

Antibody Testing Versus Vaccination

The demand for and availability of antibody testing (both qualitative and quantitative) for canine vaccine preventable diseases has increased substantially over the past decade.

It is imperative, when assessing test results, that the veterinarian have a clear understanding of the indications for testing and the interpretation of test results.

This section of the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) Canine Vaccination Guidelines specifically addresses indications and interpretation with respect to canine distemper virus (CDV), canine parvovirus (CPV), and canine adenovirus (CAV) antibody only.

Antibody testing for the purposes of determining protection from infection is valid only for CDV, CPV, and CAV.

For more information on interpreting antibody tests for:

- [Diseases prevented or mitigated by both core \(CDV, CAV-2, CPV\) and noncore vaccines \(Lyme, leptospira, influenza\), see FAQ section.](#)
- [Rabies antibody testing](#)

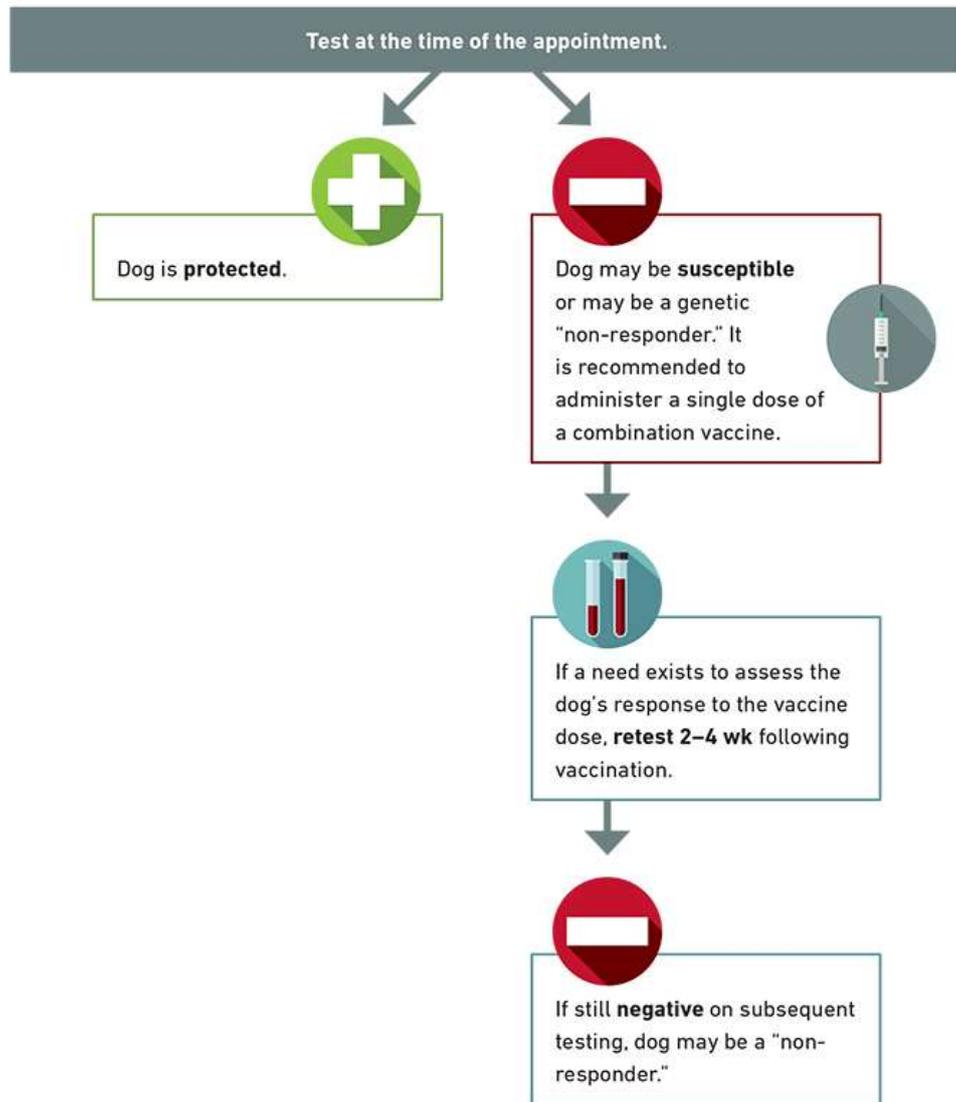
Quantitative Antibody Testing	Qualitative Antibody Testing
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Results reported as a titer (e.g., 1:1600).• Methodology: a laboratory-based, "end-point" test.• Generally more sensitive than qualitative tests.• Results usually reported within days.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Results reported as "yes" (POSITIVE) or "no" (NEGATIVE).• Methodology: in-hospital, point-of-care test kit.• Good correlation with "positive" quantitative test results.• Results available within 25 minutes.

In This Section:

- a "positive" test result correlates with protection from infection if exposed.
- a "negative" test result may correlate with susceptibility. False negative test results do occur and can be associated with test sensitivity, insufficient time following vaccination for a detectable antibody response to develop, natural decline of antibody over time, procedural errors, etc.

Interpreting the significance of a "positive" versus "negative" test result is largely dependent on the test indication. Select from the list of indications below

1. To assess the immunity when there is a prior vaccination history in an adult dog but the dog is due (or is overdue) for a scheduled booster.



2. Guide decisions on the need for revaccination (booster) by assessing the immunity of dogs who have or are:
3. To assess the immunity following completion of the initial vaccination series in puppies >24 wk of age
4. To assess the immunity in adult dogs when there is no (or unknown) vaccination history.
5. Prebreeding assessment of immunity.
6. To identify a genetic "nonresponder" (e.g., canine parvovirus)..
7. Assessment of the immunity of shelter-housed dogs
7. Guide decisions on the need for revaccination (booster) by assessing the immunity of dogs who have or are: