



## **Staying Safe at The Barking Birch: A Guide to Vaccinations**

At the Barking Birch, we take care of our pack members as if they were our own family members—whether they run on two legs or four. It's important to us that any of our furry visitors have fun and enjoy themselves while visiting. Part of having the most fun possible, though, is being safe.

To keep our pack in the best health, we require our guests to be up to date on three important vaccinations: Rabies, Bordetella, and Distemper. Never heard of those before? We're happy to tell you a bit more about why we require them and how they protect your pooch.

### **Rabies Vaccinations**

This is probably the most widely known and common vaccination for dogs. Rabies shots are required by most city ordinances – including in most cities in Minnesota.

Rabies is a serious viral illness that is often fatal but can easily be prevented with regular vaccinations. It can infect all mammals—even humans—and is transmitted through a bite or a scratch.

#### **How often does my dog need it?**

Puppies can get their first rabies dose at 12-16 weeks old. They'll get the second dose after one year, and booster shots every three years. Your vet will often give you a new metal ID tag every time your dog gets a rabies booster shot.

#### **Are there any side effects?**

Side effects after the vaccine are usually mild: soreness at the injection site, fatigue, sometimes a slight fever. These usually go away after a day. Some dogs might develop hives, vomiting, a swollen face, or collapse after getting an injection. These symptoms are rare, and you should contact your vet if you believe your dog is having a bad reaction to the vaccine.

### **Distemper Vaccinations**

Distemper is another viral disease active in dogs. It's spread through the air, much like the common cold. Because it is easily transmissible, it can be tough to control among stray dogs or groups of unvaccinated dogs. Just like with Rabies, though, it is easy to prevent with regular visits to the vet.

### **How often does my dog need it?**

Distemper vaccines are often given in combination with other vaccines, like parvovirus or parainfluenza. Puppies can get their first shot when they are eight weeks old, another at 12 weeks, and a third at 16 weeks. After a year, they'll get a booster shot, then boosters every three years.

### **Are there any side effects?**

Most dogs do not have side effects from the shot, though some feel lethargic, develop a mild fever, or can have soreness around the injection site. More serious side effects (like swelling, loss of appetite, or diarrhea) might be a sign of an allergic reaction and you should contact your vet.

## ***Bordetella Vaccinations***

Bordetella is a vaccination against a disease called kennel cough. Although kennel cough isn't usually fatal for a healthy dog, it is easily spread from pup to pup. Because our dogs meet so many new friends and play in groups for most of the day, this vaccination is important for the entire pack.

### **How often does my dog need it?**

Puppies get their first Bordetella shot at 6-8 weeks old, and a second four weeks later. If your pup is at least 16 weeks old, they'll only need one shot because their immune system is much stronger. Adult dogs should get a booster shot every six to twelve months. At the Barking Birch, we require a booster once per year. You might consider getting a booster more often if your dog is exposed to unvaccinated dogs more often, such as at the dog park.

### **Are there any side effects?**

Again, side effects are usually mild. Some dogs might feel more tired than usual or have pain around the injection. A mild fever is normal, but more severe reactions should be reported to your vet immediately.

## ***Vaccinations at The Barking Birch***

Before you bring your dog to The Barking Birch for Daycare, Grooming, or Lodging, you must show up-to-date vaccination records. You can do this by presenting a copy of your vaccination records at our front desk or emailing them to us at [info@thebarkingbirch.com](mailto:info@thebarkingbirch.com) Don't have a copy of your dog's vaccinations? No problem! Simply call your vet and ask them to send us a copy.