

Vaccinating your Cat

Vaccinations are vital in providing your cat protection from a variety of life threatening diseases. We vaccinate your cat against Feline Herpesvirus, Feline Calicivirus, Feline Panleucopenia, Feline Chlamydia and Feline Leukaemia.

The initial vaccination course consists of two injections given 3 weeks apart. Thereafter, subsequent booster injections are given annually. The brand of vaccine we use is Purevax.

Feline Herpesvirus

Feline Herpesvirus, also known as Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, is a feline upper respiratory disease – one of the Cat Flu diseases.

Close contact with infected cats, aerosolised droplets and contaminated objects transmits the virus. After inhalation, the virus replicates in the local lymph nodes before targeting the epithelial cells of the respiratory tract and conjunctiva.

After infection cats often become carriers, shedding the virus when stressed, and will remain carriers for life. Severe illness and fatalities can occur in young and old cats. Some cats develop chronic rhinitis or sinusitis ('chronic snufflers'). Cats of all ages are susceptible, but the disease may be more severe in kittens, elderly cats and immunocompromised cats.

Symptoms of Herpesvirus include: depression, inappetence, sneezing, high temperature, conjunctivitis, rhinitis (serous ocular/nasal discharges rapidly becoming mucopurulent with secondary bacterial infection), salivation, and coughing and breathing difficulties if pneumonia develops.

Feline Calicivirus

Feline Calicivirus is a feline upper respiratory disease – one of the Cat Flu diseases.

It is transmitted via close contact with infected cats, aerosolised droplets or contaminated objects. After inhalation, the virus replicates in the local lymph nodes before targeting the epithelial cells of the respiratory tract and conjunctiva.

The disease is usually not as severe as Feline Herpesvirus but carriers of Feline Calicivirus will shed it continuously, some for a short period and some for years. Cats of all ages are susceptible, but the disease may be more severe in kittens, elderly cats and immunocompromised cats.

Symptoms of Calicivirus include: mild ocular/nasal discharge (becoming mucopurulent with secondary bacterial infection), sneezing, inappetence, depression, a high temperature, ulceration of tongue/cheeks/hard & soft palates, and chronic ulcerative stomatitis and gingivitis in some individuals.

Feline Panleucopenia

Feline Panleucopenia, also known as Feline Infectious Enteritis, is caused by feline parvovirus and infects domestic and wild cats. It survives in the environment for long periods of time and is very resistant to heating and routine disinfectants.

The disease is usually seen in unvaccinated kittens. The virus is shed in faeces, vomit, saliva and urine up to 6 weeks after infection. Transmission occurs by ingesting contaminated faecal matter or in the womb transplacentally.

As a parvovirus, feline panleucopenia targets rapidly dividing cells; such as the lymphoid tissue, gastrointestinal track and bone marrow. Destruction of the lymphoid tissue and bone marrow results in immunosuppression. Damage to the gastrointestinal system leads to gastroenteritis. Damage to the bone marrow and enteritis increase susceptibility to bacterial infections.

Symptoms of feline panleucopenia include: a high temperature, depression, inappetence, vomiting, diarrhoea (less frequent), dehydration, hypothermia, neurological signs, retinal lesions, abortion and infertility.

Feline Chlamydia

Feline Chlamydia is caused by a bacterium and primarily causes conjunctivitis.

Feline chlamydia is very short lived off the host and transmission is likely to occur through direct contact with infected ocular and nasal discharges. All ages can be affected but kittens are likely to be the most severely affected.

Symptoms of feline chlamydia include: conjunctivitis and blepharospasm (tight closure of the eyelids), serous to mucopurulent ocular discharge and mild upper respiratory tract disease.

Feline Leukaemia

Feline Leukaemia Virus (FeLV) is a serious disease that attacks the immune system and causes cancers such as lymphoma and leukaemia. As FeLV damages the immune system it also increases the risk of other infections and diseases.

FeLV spreads in bodily fluids such as saliva, nasal discharge, urine and faeces. Young, unvaccinated, un-neutered outdoor cats living around lots of other cats are most at risk of contracting FeLV.

Symptoms of FeLV can often at first go unnoticed because they tend to be mild and vague. Symptoms often include: lethargy, weight loss, diarrhoea, vomiting, poor coat condition, inappetence, pale gums (anaemia), developing growths and lumps, abortion and fading kitten syndrome (kittens born with FeLV often die shortly after birth).