

If you want a wildly healthy, naturally disease resistant pet, who turns heads and starts conversations with awestruck onlookers, you're right where you belong. This is the vital animal podcast with your host, homeopathic veterinarian. Dr. Will Falconer.

Will Falconer, DVM 0:36

This is Dr. Will Falconer, and welcome to another episode of the Vital Animal Podcast. Are you making this common mistake with your pets? So this is about time and in medicine and health and natural things, some things are not time sensitive. Immunity is one of those. A common misunderstanding around this lies with the concept that vaccinations are due.

Will Falconer, DVM 1:07

You'll get a postcard or an email that says your vaccinations for Sadie are due. And being a good citizen, you want to act on something that you need to take care of. Right. But let's look at this a little deeper. It's important to understand this clearly. Here's a recent comment from a past episode, Carolyn says, "Stuck having to get a rabies vaccine. Yes. I want Maggie's immune system to be well primed before and after the vaccine. I adopted Maggie at age 10. And she's now 14." (That's a red flag for me. Right? She's probably well immune. But we'll get into that.) Her question: "What product do you suggest for her immune system? How many days before the vaccine? How many days after the vaccine?"

Will Falconer, DVM 1:54

By the way note: I'll tune back into this question at the end and answer this for you. And she says thank you for your time Carolyn & Maggie. And then she adds on "ASAP: I will need this information to place an order and receive it and Maggie's immune system to be well primed." And then she puts a date of when she's writing this.

Will Falconer, DVM 2:16

So the question that arises is, is immunity like a gas tank that runs out at a certain point on the calendar? Does the calendar have any bearing on immunity? Does that gas tank run out at three years when your reminder card comes along that you need another round of shots? Or is that a short sighted view that really has no basis in biology or in reality?

Will Falconer, DVM 2:46

So first, let's talk about vaccination versus immunization. So what's vaccination? It's the act of installing a vaccine. So you or your veterinarian pull a vial out of the refrigerator, stick a needle in a syringe and use it to withdraw the fluid, come back to the dog, lift up the skin, poke the needle through and install that fluid with viruses and mercury and all sorts of other crud into your animal. That's vaccination.

Will Falconer, DVM 3:24

What about immunization? Well, immunization is what we're after one way or another, whether you choose vaccination to get it done or some other healthier way. Immunization is when your animal responds to that challenge. Whether it's a vaccine virus in a syringe, or a slew of five of them, or it's an exposure to Parvo in the dog park, we want immunization, which is your dog's response to say, "Oh, I recognize you! You're a foreigner. You are a virus that I need to make a reaction to, so you don't kill me." Immunization is the mounting of immunity in your animal.

Will Falconer, DVM 4:11

How do we evaluate whether that's happened or not? There's two ways but really only one is practical. The one that's practical is measuring the antibody levels, aka doing a titer test. And you can see Episode Four and listen in while Dr. Robb and I talk about titers. You'll learn a lot from that. And also Episode 16 with Julie Anne Lee, where we go even deeper on titers and what their limits are and how you can misuse them and how you can get smoke blown at you from conventional vets who say they vary all over the place. That's smoke by the way. So what we really want to know is how long is duration of this thing called immunity. If we've got immunization, your animal responded to this challenge whether it was Parvo in the dog park or a vaccine version of Parvo and distemper and other things. How long does this immunity last? This is called DOI or duration of immunity. And we know way back from a study done on over 1000 dogs in 2006 and published by Dr. Ron Schultz, PhD virology University Wisconsin.

Will Falconer, DVM 5:37

He found that canine distemper the usual modified live virus vaccine shows a duration of immunity in those vaccinated of greater than 15 years by blood test, by looking at titers. And greater than seven years by challenge. Challenge versus titers, two different measurements. One, the titer test is "Is there antibody present?" And that pretty much correlates with challenge but challenge is even more intense. It's blowing the actual virus, the virus that could kill somebody, at the vaccinated animals and counting up those who survived it. So by challenge, canine distemper vaccinated animals were good to go for longer than seven years. And if we go by antibody tests, they were good to go for longer than 15 years. Similarly, with Parvo virus also modified live virus, over seven years by challenge and over nine years of immunity by serology or by titer testing. Adenovirus, which is the cause of hepatitis in dogs, over seven years by challenge, they withstood the challenge more than seven years. And they still had an antibody titer after nine years. And rabies, which is a killed virus, as opposed to these modified live ones, (killed viruses, by the way, don't create as strong an immunity), we still had more than three years by challenge, meaning those who were given live rabies virus after they were vaccinated with this killed rabies vaccine, were good to go, still showed immunity for more than three years, and they still had antibody titers for more than seven.

Will Falconer, DVM 7:36

So when we're talking about immunization, or immunity, you can see that this is anything but a tank that runs out at a certain date, right? That's just not a reality. And how does that inform your thinking when you get an email or the postcard saying your Sadie is due? Or worse yet, when you've set an appointment for more vaccines, and you want to be sure Sadie's immune system is primed to respond appropriately, and not have wild overreactions or illness. What does this timing of an appointment have to do with immunity? Well, as you can see, it really doesn't have much to do with time at all. So I answered Carolyn's email, or probably comment in my blog, I guess is what it was or on this podcast comment. And I said, the product you're after is called Canine Immune Complete, and I'll have a link to that in the show notes for you. This is episode number 28. So you can go to a VitalAnimal.com/28 to find the link. Canine Immune Complete is from our sister company, Vital Pet Health. That's a complete immune booster made with transfer factors, purified transfer factors, and

medicinal mushrooms and several other synergistic ingredients that help the immune system really get rocking and rolling, really on the lookout for foreigners. And was there a hurry to ship it to her so she can be on time for Maggie shots? No way. If need be, she can easily postpone that appointment or even cancel it altogether, as she learns more about immunity from the immunologists, who I often quote.

