

Combination Shots for Dogs: Weapons of Over-Vaccination



By: [Jan Rasmusen](#) - Reading Time: 8 minutes



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Combination Shots For Dogs

Whombo combos, mumbo jumbos: that's what veterinarians who understand immunology call combination shots.

Unlike a vaccine such as rabies, which contains a single virus, combination vaccines contain multiple "modified live" viruses mixed with various bacteria.

Think of them as toxic soups, biochemical wolves in sheep's clothing. When your vet sends out reminders to bring your dog "up to date on shots," expect the whombo combo. Beware the wolf.

You've probably seen combo shots listed on your vet bill as DHLPP, DHLPPC, DA2LPPC, 5-Way, 6-Way, 7-Way, 7 in 1 or the like.

After you learn more about them, you won't want to see them on a bill again.

Why Would Your Vet Use Combination Shots?

Profit and convenience are the big selling points. Vets in large corporate practices, even those who don't like combo shots, may be under orders to use them.

I suspect some vets don't realize (or want to believe) how dangerous these weapons of over-vaccination can be.

Pharmaceutical reps, frequent visitors to veterinary clinics, promote the shot's many benefits for the vets while minimizing potential risks for pets. Adverse reaction reporting is voluntary and rare. The 2007 World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) Vaccine Guidelines reports (regarding all vaccines) there is: "gross under-reporting of vaccine-associated adverse events which impedes knowledge of the ongoing safety of these products." Unless a vet is an avid veterinary journal reader, he/she may be stuck in the mindset of believing shots are safe and that if shots are good, more shots are better.

Proponents say that the combo saves Spot multiple needle pricks, and saves you and your vet time and money. True — but only if vaccinating against multiple diseases is really necessary ... and only if expensive adverse reactions don't occur.

Why Should You Avoid Combination Shots?

Immunity given by some vaccine components can last for years, even a lifetime, but other components may give immunity for less a year, yet they're packaged together.

This is the pharmaceutical equivalent of packaging beef jerky and ice cream together.

To keep immunity strong with short-duration vaccines, the long-duration vaccines have to be given again and again needlessly. This exposes your dog repeatedly, for no good reason, to adverse reactions which may include skin diseases, autoimmune disease, allergies and even death.

Vets who still, for monetary reasons or ignorance, [vaccinate](#) annually find this practice quite convenient.

Jab away.

But vets who've switched to vaccinating every three years — which is still a misunderstanding of current guidelines recommending vaccinating "no more often" than every three years — aren't using the short-duration vaccines often enough. Either they don't believe the short-duration shots are really necessary (which is usually true) or they are being negligent and putting your dog at risk.

Some combo components are made from viruses, some are from bacteria, all delivered at once with a dangerous punch.

Dr. Patricia Jordan, author of *Mark of the Beast*, writes about one manufacturer's combo shot: "... the absolutely worse adverse vaccine reactions have been noted with ... the "mumbo jumbo" polyvalent with several modified live viruses, killed whole bacterins of Leptospirosis, killed corona virus (the vaccine looking for a disease), lots of adjuvant, mercury, aluminum, antibacterial like gentocin, antifungal and fungi stats, proprietary ingredients of whose true identity makes me shudder to even speculate."

Author Catherine J.M. Diodati wrote about combination shots in her *Vaccine Guide for Dogs & Cats*: "The number of pathogens plus toxic and carcinogenic chemicals that the animals are exposed to all at once generate an enormous toll on the immune system. The results can be devastating."

Small dogs and puppies suffer more adverse reactions when receiving multiple antigens at once.

Melissa Kennedy, DVM, PhD, DACVIM wrote in *DVM360* on-line magazine: "The likelihood of adverse reactions in dogs has been found to correlate with the size of the dog and the number of inoculations given, with higher risk associated with small size and multiple inoculations."

Renowned pet vaccination expert Dr. Jean Dodds has written about combo shots (she calls them combo whombos) that they: "can overwhelm the immunocompromised or even a healthy host.... The recently weaned young puppy or kitten being placed in a new environment may be at particular risk."

This means: no combo shots for small dogs — or any other dog for that matter. And NEVER EVER GIVE ANY OTHER SHOT — ESPECIALLY A RABIES SHOT — WITHIN 3 WEEKS OF A COMBO. This also means no Bordetella given nasally. Giving rabies and Bordetella with a combo could mean as many as 9 shots in one day. Some dogs don't survive this.

If your dog experiences a reaction to the combo shot, there is no way to determine which antigen caused the reaction and must be avoided in the future.

Determining which antigen caused the reaction is like trying to determine which ingredient is causing an allergic reaction to kibble. It can't be done.

