

# What You Need to Know

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Although vaccinations are essential for protecting your dog against serious illnesses, there is a small chance your pup could have a negative reaction. Here, our South Lebanon vets discuss why vaccination is important and what to watch for post-vaccination to ensure your pet's health and safety.

## Should I vaccinate My Pet?

[Routine vaccinations](#) are an important part of protecting your pet from a range of contagious, often serious, diseases which could threaten the long-term health and well-being of your furry companion.

As with any veterinary procedure, there is always a slight risk. In rare circumstances, a dog can have a negative reaction to a vaccination. However, the benefits of protecting your pet from serious illness far outweigh the small chance that they will experience a vaccine reaction.

In many states, certain vaccinations (such as the rabies vaccine) are also required by law.

## Dog Vaccination Side Effects

The majority of the side effects dogs get from vaccines are short in duration and generally mild making them far less dangerous than the illnesses the vaccinations protect them from.

Along with the side effects listed below, it is also normal for a puppy to yelp or cry after being vaccinated. Going to the vet can be a scary new situation and your dog will feel a tiny pinprick from the shot. Be sure to give them lots of love and treats before and after the vaccination so as to help create a positive association with visiting the vet office.

Common side effects of dog vaccinations:

### Lethargy & Slight Fever

- It is normal for your pup to be lethargic after getting their shots. In fact, lethargy accompanied by a

slight fever is the most common side effect dogs get from vaccines. Lethargy is characterized by your dog acting tired and a little out of sorts. This is normal and the symptoms should fade after a day or two. If your dog isn't acting like themselves after a couple of days you should follow up with your vet.

### **Localized Swelling**

- Lumps and bumps are common side effects in dogs. Sometimes a small, firm bump will develop at the spot where the needle pierced the skin. This is a normal response however pet owners should monitor the area to make sure that the lump doesn't get bigger or display signs of inflammation, oozing, or infection. The lump shouldn't be painful and should gradually disappear in about a week. If the lump shows signs of infection or hasn't gone away after a week has passed, contact your veterinarian.

### **Sneezing & Cold Like Symptoms**

- While most of the vaccines recommended for dogs are administered by injection some are given by drops or sprays into the animal's eyes or nose. Side effects to intranasal vaccines look a lot like a cold and include symptoms such as a runny nose, coughing, and sneezing. Your dog should recover from these symptoms in a day or two. If your pet doesn't get better within a couple of days or starts showing more severe symptoms, contact your vet.

### **Serious Vaccine Reactions in Dogs**

Most effects associated with pet vaccination are mild but in a few rare cases, more severe reactions requiring [emergency veterinary care](#) can occur.

Symptoms of a serious reaction will generally occur very quickly after the vaccine is given but could take up to 48 hours to appear. Signs of more severe side effects to dog vaccinations include:

- Facial swelling
- Vomiting
- Hives
- Itchiness
- Diarrhea
- Breathing difficulties
- Having trouble walking

Anaphylaxis is the most severe allergic reaction that pets can get from vaccinations. Anaphylaxis will typically occur in dogs very soon after the vaccination has been given, but it's important to remember that anaphylaxis can appear up to 48 hours after the vaccine.

### **How can I prevent my pet from having a reaction to getting their shots?**

Vaccines are an important part of protecting your dog's overall health. The risk of your pet having a serious reaction to a vaccine is very low.

If your furry companion has had a reaction to vaccines in the past, be sure to let your vet know. Your veterinarian might recommend skipping a specific vaccination in the future.

In smaller dogs, the risk of having a reaction to vaccines is increased when multiple vaccinations are given at

once. If your pup is a small or miniature breed dog, your vet might suggest getting your puppy's shots done over the course of several days rather than all at the same time.

**Is your dog due for their routine annual vaccinations? [Contact our vets today](#) to book an appointment.**