

5 Reasons to Utilize Recombinant Vaccines in Your Practice

New technology provides veterinarians with more vaccine product options, but knowing what product is the safest and most effective can be difficult. Richard B. Ford, DVM, DACVIM, DACVPM (Hon), explains five reasons you should utilize recombinant vaccines in your practice. To find out more about this topic, listen to the full discussion between Dr. Ford and Cassi Fleming, MS, DVM, in the Vet2Vet conversation, sponsored by Boehringer Ingelheim, by scanning the QR code below.

1. Sophisticated science and research

Recombinant vaccines are based on extensive research. The sophisticated science involves engineering cell lines to efficiently produce recombinant proteins to improve their physiochemical and pharmacological properties. Recombinant vaccines are at the forefront of advancement and this research was initiated to address the problems of older vaccine technologies.

2. A different approach

Recombinant vaccines work differently than other vaccine technologies commonly used in veterinary medicine. Rather than using an inactivated or weakened version of the pathogen, recombinant vaccines inject genetic code, instead of an antigen, that targets only one or two immunogenic proteins rather than the entire virus or bacteria.

3. Targeted immunity

The immunogenic proteins in the recombinant vaccine stimulate the production of specific antibodies, resulting in a targeted immune response. For example, the RECOMBITEK® Lyme vaccine from Boehringer Ingelheim contains lipidated outer surface protein A (Osp A), which is a critical determinant of

immunogenicity, and the vaccine elicits a significantly higher antibody response when compared to a non-lipidated adjuvanted Osp A/ chimeric outer surface protein C (Osp C) vaccine.

4. Earlier immunity

Unlike modified live vaccines, the recombinant canine distemper vaccine is not recognized by maternal antibodies, so puppies can receive earlier immunizations. This is especially helpful in high-risk populations such as shelter animals, where dogs are at higher risk for contracting canine distemper.

5. Fewer vaccine-related reactions

Recombinant vaccines provide targeted immunity by introducing only 1 or 2 immunogenic proteins. This results in decreased vaccine reaction risk when compared to killed and modified-live viral vaccines. Recombinant vaccines are less likely to cause systemic and injection site reactions, making them a safer vaccine choice.



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1. Winkler, et al. Canine Lyme Disease: One-year duration of immunity elicited with a canine OspA monovalent Lyme vaccine. *Intern J Appl Res Vet Med*. 2006;4(1):23-28.

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