If all this isn't bad enough, the components are unnecessary for most adult dogs, the great majority of which have lifetime immunity to the important shots or have no need for other ingredients.

So, Exactly What's In These Combination Shots?

The ingredients differ, but here are some in the most common combos.

Give me a D! Give me a P!

The D is for distemper and one P is for parvovirus. Your dog very likely has lifetime immunity to both if he has had even one shot for these diseases after 4 months of age. These are important shots, but they needn't be given again and again. In fact, adult dogs rarely need revaccination for parvovirus and distemper and there is a simple blood test called a titer test that your vet can run to prove immunity.

H stands for hepatitis, a disease virtually nonexistent in North America. Sometimes this is expressed as A2, or adenovirus 2, which gives cross protection to hepatitis. According to the 2006 American Animal Hospital Association Canine Vaccine Task Force Report, it gives immunity for 7 or more years. To protect against the disease reemerging, renowned pet vaccination expert Dr. Ron Schultz recommends giving adenovirus-2 just once after a dog is 16 weeks old.

L is for leptospirosis, a highly-reactive “non-core” shot (says the AVMA, AAHA, AHVMA, and all North American vet schools). Non-core vaccines are to be given only in special cases, not to every dog who trots into the clinic. It often doesn't even protect against the specific disease strains in your area. Jeffers Pet veterinary supply, a vaccine seller, warns: “Many vets do not recommend vaccinating small dogs or young pups with Lepto. The vaccine is not normally needed and can cause harsh and sometimes fatal reactions. House dogs do not need to be vaccinated for Lepto; adult outside dogs need to be vaccinated for Lepto only if there is a possibility of traveling in the same area as feral animals.”

(Related: [Leptospirosis Vaccine and Kidney Failure In Dogs](#))

The other P is for parainfluenza (giving immunity for at least 3 years). It is also a non-core shot and does not protect against the canine flu.

C is for coronavirus, a vaccine specifically “not recommended” by any major vet organization or school. Extremely rare, it's called “a vaccine looking for a disease.” Diodati reports that the reactions from the shot are more dangerous than the disease itself.

Combination shots are part of the unethical practice of over-vaccination of pets. They should have no place in your dog's health care regimen. And vets who use them should have no place in your dog's life.

[NOTE] Want to know if your dog is getting unnecessary and dangerous shots? [Click Here](#) to grab our free guide and find out which vaccines he might not need.

Did Your Vet Inform You Fully About This Shot Before Giving It?

If your dog was given a combo shot, and your vet didn't explain exactly what was in it, why your dog needed it, why your dog may not have needed certain components, and what adverse reactions they may cause, change vets (and tell him/her why) and report that vet to your state veterinary board for using products not backed by science and not informing you properly.

This is the only way things will change.

Veterinarians have a legal obligation to obtain your informed consent before vaccinating by fully disclosing benefits and risks of the suggested shot — and alternatives. Of course, had they told you the truth about these shots, you'd probably wouldn't have consented.

Alternatives To Combo Shots

To avoid the combination shot, you have to take action and be willing to stand up to your vet (or switch vets). Most are reluctant to give up their cash cow. Here's what to do:

1. Test titers for parvovirus and distemper. If titers are strong, don't revaccinate. (If weak, read my article.) Forgo leptospirosis, coronavirus, hepatitis and everything else unless your dog has an urgent, proven need because of the special circumstances of his lifestyle.
2. Avoid clinics that subscribe to "one size fits all" vaccination even though all vet schools and organizations recommend otherwise.
3. If you're vaccinating a puppy, or a young dog with low antibody titers, ask your vet to use a monovalent vaccine (meaning the vial contains only one vaccine). Also, use vials with only one dose to avoid the extra chemicals preventing contamination in multi-dose vials. Three readily available vaccines include: Galaxy Pv (a shot containing only parvovirus, offering 7+ years of immunity) and Galaxy D (a shot containing only distemper, giving 5 or more years of immunity). If those aren't available, use Intervet Progard Puppy DPV containing both parvovirus and distemper but nothing else.
4. If your vet won't purchase monovalent shots (protesting that his distributor doesn't carry them), purchase them yourself and have your vet give them. Refrigerate until use. Better yet, have them sent to your vet by the reseller. You may not be able to purchase just one vial, but the extra cost is worth the savings from potential adverse reactions.
5. Better still, find a holistic vet who'll know how to vaccinate, or not vaccinate, without harming your dog and already use monovalent vaccines.

I asked holistic vet Tamara Hebbler what she thought about combo shots. She responded: "I won't give them. Ever! You couldn't pay me enough to use them. It's like playing Russian Roulette with your dog's health. The risks are just too great."

I couldn't have said it better myself.