

## Puppy Vaccination: Frequently Asked Questions



### What has my puppy been vaccinated against?

- Parvovirus
- Leptospirosis
- Distemper
- Canine infectious hepatitis
- Parainfluenza

### Is my puppy covered for kennel cough?

Unless specifically requested, your puppy has not been vaccinated for the bacterial component of kennel cough. If you would like kennel cough vaccination, please talk to one of our vets.

### Now my puppy has had both vaccinations can he/she start to go on walks?

*Please note that the specific timings mentioned here apply to our standard Versican Plus dog vaccine. If you have requested a different brand of vaccine, then the timings may vary – please discuss this with the Vet.*

**We feel that a sensible approach is to recommend that puppies can play in the garden, go for walks around town and attend puppy classes any time after the second vaccination (or 1 week after 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination if we used Nobivac).**

**We would advise that you wait until four weeks after the second vaccination before walking on farmland or near rivers/streams.**

The detail is a bit more complicated...

Immediately after the second vaccination your puppy should be fully covered for parvovirus, distemper and canine infectious hepatitis. However, the full coverage for parainfluenza is not complete until 3 weeks after the second vaccination and full cover for leptospirosis is not complete until 4 weeks after the second vaccination.

Leptospirosis is spread via the urine of infected rats or dogs. This means any waterway or soil that could be contaminated by urine is a potential risk. For this reason, we would certainly avoid any farm land or land near rivers/streams.

We cannot guarantee that urban areas will be free from leptospirosis but the risk is much lower. Given the importance of early socialisation and the fact they are covered for all the viral components in the vaccine; a risk-benefit assessment should be adopted when considering taking your puppy for walks. If you are concerned, please talk to one of our vets.

### Is vaccination 100% effective?

Whilst vaccination is seen to be a safe and effective method of preventing transmission of these diseases there is a very, very small chance your puppy's immune system may not respond adequately to the vaccination. This is **extremely rare** but if you are concerned about it there are two things that we can do:

1. Depending on the age of your puppy, a third vaccination can be given to increase the chance of a full response being mounted. There would be a charge for this injection and we would recommend it was given at 16 weeks old.
2. A blood test can be performed to try and assess your puppy's response to the vaccine. This can be performed from 24 weeks (6 months) old.

These things are not routinely performed but if you would like to discuss with a vet please give us a call.

## Bicester Vets - Adolescent Health Checks at 4 & 6 months of age

Now that your puppy has had its second vaccination, we would like to introduce you and your pet to our Adolescent Health checks.

We know that it can be a bit daunting, especially if this is the first pet that you have owned, as there is a lot of information that you need to know. If you have already owned a pet, then the checks are a great opportunity to revisit all of the things that you are already familiar with.

The check is a free consultation and will run through:

1. Diet - It is important at this stage of life, getting the right information now will make sure your puppy is getting the right nutrition and help prevent problems in the future.
2. Flea and Worm Treatments – When and what to use.
3. Neutering – Why this is important.
4. Dental Care – Advice on brushing teeth and oral hygiene.
5. Micro-chipping – By law this should have been done by 8 weeks of age.
6. Basic Training – Basic commands.
7. Insurance – Advice.
8. General advice on regularly checking claws, coat, ears etc.
9. Anything else that you may want to know.

These checks will get your puppy used to coming into the practice. This will make future visits more enjoyable as a relationship has already been established.

We look forward to seeing you soon,

*Bicester Vets Nurses*



## Bicester Vets - Neutering Recommendations

Neutering is the surgical removal of part of the animal's reproductive tract. This leads them to be infertile and also removes the influence of certain sex hormones. There are various reasons for neutering, such as preventing unwanted pregnancies, unwanted behaviours and some serious medical conditions.

### **Male dogs: castration - removal of the testicles**

**WHY:** Reasons for castration include preventing unwanted litters and preventing inappropriate behaviours (such as humping or scenting and marking in inappropriate places). Castration can also reduce the risk of dogs developing certain prostate problems and testicular cancer later on in life.

**WHEN:** In male dogs our recommendation is to wait until skeletal maturity before castration. Whilst in small dogs this may be around six-twelve months of age, in larger breed dogs it may not be until eighteen months of age. If there is a certain reason that castration is required prior to skeletal maturity (e.g. the dog is living with an entire female) then castration can be performed earlier, however, there is the potential for bone development to be adversely affected if a dog is castrated before being fully grown. As well as affecting bone development, castrating a dog too young can reduce their confidence and worsen any fear related behavioural problems.

There is also the option of a temporary implant for male dogs, which will have a similar effect to castration, and can help if you are unsure about whether to castrate your dog. Please ask to speak to a vet if you would like to know more.

If you are unsure about when to castrate, please call and ask to speak to a vet.

### **Female dogs (bitches): spaying - removal of the ovaries and sometimes the uterus**

**WHY:** As well as preventing unwanted breeding, spaying of female dogs reduces the risk of various tumours developing later in life (ovarian and mammary tumours) and stops females from developing a potentially life threatening emergency condition called pyometra (hormone related infection of the uterus).

**WHEN:** In female dogs, we recommend waiting until after the bitch's first season (also known as being in heat). This is when her vulva starts to swell and bleed, and her nipples may start to enlarge. The timing of the first season can vary between breeds but is usually around 6-9 months of age. The bitch should be booked in for neutering 4 months from the beginning of the season, or 3 months after the end of the season. This gives time for her reproductive tract to normalise prior to the surgery, making the surgery safer and reduces the risk of temporary but unwanted behavioural changes. Neutering prior to the first season is still a possibility, especially in smaller breed dogs, and so if this is something you would prefer, we suggest discussing it further with a vet.

## Laparoscopic “Keyhole” Bitch Spays

We offer keyhole (or ‘laparoscopic’) surgery for bitch spays, as well as the option of a traditional spay. The keyhole technique involves making 2 small holes allowing us to insert instruments and a camera into the abdomen to remove the ovaries under anaesthetic.

The benefits of keyhole spays include:

- Smaller surgical wound
- Quicker recovery and return to normal exercise
- Less discomfort post op

Keyhole bitch spays can be done on any bitch from 6kg upwards and up to 8 years of age. The keyhole price includes intravenous fluid therapy throughout the operation.

Intravenous fluid therapy is also recommended for traditional midline spays as it helps maintain blood pressure and makes the anaesthetic as safe as possible.

Please click the link below if you’d like further information on Laparoscopic Spays.

[Laparoscopic Bitch Spay - Further Information from our website](#)

