Ferret Vaccination Schedule

Because ferrets are highly susceptible to the fatal viral disease caused by the canine distemper virus, they should be protected by vaccination. The vaccination schedule generally involves vaccination with a ferret approved canine distemper vaccine at 8, 11, and 14 weeks followed by yearly boosters. Most young pet ferrets have already had their first canine distemper vaccine before entering the pet trade.

Ferrets are also vaccinated for rabies (a requirement by many states). The vaccination schedule for rabies vaccine is at 3 months followed by yearly boosters.

On occasion, a ferret may experience a vaccine reaction. When this happens, it occurs within 20 minutes of receiving a vaccination; therefore, ferret owners are asked to wait in the hospital for at least 30 minutes before taking their ferret home. Signs associated with a vaccine reaction include reddening of the skin, the hair standing on end (this gives the tail a bottle-brush like appearance), vomiting, diarrhea, panting, and in severe cases, collapse. When any of these signs appear, the ferret will be immediately taken by the hospital staff and given medication to counteract the medication. If a ferret has had a previous vaccine reaction, the client should notify the doctor prior to the ferret receiving another vaccination.