

## Magazine

### Does my pet really need a rabies vaccination?

Posted on March 9, 2012 by Luke



Thanks to various government anti-rabies programs over the decades, instances of rabies infections among humans are now rare, which means that taking a pet abroad is now easier than ever.

In the past, taking a beloved pet with you [when travelling](#) meant dealing with all sorts of delays – some countries, including the UK, ran a compulsory quarantine scheme whereby animals travelling into the country were placed in a kennel for six months to ensure they were not infected with rabies or other contagious diseases.

However, as of January 2012, a new scheme run by DEFRA (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs) known as the 'Pet Travel Scheme' was officially introduced. The scheme will make use of fast, advanced techniques of spotting and diagnosing rabies, so that pets can travel to and from the UK without the need for quarantine.

However, even though these techniques have come on in leaps and bounds, it's still compulsory to get your dog or cat vaccinated against rabies when travelling to many countries – otherwise you simply won't be allowed in, which will put a bit of a dampener on your holiday, to say the least!

The rabies vaccination is an essential part of your pet's passport, and should state:

- The date and expiry date of the injection
- The name of the vaccine used
- The batch number and
- The date when the next booster is due

It's also important to check that your pet's vaccination is well within the expiry date; otherwise you and your furry friend may be refused permission to travel.

As crucial as rabies vaccinations are for human health, the injection has caused considerable controversy over the years, because some animals have experienced serious adverse reactions, including difficulty breathing, facial swelling, seizures and fits.

If your pet experiences any of these complications after being vaccinated, it's essential that you call your vet immediately. However, severe allergic reactions of this sort are rare and can often be treated with specialist drugs.

For more [rabies injection information](#), take a look at this [rabies information wiki](#), which provides a useful guide detailing the types of vaccines available and the risks involved, so you can make an informed choice – many people find it far more convenient to leave their pets with friends, family or neighbours when jetting off abroad.

However, if you do decide to whisk your furry friend away with you, there are ways to make the vaccination experience less stressful, both for you and your pet – particularly during the trip to the vet.

Bringing your pet's favourite blanket and toy along for the ride will give them something familiar to sniff or play with, whilst tempting them with a [dog treat](#) before and after the injection will be a welcome (and edible) distraction. Moreover, giving your four-legged friend a dog treat whenever they have been good (and brave, for that matter!) is a great way to reinforce good behaviour.

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