

The following article is an excerpt from the book,
It's For The Animals! Natural Care & Resources
by Helen L. McKinnon www.ItsForTheAnimals.com

This thought-provoking article by Dee Blanco, DVM, a holistic veterinarian, provides a greater perspective regarding vaccinations. Dr. Blanco has her practice, Los Animales Hol Vet Care, in Santa Fe, NM. She teaches classes on holistically caring for our animal companions and has been practicing holistic veterinary medicine for 15 of her 22 years as a veterinarian. To contact Dr. Blanco, e-mail petcare@drdeeblanco.com 505/ 986-3434
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Dr. Blanco's article is intended "to help you rationally think and ask questions about the use of vaccines for your animals" and is reprinted here with her kind permission.

!!?? Vaccinations ??!?

Dee Blanco, DVM

The questions around the issue of vaccinations are many. My intent is to open other doors of thinking that might help you make your decisions align with your animals, your lifestyle and your heart. Please take whatever information you find helpful and let the rest pass by.

In the last 15 years since I have been practicing exclusively holistic medicine I have taken extra time to research out the topic of vaccinations. I can honestly say I have found them to be more harmful than helpful in almost all situations. The reasons are many, which I hope to summarize for you here.

The purpose of vaccinating your animal (or yourself or your child) is to create a circulating level of antibodies in the blood. These circulating antibodies, should your animal come in contact with that infectious agent, will already be present and provide an immediate counter attack. It's a bit like having the 'minute men' on guard ready to protect and defend you against invading armies. Theoretically, this is very good, except that this also creates other problems.

First of all, most vaccines, are a combination of many viruses, sometimes as many as 6 other viruses. This is a tremendous load for the immune system to

handle at one time. This kind of exposure to that many viruses or bacteria at one time would never occur in nature. This is especially an enormous load to an immature immune system such as that of an infant or a young puppy or kitten.

Secondly, most of the viruses (except rabies, lyme, etc.) are primarily spread from animal to animal thru secretions from the nose or mouth. Almost all of the vaccines are given by injection under the skin or in the muscle. Injection is an unnatural method of transmission, bypassing one wing of the immune system (the secretory immune system) that starts in the mucus membranes. This is a very powerful and important protective component of the immune system. It's strength is very evident when we get a sore throat and swollen lymph nodes. These swollen nodes are the bodies' attempt to localize the invading virus and keep it from going anywhere else in the body. When you're depending solely on just one arm of the immune system to do most of the work the action is less efficient. You can imagine if a soldier only had one arm to fight invading soldiers.

Thirdly, there are other non-specific proteins that are put into the vaccines designed to stimulate a nonspecific immune reaction. This is where many of the chronic, long-term problems occur. By turning on the immune system in a non-specific fashion the body becomes over-reactive to everything, including things that should usually be considered benign. This will often show up as allergies of any type, including food allergies. It is a well known fact among immunologist that it is easy to turn the immune system on, but much harder to turn it off.

Fourth, other harmful components in these vaccines are the preservatives and antifungal agents. Everyone knows that preservatives can mean a longer shelf-life of a product, but they many also pose a threat to our health. The preservatives in many vaccines are known carcinogens such as thymersol (from mercury) and formalin (from formaldehyde) and aluminum. It is worth a serious thought or two if you want to inject your loved one with these agents.

Next, I'd like to explain a little bit more about how these vaccines work in the body. When you inject a virus or many viruses into the body you are asking the body to produce a circulating level of antibodies. It's like the body maintaining a state of 'exposure and stimulation' to all of these agents at the same time. In other words, we maintain a low-level state of illness in order to protect against the disease. If you are in a low level state of rabies, a low level state of parvo, a low level state of corona, a low level state of adeno virus, a low level state of distemper, a low level state of lyme, a low level state of bordatella etc., you will never be in a high-level state of health! As long as the immune system is occupied with these viruses, non-specific proteins, and these preservatives, the rest of the body is not able to maintain overall vibrant health. We won't necessarily see life threatening illness such as parvo or rabies because the vaccines usually protect against acute illness, but we will see chronic low-level debilitating disease or just chronic, low level health. These include: chronic ear

infections, eczema, poor hair coat, hot spots, warts, fatty tumors, gingivitis, tartar, arthritis, hip dysplasia, premature graying, eye discharge and many, many more.

It is outrageous that we are now accepting lower states of health as the norm. Other life threatening illnesses such as seizures, auto immune diseases, injection site fibrosarcomas, personality disorders, benign and malignant tumors, diabetes, thyroid disease, endocrine disorders, inflammatory bowel disease and immune suppressive disorders are some of the chronic diseases that many believe start as an adverse reaction to vaccines. The only accepted adverse reactions at this time are fibrosarcomas in cats, auto immune hemolytic anemia in certain purebred and anaphylactic shock.

The amount of chronic illness has grown astronomically since I graduated from vet school in 1981. Could vaccines be a factor? Could poor quality diets? Could polluted water and air contribute? Could the continual use of pesticides, antibiotics, and steroids and other pharmaceuticals be playing a role in our animal's health?

This leads me to the topic of susceptibility. Once an animal reaches puberty their level of susceptibility decreases dramatically. This is also true for us humans. Vaccinating past the point of serious susceptibility is an erroneous practice immunologically. Most of our domestic animals are vaccinated every year of their life without accounting for the susceptibility factor. This would be like vaccinating yearly every human being for our entire lives for chicken pox, measles, mumps, polio, diphtheria, etc.

The current vaccination practices are a historical practice not based on any sound immunological practices. I have more information on the history should you desire, but suffice to say that there is no proven scientific basis for the annual revaccination of our animals. In fact there is information that the residual immunity from a modified live vaccine may neutralize the new vaccines and hinder the virus replication- thereby making the new vaccine worthless. With a killed vaccine, the repeated vaccines don't necessarily prolong immunity either.

Another disturbing fact about vaccines is the lack of studies that determine the exact (or even close would be helpful) duration of immunity these vaccines actually incur. The biologic companies that make the vaccines are self admittedly very hesitant to conduct these studies primarily because of the cost involved. But, we the public and veterinarians are not demanding these studies. Let me make a very important point here: even if we did have studies, because of the nature of immunology we will still not get definitive and complete information from these studies! No matter how many studies there will never be one clear-cut answer. This is because the immune system is a complex system. Our lives are complex, the stressors are complex. But, what the duration of immunity studies and antibody titers can tell us is that the immune system has been activated and is likely to be protective against the invading agent.

I have yet to bring up the topic of animal rights and issues of freedom. Nor have I mentioned the regional exposure to specific diseases, antibody titers and the use of homeopathic nosodes for immunological protection. These are topics for later discussion.

I have only presented some of the vast information available about vaccinations (please ask for a bibliography for more info.). I can definitively say that fear and money seem to dictate the use of vaccines, not sound immunology or common sense. I hope this paper, with my strong bias, is still able to help you rationally think and ask questions about the use of vaccines for your animals.