

Communicating Vaccination Protocols

The first discussion concerning vaccines should happen at the time the appointment is made. The caller should be told that we recommend their pet be fully vaccinated prior to surgery. If the pet is not currently vaccinated, we recommend for their pet's best protection to have them vaccinated with their regular veterinarian a minimum of one week prior to surgery.

It is important the pet's family understands that surgery is a stressful event, compounded with a new environment containing numerous other animals. Stress and possible exposure to infectious disease predisposes the pet to potentially develop minor illness. Proper vaccinations may alleviate or lessen any illness the pet may contract. Vaccine recommendations are best made on an individual basis as directed by the pet's regular veterinarian.

Current rabies vaccinations are required by most state laws for pets three months of age or older to prevent the spread of this potentially fatal disease. Upon admission to the hospital, owners may provide proof of current rabies vaccination consisting of a rabies certificate. Tags are not adequate proof, as they do not include the identification of the pet. At ASPCA Spay/Neuter Alliance, if the pet is not current for rabies vaccination or the family is not able to provide proof, the pet must be vaccinated for rabies during their stay in order to proceed with surgery. Use your state laws to determine your own clinic's rabies vaccination guidelines.

Administering Vaccines

Vaccines are routinely administered following surgery to prevent vaccine reactions while under anesthesia. Subcutaneous vaccinations should be administered on the lower lateral aspect of the appropriate leg.

The following vaccinations are available at the ASPCA Spay/Neuter Alliance at the time of surgery:

Dogs

- Rabies – one-year or three-year depending on vaccination status and age (SQ right hind leg)
- DA₂PPv (Distemper/Parvo) – administered to puppies less than 12 weeks (SQ right front leg)
- DA₂LPPv (Distemper/Parvo/Lepto) – administered to puppies 12 weeks and older and adult dogs (SQ right front leg)
- Bordetella (Kennel Cough) – intranasal for all dogs and puppies – at the return of the swallow reflex/extubation

Cats

- Rabies – one-year or three-year depending on vaccination status and age (SQ very low on leg)
- FVRCP (Distemper/Upper Respiratory) – administered to kittens older than 6 weeks and cats (SQ very low on leg)

Vaccination of a pet is not without risk and warrants the direction and recommendations of a veterinarian on an individual basis. For this reason, ASPCA Spay/Neuter Alliance will encourage a pet's family to seek their regular veterinarian for their pet's own vaccination protocol.

Some clinics may opt to distribute certain information regarding vaccines, protocols and signs of reactions. You can obtain a vaccine reaction handout from your vaccine manufacturer.