



# Main Street Veterinary Services

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## Titer Testing

Reprinted with permission by Dr. Shawn Messonnier, [www.petcarenaturally.com](http://www.petcarenaturally.com)  
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Vaccines have been ONE OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT FACTORS in reducing serious infectious diseases. Although all veterinarians agree vaccines are necessary, studies showing minimum duration of immunity (DOI) of at least three years (and likely longer) are causing veterinarians to question the frequency with which these vaccines are administered.

Based on current research, we know that most vaccines, specifically the core canine vaccines (parvo, distemper, and adenovirus) can produce long-lasting immunity, thus making regular vaccination unnecessary. Core vaccines should not be given any more often than every three years after the 12-month booster injection following the puppy/kitten series, because the DOI lasts many years, even up to the lifetime of the pet.

In order to ensure the existence of DOI, and determine if/when booster vaccinations are needed, titer testing may be used. For canine core vaccines, there is excellent correlation between the presence of antibody and protective immunity, and there is long DOI for these products. The benefits of titer testing include the prevention of unnecessary vaccination, allowing the doctor to individualize vaccine protocols and encourage vaccination when needed.

Since the purpose of titer testing is to demonstrate protective immunity, it should be done in the following instances: any adult animals (over one to two years of age), strays, at shelters/ rescues, in pets with lapsed vaccinations, and in puppies two or more weeks after the last puppy vaccine at 14 to 16 weeks. When antibody is present, there should not be a need to revaccinate the dog for the specific disease being tested. If antibody titer is absent, the dog should be revaccinated unless there is a medical basis for not doing so.

Until recently, a perceived drawback in performing antibody tests was the cost and time it took to obtain results. Titer testing usually required sending blood samples to a lab, which entailed a relatively expensive test and results obtained days or weeks later.

Recently approved by the USDA, VacciCheck® is intended to be used as an in-house diagnostic tool to evaluate the antibody response to the core vaccination or infection by canine hepatitis, parvovirus and distemper virus. It is a “self-contained” dot ELISA titer test kit, with no need for any reagent preparation. Results are available in 21 minutes. With VacciCheck®, practitioners can offer a quick and easy test that can be performed at a reasonable cost to pet owners.

VacciCheck® titre testing is available at Main Street Veterinary Services. Titre testing is \$40 plus a blood draw fee if applicable. Please call 519-203-2000

