

## When is the right time to vaccinate?

Immunity passed on from the mother to the young will start to reduce at about 7-8 weeks of age. Some vaccinations are designed to be given earlier than this and others slightly later.



Your vet will be able to help you decide on the right time to vaccinate depending on your requirements.

Some vaccinations require a **'primary course'** which usually consists of two vaccinations given between 2 and 3 weeks apart.



**Booster vaccinations** will then be required at regular intervals to maintain lifelong protection for your pet. These intervals will vary depending on the vaccine type but may be between 12- 36 months.

## Summary:

- Vaccinations are an important way of protecting your pet from serious illness.
- Regular health checks at the time of vaccination will allow your vet to make sure your pet remains fit and well.
- Speak to the staff at your practice if you would like more information about which vaccinations may be appropriate for your pet.



XLVets Small Animal member veterinary practices work together to share experience, knowledge and ideas to ensure the highest levels of quality and care for their client's pets. XLVet member practices provide a compassionate and caring service for all pets and at the same time offer comprehensive and up-to-date treatment in all fields of veterinary medicine and surgery.

# THE IMPORTANCE OF VACCINATION FOR YOUR PET



## Why vaccinate?

There are a number of contagious diseases which can affect our pets. These can cause severe illness or in many cases can be fatal. Many of the diseases are preventable by vaccination. This leaflet will help you understand what protection is available for your pet.

## What is a vaccination and how does it work?

Vaccinations in pets generally consist of a small injection administered under the skin at the back of the neck. The exception is one that can be given to dogs, which is a few drops of liquid administered via the nose.

**The purpose of a vaccination is to boost the immune system of your pet to protect it against serious infectious disease.**

In most cases young animals are born with some protection which they have gained from their mothers at birth. As they begin to grow however, this protection fades and unless we vaccinate they will be left exposed to illness.

## Which diseases can we vaccinate against?

### CATS



#### Feline Herpesvirus and Feline Calicivirus

Together these viruses contribute to the disease commonly known as 'cat flu'. Affected cats will have symptoms including runny eyes and nose. Once the cat is affected the viruses can remain dormant for many years and re-emerge from time to time particularly during times of stress.

#### Feline Infectious Enteritis

Symptoms of this disease are similar to Parvo virus in puppies and can include severe bloody diarrhoea.

#### Feline Leukaemia Virus

This disease can be caught during direct cat to cat contact, particularly during fighting or grooming. Symptoms can be varied and include loss of appetite and weight loss.

### RABBITS

#### Myxomatosis

This is common problem among wild rabbits which is frequently fatal. The virus is spread by fleas which can transfer the disease from wild rabbits to our pets. An affected rabbit may have swollen eyelids, nose and genitalia and will deteriorate slowly over several days.

#### Rabbit Haemorrhagic Disease

Sudden death is the most frequently seen sign associated with this disease. It may happen within 1-3 days of contracting the virus.



### DOGS



#### Canine Distemper

A highly infectious disease that can cause signs ranging from a mild runny nose and eyes, to severe diarrhoea and fits or seizures. Some dogs may also develop hard, thickened foot pads.

#### Infectious Canine Hepatitis

As the name suggest this disease affects the liver. Signs including jaundice and seizures can be present. Some dogs will develop a clouding of the surface of their eyes, sometimes referred to as 'Blue eye'.

#### Parvo virus

This is a very common disease which often affects young puppies. It will cause severe sickness and diarrhoea, in many cases puppies will die.

#### Leptospirosis

Similar to Weil's Disease in humans. This can affect the liver and kidneys causing jaundice and sickness. The disease can be transmitted via dirty water and from infected mammals such as rats.

#### Infectious canine tracheobronchitis

Another name for this disease is 'Kennel Cough'. These days this disease is widely seen in dogs which have never been into kennels and can occur at any time of the year. Signs include a harsh retching cough that can sometimes progress to pneumonia.