

Cats Fact Sheet

Vaccinations

Cat flu is still commonly seen in unvaccinated kittens, which will be suffering with poor appetite, excessive nose and eye discharge and possibly ulcers starting in the eyes. These kittens are often very sick and may not recover from the virus.

Vaccination is recommended and works well against:

Cat flu (Herpes and calici viruses)

Enteritis (a parvovirus causing severe diarrhoea)

Leukaemia (a debilitating virus causing variable non-specific signs)

Flu and enteritis vaccination is essential for catteries.

The primary course consists of 2 injections 3-4 weeks apart from 8 weeks of age.

Booster vaccinations are given annually. Cats are given a full examination at this time to check for any other problems and to discuss any concerns you may have.

Other vaccinations include:

Rabies vaccine

As the UK is free from Rabies, only travelling cats are required to have this vaccine. This will be an essential requirement for the Pet passport (PETS) scheme, which enables cats to re-enter the UK without undergoing 6 months quarantine.

Chlamydomphila felis vaccine (consider this for a cattery or multi-cat households)

Chlamydomphila vaccine is rarely requested, but can be given in combination with other vaccine components. This bacteria can cause recurrent conjunctivitis and possibly respiratory signs in cats, though is treatable with appropriate antibiotics.

Bordetella vaccine (consider this for a cattery or multi-cat households)

Bordetella bronchispetica vaccine is rarely requested and needs to be administered into the nose to provide protection for one year. This bacteria causes respiratory disease (sneezing, coughing etc) though can be treated with appropriate antibiotics.

Safety of vaccines

Vaccination safety is always a serious consideration We examine animals to ensure that they are fit and well at the time to minimise any potential problems. The vast majority of cats show no adverse effects at all, but occasionally they can feel low for a day or so after vaccination. Rarely, a soft tissue swelling can develop at the site of injection, but will disappear with time. Generally, the benefits of vaccination greatly outweigh any adverse effects. (We vaccinate our own pets).

Worming

Cats can be prone to worms throughout life as kittens may acquire roundworms via the mother's milk and adults often catch and eat prey with worms. Fleas can also help to transmit tapeworms. We recommend worming kittens every 3 weeks until 12 weeks old then monthly until 6 months, then generally every 3 months, though sometimes more frequently in actively hunting cats.



“Unwelcome Guests” - fleas and ticks



Fleas



Fleas are very common in cats, some of which show minimal signs, while others may develop allergic skin signs with fur loss, sore skin and scabs. These small blood-sucking insects are visible crawling through the coat, leaving tiny black comma-shaped faecal deposits. Eggs, once laid, will drop to the ground to develop through larvae and pupae stages to adults, where they can jump onto your cat again. All cats and dogs in the household will need to be treated, as well as eliminating the environmental population by washing bedding, hovering and shampooing carpets and using a recommended household flea spray.

Ticks



Ticks are blood-sucking parasites typically picked up from the grass, where they wait for the cat to pass by. As ticks swell with blood, this can cause irritation, and removal may be needed along with a suitable tick treatment, available at the surgery.

Neutering



Spaying (ovariohysterectomy under a general anaesthetic)

Female cats can be neutered from 5-6 months of age, mainly to prevent unwanted pregnancies. Un-neutered, every time they come into season (usually every 3 weeks), they will “call” and show escapist tendencies.

Castration (removing the testes under a general anaesthetic)

Castration of male cats is recommended to:

Prevent breeding

Prevent wandering, fighting with other cats, associated wounds, abscesses

Reduce the transmission of certain diseases (especially FeLV (feline leukaemia virus) and FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus) due to reduced bite wounds.

Prevent/reduce spraying or marking (pungent) urine in the house and garden

