



INTRANASAL (KENNEL COUGH) VACCINE TRAINING

Having the kennel cough vaccine can be an unpleasant experience for some dogs. Although you can never take away that odd feeling from liquid being squirted into the nose, you can do a lot to help your dog be prepared for the experience.

Try to start this training at least a week before the vaccine is due – longer is even better!

Step 1: Teach your dog to put his chin on your palm

Hold your hand out just in front of you with your palm facing up.

Encourage your dog using your voice to come close. Praise and treat all attempts to work out what you want as follows:

- praise and treat him looking at your hand
- praise and treat him moving towards your hand
- praise and treat him touching your hand
- praise and treat him placing his chin on your hand
- add a cue, such as “chin” once the behaviour is reliable

Ignore any behaviour you don't want, such as pawing at your hand or trying to chew it.

Step 2: Move your hand around and upwards

Once your dog will put his chin on your hand reliably to the cue “chin”, start to gently move your hand. Build this up slowly using your dog's response as the guide to how far and how quickly you can progress this part of the training. Don't push it! Praise and treat each successful trial.

Your aim is to be able to lift your dog's head up by gently pushing on his chin so his nose is in the air.

Once you can do that, build up to holding his chin in that position for 5-10 seconds.

Make sure you are still praising and treating him each time.

Step 3: Getting used to a syringe

Either get hold of an actual syringe (best), or use something similar such as a small pen.

Allow your dog to have a good sniff at it.

Gradually, over many small attempts, bring it closer and closer to his nose, praising and treating regularly. Watch him for any uncertainty – him looking unsure, moving away, turning his head away etc. and stop immediately.

Once he can tolerate it touching his nose, ask him for “chin”, raise his head a fraction and approach with the syringe/pen again.

Build this until he is happy to lift his nose in the air and have it touched by the syringe.

Step 4: Adding the feel of liquid

Once your dog is happy to be touched by the syringe/pen as per step 3, start again with his head just resting on your hand, dip the syringe/pen in water then touch his nose.

Again build until he is happy with this when his nose is in the air.

(NB Do NOT try and drop or squirt any water into his nose – this is just to get the feel of liquid near his nose)

You can watch a video showing this training here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQEnIj0j4hI&t>