



Welcome to this new column by local Veterinarian Dan Flynn from Balmoral and Commons Brae Vets. He will answer your questions about problem pet issues over the coming issues of South Belfast Life magazine. If you have a question you'd like the vet to write about, email: askdanthevet@gmail.com.

Q: Why does my dog need to be vaccinated annually?

We all want happy, healthy pets! When a new puppy comes home the first stop is usually to the vet to get a course of vaccinations so the puppy can safely mix with other dogs and can be taken out for walks.

But many people aren't aware that this initial course of vaccinations doesn't protect your pet for his entire life.

The diseases being protected against in the puppy injection course are;

- Canine Parvo virus
- Canine Distemper virus
- Leptospirosis
- Infectious canine Hepatitis
- Parainfluenza

The first year annual booster given at about 14 months of age is one of the most important injections to give some prolonged protection against these diseases. Parvo and Distemper vaccinations can give good protection up to three years after this first year annual booster.

However with the other diseases, especially Leptospirosis, good protection



can only be achieved with a repeated annual injection.

I recently did a blood test for a client who was worried about a vaccination, to look at the levels of protection after one year. We found protection levels of Parvo and Distemper good but the Hepatitis fell below the level required and therefore would require a booster.

To give your dog the best protection, I recommend six monthly health checks and annual booster vaccination. Your vet will always be open to discuss what your pet is being vaccinated for and the risks of your pet picking up these diseases.

Remember, if there are any issues you would like discussed in the column let us know. Email: askdanthevet@gmail.com.

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