



## Vaccinations

Ever wonder what that “distemper” vaccine was doing. It’s actually protecting your pet against a variety of diseases. Vaccination is important for diseases that can be fatal or are highly contagious.

### ***Rabies vaccine***

Rabies is a virus affecting the muscles, spinal cord, and brain. Infections usually occur through bites from infected animals because the saliva contains the virus. There are two forms of the disease: paralytic (dumb) form that is more common in dogs and furious form that is more common in cats.

Signs of the dumb form include lethargy, difficulty swallowing, voice or bark changes, dropped jaw, and paralysis (inability to move). Signs of the furious form include aggression, excessive salivating (foaming at the mouth), over sensitivity to light and sounds, seizures, and difficulty walking. An infected animal may not show signs for 2 weeks to 6 months after getting rabies. However, when signs are visible death occurs within 10 days.



There is no treatment for animals. Rabies can also infect humans, which is why laws require rabies vaccinations. The most common carriers of rabies in Illinois are bats (which can get into houses). Skunks,

raccoons, and foxes can also spread rabies.

### **DOGS**

#### ***Canine Distemper Complex vaccine (DA2PP)***

**Canine Distemper:** Distemper is a virus that typically affects young dogs causing a respiratory disease that spreads to the nervous system. Signs include coughing, nasal and eye discharge, diarrhea, vomiting, seizures, and weakness/difficulty walking. This disease is very contagious (between dogs) and can be fatal.

**Canine Adenovirus Type 2:** There are two major types of adenovirus in dogs. Adenovirus type 1 is a virus that causes liver disease, fever, abdominal pain, vomiting, and diarrhea. Adenovirus type 2 is a virus that causes respiratory disease. Signs include a dry, hacking cough, retching, and inflammation of the eye (conjunctivitis). Both of these diseases are very contagious (between dogs). Vaccination for type 2 provides protection from both types.

**Parvovirus:** Parvovirus is a virus that destroys part of the linings of the intestines of dogs. It causes severe vomiting and diarrhea. Due to the destruction of the intestinal linings, infected dogs can develop severe infections and have a high risk of death without treatment. Parvovirus is extremely contagious and can last in the environment for longer than 6 months.

**Parainfluenza:** Parainfluenza is a virus that causes respiratory disease. It is one of the most common causes of kennel cough. Signs include coughing, low-grade fever, nasal discharge, lack of energy, and loss of appetite. This virus spreads easily through the air and generally spreads quickly in areas such as kennels or shelters. Although the signs may resemble canine influenza, they are unrelated viruses and require different vaccinations for protection.



#### ***Lepto vaccine***

Leptospirosis, commonly called Lepto, is a bacterial infection most commonly transmitted through exposure to contaminated water. Lepto causes sudden kidney failure and can damage the liver. Signs of infection include vomiting, loss of appetite, increased urination, reluctance to move, lower back pain, and lethargy. This infection can cause death, but in those that survive, they have life-long kidney and liver damage. Humans can get the disease from your dog through contaminated urine.

## ***Bordetella vaccine***

*Bordetella bronchiseptica* is a bacterial infection causing kennel cough. Signs include a dry hacking cough, sneezing, mild to moderate fever, and watery discharge of the nose. Severe infections can lead to pneumonia. Transmission is through direct contact or through the air. *Bordetella bronchiseptica* can infect immune compromised people.

## ***Canine Influenza***

Canine influenza, the dog flu, is highly contagious and caused by an influenza A virus. The most common sign is coughing similar to “kennel cough”. The cough tends to persist for 2-3 weeks and may not improve with treatment. Dogs can also have an eye or nose discharge, sneezing, tiredness, or a reduced appetite. Some will develop a fever and, occasionally, pneumonia. In a few cases, the flu can be fatal. The virus is easily spread through coughing, barking, sneezing, by direct contact, or contaminated surfaces such as leashes. Humans don’t get this flu, but in rare situations, cats might.

## **CATS**

### ***Feline Distemper Complex vaccine (FVRCP)***

*Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis*: This is a disease caused by a herpes virus resulting in an upper respiratory infection. Signs include eye and nasal discharge, decreased appetite, sneezing, squinting eyes, conjunctivitis, ulcerations (scratches) on the eye, and fever. Long-term nasal discharge and eye ulcerations may occur because of the infection. It is contagious between kittens and cats and is often in crowded areas such as catteries and shelters.



*Calicivirus*: This virus is another cause of an upper respiratory infection. It can also cause oral sores and lameness. Common signs include decreased appetite, lethargy, sneezing, eye and nose discharge, drooling, and a reluctance to walk. Severe infections can also cause fever, difficulty breathing, pneumonia, heart problems, and possible death. It is also contagious and most often in shelters.

*Panleukopenia (feline distemper)*: This virus is highly contagious and comes in two forms. One form causes severe inflammation of the intestines. Signs include vomiting, diarrhea, anorexia, extreme lethargy, or sudden death (fading kitten syndrome). The second form affects the central nervous system. Signs include seizures, stumbling around and tremors when trying to walk, and dullness. This virus can survive and spread in the environment for up to a year.



### ***Feline Leukemia Vaccine (FeLV)***

*Feline leukemia*: Feline leukemia is a viral infection that decreases the immune system and causes malignant cancer. Saliva spreads it during grooming, playing, and biting. Signs include fever, decreased appetite, lethargy, recurrent infections, depression, weakness, masses in the chest, enlarged lymph nodes, and sudden death (fading kitten syndrome). Most cats that become infected do not live longer than 3 years after infection.

### ***Vaccinate Your Pets!***

Puppies and kittens are more susceptible to most of these diseases. It’s important to get all the vaccinations they need on the correct schedule. It’s also important for all adult pets to receive their booster vaccinations on a regular schedule. This is the only way to prevent these diseases from attacking your pet.