Will Falconer, DVM 9:27

So some questions to think about. Let's leave you with some questions. First, is Parvo a disease of adult dogs? You'll often see that a 10 or a 14 year old dog is getting a Parvo vaccine. Well, how many 10 year old or 14 year old dogs get Parvo? It's a rarity. And if they get it, it's usually those who've been weakened by earlier Parvo vaccine. So if you've managed to get your animal immune without vaccination, the odds of an adult animal having Parvo are exceedingly rare. And is natural immunity to Parvo likely in dogs? That's a big Yes, because this is a virus that's everywhere dogs live. The \$40 word for this is it is ubiquitous. It lives everywhere dogs live, dog parks and walking around the block if lots of dogs walk around your block. So the chance of getting immune to that just by smelling it and go on to the next tree and smelling the next tree, smelling the poop, at the third tree, it's really, really high.

Will Falconer, DVM 10:41

A second question, have you heard of canine distemper around you in your area? It's a deadly disease, usually of young dogs, but can be any age. And it usually makes the local news if you're kind of keeping your finger on the pulse of what's going on locally, especially as concerned dogs. So, remember, past vaccination, if you've had a history of past vaccination, you've got an antibody level likely for more than 15 years. So the odds are your animal is going to be immune to it unless it's a 30 year old dog or something. So why would you need more vaccine in a 14 year old dog? Another question worth asking. I would submit that more seniors are damaged by unnecessary vaccines than probably any age group. The youngsters have their own challenges but seniors have been in a state of balance for some time, they follow the call because they think their animal is due, they get vaccinated and then I often see them spin down a horrible spiral, circling the drain and even dying prematurely.

Will Falconer, DVM 12:00

Similarly, we can ask the same questions about feline distemper aka panleukopenia. We, in this particular study I quoted we didn't have data on panleukopenia. But the duration of immunity is very long on that as well. And similarly for rabies, which is that immunity is likely lasting in rabies vaccinated animals. There's not such a thing as natural exposure to rabies, by the way, it's a virus that needs to be injected via saliva. So you don't go out to the dog park and get natural exposure immunity to rabies like it could from sniffing around and getting Parvo immunity. But those vaccinated animals are likely immune for a long time, much longer than one year for sure. And very likely longer than three. And rabies by the way, if you didn't know this is the only one that has a "law." I'm making air quotes around it, a law around it. None of the others are required by law. So you have every right to say no to those others. If you've thought your way around this and decided that your animal is unlikely to need it. And if you haven't thought your way around rabies yet, I'd suggest you

start with my free Rabies Short Course. I'll have a link to it in the show notes. Again, this is Episode 28. So <https://vitalanimal.com/28>. In my Rabies Short Course you'll learn more about rabies and the damage the vaccine can cause. And also be aware that we'll be reopening the deeper paid course called Rabies: Knowledge is Power before too long for you to join and not only go deeper on the disease, but it's greater risk, at least here in the West of the disease coming from over vaccination from this disease. These seniors that get one more vaccine, it's often a rabies vaccine, and that's the one that causes them to go into behavioral problems and paralysis problems and more likely than not, it's the cause of a shortened life. That latter course, Rabies: Knowledge is Power, shares many strategies on how to opt out of over vaccinating, law or no law, and goes deeper still on how to vaccinate if you're determined that you're going to, how to vaccinate safely. So keep an eye out for that.

Will Falconer, DVM 14:40

I'll leave you with another recent quote that came in over email on rabies from an owner whose lights have gone on but who has yet to figure out the how of avoiding more unnecessary rabies vaccines. She said "I'm desperate. I do not vaccinate but was forced to get the rabies shot for my dog, and she immediately went into rolling seizures that almost killed her, had I not intervened with valium to save her. I told the vet beforehand, I did not want it. And after that happened, I reported it to the vet. And they didn't care and told me to find another vet. Her shot is going to be considered "expired" soon, she's quoting it. And she'll be required to get another one. I won't do it, it will kill her. I'm not going to kill my dog."

Will Falconer, DVM 15:34

So that attitude goes a long way when you know that you're not going to harm your dog and you've already likely got immunity from an earlier vaccine, then the question becomes how to avoid getting more. And again, we'll go more deeply into that in Rabies: Knowledge is Power. But start with my free rabies short course linked in the show notes under [VitalAnimal.com/28](https://vitalanimal.com/28). Because this is Episode 28.

Will Falconer, DVM 16:05

So that's it. I just want you to think about time and don't make this mistake about thinking immunity is somehow a gas tank that runs out at one year or three years. It is not. Calendars have almost nothing to do with immunity. And that's true with biology in general. Nothing really follows a 30 day or a yearly calendar in biology. That's not the reality we live in. So thanks for listening. This is Dr. Will Falconer. Stay tuned. We'll continue to have more good episodes for you coming right along. Bye for now.