3 years at a time. Because a year in the life of a dog is the equivalent of approximately 7 human years, this would be like not seeing a doctor or dentist for 21 years. This is obviously not recommended as a problem which could be picked up and treated early on could be left unnoticed for a long time and could have progressed to something far worse than necessary by the time it is discovered.

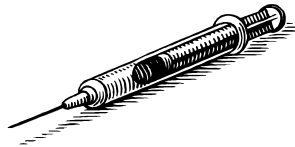


### **Current recommendations:**

For puppies to be fully covered against the 3 main diseases they need their first vaccination at 6-8 weeks and their second from 10-12 weeks. 12 months later they will need a booster vaccination and from then on they will need 3 yearly vaccinations. Every twelve months we recommend an annual health check to make sure everything is running smoothly in-between times.

For previously unvaccinated dogs older than 10 weeks, they will need a single vaccination followed by a booster twelve months later then every 3 years after that.

For dogs that need vaccinating for kennel cough, they will need either an intranasal vaccination or an initial course of 2 vaccinations 4 weeks apart and then an annual booster henceforth.



You will notice that we have changed our prices for vaccinations to include an annual health check with the vaccination. So for a standard basic vaccination regime, 2 out of 3 years will be simply the annual health check price and only the 3<sup>rd</sup> year will be more expensive being the annual health check plus the cost of the vaccine. Overall the average cost will be about the same as before.

We hope this explains what we are doing and the reasons behind it. We look forward to seeing you and your pet at your next visit. If you have any questions, please feel to ask any of the vets in the clinic.