Common concerns regarding vaccination delays

- Inadequate establishment of the immune response due to an incomplete or delayed primary series.
- Loss of protection from boosters resulting from these delays.
- Longer intervals may decrease the anamnestic response to boosters.

A few things to consider...

- Immune systems are pretty smart and the vaccines we have are very good.
- A lot of what we do is based on convenience and is not necessarily related to the immune system. *(Immune systems don’t recalibrate based on the calendar!)*
- Short intervals are mainly designed for rapid onset of protective immunity, not because we absolutely need to get things done within a specific window, or because of concerns about loss of response.
- Just because we go over the defined period for the booster doesn’t mean we’ve necessarily lost the ability for an anamnestic response.
- Evidence-based assessments are difficult because studies are not always done for a variety of vaccination intervals.
ESTABLISHING PROTOCOLS FOR PATIENTS WHOSE VACCINES ARE OVERDUE

**REVIEW: Do your homework**
- **✓ Familiarize yourself with the label recommendations** for all the vaccines you use.
- **✓ Contact your vaccine providers** and speak with technical services veterinarians for information about their products and how to use them.
  - Find out what **support they will provide** in case of problems.
  - Be aware of the fact that they are **legally bound to the licensing (label) claims**.
  - Understand that manufacturers **don't have much data about uses that differ from the label instructions**, and have not conducted trials to assess a variety of vaccination intervals.
- **✓ Review the AAHA, AAFP and WSAVA guidelines** on feline and canine vaccination. (*Links provided in a separate “Complementary resources” document.*)
- **✓ Check with provincial authorities** to find out about the implications, from a regulatory standpoint, of overdue rabies vaccination.

**ASSESS: Determine individual needs**
- **✓ Conduct a thorough risk assessment** for each patient.
  - **What is the likelihood of exposure**, based on regional and/or lifestyle risk factors?
  - **What is the risk of severe disease**, based on the patient's age, living conditions, health status, etc.?
  - **What is the patient's vaccination status**?
  - **For how long** has vaccination been overdue?
- **✓ Consider the type of clients** you have
  - **What do they want**?
  - **How risk-averse are they**?
  - **How cost-conscious are they**?

**IMPLEMENT: Go with your comfort level**
- **✓ Get together with your team** to discuss local disease prevalence, patient needs and your staff's ability to meet those needs when resources are stretched thin and things are complicated.
- **✓ Establish priorities** according to patient types, and be consistent in your recommendations.
- **✓ If permitted in your jurisdiction, consider involving your technicians** in the administration of boosters, under veterinarian supervision, to optimize veterinarians' time. (*Check with your province's licensing bodies to confirm.*)
  - Clients may appreciate a price adjustment for boosters administered by technicians.
- **✓ Reassure clients** that failure to revaccinate on the precise anniversary of the last vaccination does not necessarily mean that their pet is unprotected, especially in the case of core vaccines.
- **✓ Make sure that your clients understand** your protocol and that you get their informed consent, especially when you drift from the vaccine label and/or AAHA, AAFP and/or WSAVA guidelines.
- **✓ Remember, no one is an expert at this** – trust yourself and your team!

View the “Practical considerations for the vaccination of cats and dogs in 2021” webcast and complete the questionnaire for CE credit.

**WATCH NOW**

**ACCESS COMPLEMENTARY RESOURCES**

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