

# PREVENTING VACCINE FAILURE

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Most persons will agree that vaccines are invaluable for preventing life-threatening diseases. After all, vaccines were indispensable in the eradication of diseases such as polio in the US and smallpox worldwide. However, there is a lot more that goes into the process of BECOMING IMMUNIZED besides receiving the vaccine injection, and for this reason it is essential that your pet's vaccines are administered by



or under the supervision of a qualified veterinarian. If strict procedures are not followed, vaccine failure can occur, putting your pets at risk. Some considerations are listed here.

## Before Vaccinating

- 1) The veterinarian will ensure your pet is at the appropriate age to receive the vaccine. If vaccines are administered too early, for example, they can be ineffective due to the presence of circulating maternal antibodies from the dam's milk.
- 2) A physical examination and full history is important to ensure that your pet is not ill at the time of receiving the vaccine. Your pet being malnourished,

having a severe gastrointestinal worm infestation or being infected with other diseases could result in a failure to mount an adequate immune response to the vaccine

- 3) Vaccine products need to be kept under specific conditions- commonly, under cold storage from the point of manufacture to the point of being administered. If this cold chain is broken, or the vaccine has passed its expiration date, it then becomes useless.

#### After Vaccinating

- 4) Vaccine protocols vary depending on the specific vaccine and manufacturer. Some require multiple doses given at specific intervals to be effective and this is taken into consideration by your veterinarian when formulating your pet's vaccine schedule. It is essential that you return on the given dates to receive the follow-up vaccines.
- 5) Before the vaccine process is completed (which could involve multiple doses spanning many weeks), your pet is not considered fully protected, and it is therefore important to limit exposure to the diseases being vaccinated against during this time. Failure to do so could result in a full-blown, life-threatening infection.
- 6) Although rare, post-vaccine reactions can occur in some individual animals and it is imperative that you inform your veterinarian right away so treatment can be undertaken

To prevent vaccine failure and ensure the safety of your pet, ensure that vaccines are only given by a veterinarian or under the supervision of a veterinarian.