



We understand how significant your pet is to your life.

LEPTOSPIROSIS and DHPP VACCINATIONS

Leptospirosis, a disease caused by the bacterium *Leptospira*, is the leading cause of acute kidney failure in dogs and can also damage the liver. Severe infections can be fatal. Infection is most commonly caused by exposure to contaminated water. Stagnant or slow-moving water becomes contaminated when diseased small mammals deposit their urine near the water. If your dog drinks from puddles in the alleys (contaminated by rats) or puddles in the forest preserves (contaminated by raccoons, squirrels, etc.) then s/he may contract the disease. The bacteria can also be spread directly from animal to animal, and that means YOU!

There are ten serovars (strains) of *Leptospira*. The current vaccine protects against four strains. PROTECT YOUR PET! Illinois is known to have the second largest number of leptospirosis cases in the U.S. per year.

Remember that leptospirosis is a zoonotic disease, which means animals can give the disease to humans. PROTECT YOURSELF! Allow Family Pet to vaccinate your dog annually and in turn protect our community.

This vaccine does not last three years like the DHPP (Distemper, Hepatitis, Parvovirus, Parainfluenza) described below. The leptospirosis vaccine will be administered in a combination DHLPP shot when all vaccinations are due, OR given alone on the off years.

Distemper / Hepatitis / Parvovirus / Parainfluenza (DHPP) Vaccination

Although this vaccine is licensed to be given annually, University studies show the duration of immunity to last a minimum of three years. This is also supported by the Veterinary Vaccine Task Force, an academic body that makes recommendations for general practitioners.

Puppy boosters are still required at 8, 12 and 16 weeks and should be followed with a booster one year later. Only at that time can we feel confident that immunity of the vaccine will last three years.

For our older or immunocompromised patients, we offer vaccine titers (a blood test) to check antibody levels against some of these diseases. If antibodies are still sufficient, then we will choose not to vaccinate. If antibodies are not sufficient, then you may choose to vaccinate your pet OR keep him/her away from high risk situations. Vaccine titers should be performed annually.

Please check with your kennel or daycare for its policy on vaccines, as some still require annual revaccination for their clients.