



VACCINE REACTIONS (& INSECT STINGS)

Your pet has received one or more vaccinations to protect him or her from serious or even potentially fatal diseases. We greatly appreciate your letting us provide this most basic, yet crucial service to your pet.

Although these vaccines are safe and effective, occasionally pets may develop a reaction to a vaccine. **If your pet has never had a vaccine reaction before (or a reaction to an insect sting or bite), there is no way we can predict if your pet will have a reaction.** There are certain breeds of dogs, however, that are much more likely to have a reaction - Dachshunds,

Schnauzers, Miniature Pinschers, Yorkies and Chihuahuas. As you can see, smaller breeds of dogs are more likely to have a reaction than larger breeds.

The 2 most common sources of vaccine reactions for DOGS are

- 1) Rabies vaccines
- 2) The Leptospirosis component of Distemper-Parvo vaccines in dogs. Fortunately, we have Distemper-Parvo vaccines available *without* Leptospirosis. As a precaution, we routinely do not give the more susceptible breeds of dogs the vaccines with Lepto.

The 2 most common sources of vaccine reactions for CATS are

- 1) Rabies vaccines
- 2) Leukemia vaccines—may often cause some sluggishness for 12 to 24 hours

MILD VACCINE REACTIONS - When a pet has a mild vaccine reaction, one or more of the following conditions may be seen

- Mild sluggishness
- Mild fever
- Muscle soreness (especially where the injection was made)
- Decreased appetite
- Upset stomach with vomiting or diarrhea

These milder reactions rarely last for more than 12 to 24 hours. And while you may certainly call us or contact your local veterinary emergency clinic if you observe these symptoms, you can usually manage these situations at home.

- **MILD FEVER or MUSCLE SORENESS (Dogs ONLY!)** - You can give **Aspirin (buffered or enteric-coated)** at a dose of 5mg per pound of dog's weight. Example: A 15 lb Dachshund can take ~75mg (roughly equal to 1 Children's aspirin) every 12 hours
- **VOMITING and/or DIARRHEA (DOGS ONLY!)** - Give liquid Pepto-Bismol at a dose of 1 teaspoon (5 ml = 5cc) for every 20 lbs of body weight. Example: A 15 lb Dachshund would get ~4ml / 4cc (a little less than 1 tsp) every 4 to 6 hours as needed. Also, do not offer any food for at least 6 hours. Give crushed ice to lick on after ~2 hours. Pepto may turn the poop black.
- **A good rule of thumb for giving Children's Aspirin to a dog is 1 tablet for every 15 lbs of body weight twice a day !**
- **NEVER give Aspirin (or any other human pain reliever) to a Cat !**
- **Do NOT give Tylenol or Ibuprofen as a substitute for Aspirin !**
- **If these conditions last more than 24 hours, please call your local veterinary emergency clinic !**

MORE SERIOUS VACCINE REACTIONS - On rare occasions, pets may experience more serious vaccine reactions that begin to show up anywhere from a few minutes to a few hours after receiving their vaccines. Most common signs we see are:

- Swelling of the face / ears
- Hives (will appear as raised bumps of the skin) or significant itching
- Difficulty breathing (especially with "no nose" breeds such as Pugs, Pekingeses, etc)
- Vomiting
- Lethargy / sluggishness

If your pet exhibits any of these signs, your pet should be seen by a veterinarian (especially with difficulty breathing !). If this is not possible, then you can try home treatment by giving **Benadryl (generic Benadryl is OK, too)**. Benadryl comes packaged in 25mg capsules or tablets. Pediatric/Children's Benadryl comes packaged in 12.5mg capsules or tablets (1/2 the dose of regular Benadryl).

- **A good rule of thumb for giving Benadryl to a dog is 1mg per pound of body weight every 8 hours (3 times a day)**
* Example: A 15 lb Dachshund can take ~15mg (can give one 25mg Benadryl capsule or tablet ... or give a Pediatric Benadryl)
- **Do NOT give any Benadryl medication containing other active ingredients — just give plain Benadryl ONLY**

If your pet exhibits swelling and hives, it can take several hours after taking Benadryl before the swelling goes away.

ADDITIONAL HELPFUL INFORMATION

- Dogs do not absorb Benadryl very well; that's why they need a higher dosage than people take
- On occasion, pets receiving injectable vaccinations develop a localized reaction that results in a small, hard lump under the skin where the vaccines were given. It may take a couple of weeks for these lumps to appear, and may take up to 6 weeks before they go away.
- The **BORDETELLA vaccine** in dogs is often given in the nose. This may result in some **mild sneezing** for 1 to 3 days.