

To Vaccinate or Not?

A contentious and controversial issue when discussing the vaccination of children – not quite as divisive as the Springbok Tour in the 80's but quietly rating fairly high

I'm not going to discuss the vaccination of children but I am going to raise the question in regards to the vaccination of pets. Vaccination is where your pet is exposed to either live or generated bacteria that lead to disease in a small and controlled manner which encourages your pet's immune system to build a defence against that disease so if they are exposed to it in the real world they can easily combat it and not be fatally effected. For additional information please refer:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vaccination>

More and more people are questioning the vaccination regime – the majority of conventional veterinary medical practitioners will advise to vaccinate and many advise annual boosters – but is it really necessary? I have been told that vaccinations now last 2 -3 years and yet an annual reminder is sent out by many vets – are they using a different type of vaccination? – Is it not as long lasting or dare I ask - is this a revenue stream? – A practice not questioned and in my opinion not necessarily looking out for the pet's best interests. Vaccination is one of those emotive things - you must keep your vaccination certificate up to date if you are a loving caring owner.

This vaccination certificate is a vital piece of paper when booking your pets into kennels and catteries - the reason being so that your pet does not put other pets at risk – I myself am at a loss how this works – pets who have been vaccinated are endangered by your non-vaccinated pet – how does that work? Your pet without increased immunity and not exposed to the disease will infect those that are supposed to have increased immunity and have been exposed to the disease – my logic would suggest it is actually your pet that is at risk – not theirs

I vaccinated my older cat, who had appeared healthy, for cat flu as he had to go to the cattery – Noddy returned from the cattery with cat flu ... he never really recovered and proceeded to suffer from diabetes and eventually lost the battle against it – I can't blame the vaccination but I do question if it actually put his system under stress for no reason which meant he succumbed to another illness – we had wild cats next door who suffered from cat flu so he had been exposed and hadn't contracted it until he was vaccinated – and then we had the kitten who wandered in from next door very ill with cat flu ... she survived it – so logic would say that her body had immunity from it and yet the vet said she had to be vaccinated for it

Another friend has a dog who every year would get vaccinated and within a week was back at the vets for prednisone as she was scratching constantly – the possible link between the vaccination and the scratching wasn't identified until she phoned me asking if I had something to help her instead of using a steroid – I gave her a homeopathic remedy called Dog Vaccine and the scratching ceased – now I can't show causation or even cure but the coincidence is compelling. Please note the remedy Dog Vaccine is only useful for the ill effects of vaccination not as a replacement for vaccination.

¹ Hamilton DVM, Don, 1999, North Atlantic Books, Berkeley, California 94712, ISBN 9 781556432958; 'Homeopathic Care for Cats and Dogs'



A British Vet, Don Hamilton, who is also a Homeopath suggests in his book “Homeopathic Care for Cats and Dogs”¹ that it is a little more than coincidental – he has seen a link between vaccination and ill health and suggests that vaccination should only be done when all the criteria below are met:

- The disease is serious – even life threatening
- The animal is or will be exposed to the disease
- The vaccine is known to be effective
- The vaccine for the disease is known to be safe

His published experiences are a number of years old now and medical science has progressed but his recommendations still have merit. There are still side effects being shown from vaccination or vaccinating when there still should be immunity.

A healthy pet will fight off infections and build its own immunity; when they’re young and vulnerable it may be appropriate and sensible to vaccinate but are they actually at risk? Are they likely to come into contact of life threatening diseases? It is not simply a decision to vaccinate or not you are legally obligated to ensure your pet’s health - if you choose to ignore a vet’s advice to vaccinate a plan must be put in place to ensure your pet remains healthy and risk free. They must be fed a good healthy diet, access to clean water, regular exercise - basically kept at the peak of health – and seeking veterinary help at the first sign of any distress or ill health. An alternative is homeopathic protocols which can be used as an alternative to vaccination or in conjunction with vaccination to reduce the potential side effects – such as in the post-vaccination itchy dog.

Under my professional code of ethics I cannot tell you what your decision should be in regards to vaccination nor do I want to – my aim is to raise your awareness and invite your questioning of your current vaccination regime rather than just going along with the status quo – just because –

As in the case of the vaccinating children the vaccination of pets requires investigation, great thought and a non-emotive decision process – evaluating the risk of vaccinating or not and what protocols you can put in place to counter act any ill health as a result of your decision. Unlike children pets will hide ill health so a heightened awareness is required.

Thank-you for taking the time to read my article and I hope I have piqued your interest to investigate further and make an informed decision on vaccinating your pet. If you would like to discuss further please do not hesitate to contact me either on Katrina@animalhomeopath.co.nz or 021 248 6156.



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