



INFORMATION LEAFLET FOR CAT OWNERS

VACCINATIONS

Why do I need to vaccinate my cat?

Vaccines are important to protect our pets from life threatening diseases that often have no specific treatment. For this reason prevention with vaccination is key. It gives our pets immunity to diseases and peace of mind.

To be fully protected cats need to have their primary vaccine course and then an annual booster throughout their lifetime.

What do we vaccinate against?

All cats living in the UK (including indoor only cats) should be vaccinated against:

- **Feline Calicivirus and Feline Herpes Virus (cat flu):** Most respiratory infections in cats are caused by one or both of these viruses. They are not usually fatal for healthy adult cats but can be life threatening in young and old cats or those with other diseases. Symptoms include sneezing, runny eyes, mouth ulcers and gingivitis. Unlike human flu cats commonly don't fully recover from it and live with it waxing and waning throughout their life and it normally progressively worsens. Infected cats can shed the virus for long periods of time and infect unvaccinated cats they meet. Infected cats carrying the virus may appear healthy, or have chronic flu like symptoms and they often worsen during times of stress.
- **Feline Panleukopenia Virus (Feline Infectious Enteritis):** This virus affects the gastrointestinal tract and symptoms include vomiting, diarrhoea and sometimes sudden death. It also affects the immune system making the cat unable to fight other diseases. It is often fatal and there is no specific treatment for it and symptomatic treatment includes hospitalisation, fluids and treating secondary infections. It is transferred directly through faeces or indirectly through the environment.

Cats that go outside (even just to the garden) should be vaccinated against:

- **Feline Leukaemia Virus:** This virus attacks the immune system and causes cancers such as lymphoma and leukaemia. Cats with FeLV have an increased likelihood of developing other infections and diseases. Some cats will suffer from severe anaemia due to bone marrow suppression. FeLV is most common in young, unvaccinated, un-neutered, outdoor cats. It can be transmitted through biting and through bodily fluids of infected cats. A pregnant cat will pass it to her kittens in the womb and through her milk.

The above vaccines are given at 8 weeks or older, repeated 3-4 weeks later and again a year later. The cat flu vaccines would then be given annually, whereas the Panleukopenia and Leukaemia vaccines are normally repeated every 3rd year.

There is a window of time that a booster can be given ranging from 1-3 months after its due date. Please call the team to discuss this further. If your pet misses their annual booster vaccination, they will be required to have a restart course of vaccinations, the same as when they were puppies. You may then continue annual boosters after this.

Cats that travel abroad need:

- **Rabies:** The UK is a rabies free country and so vaccination is only needed for cats that are travelling abroad. Rabies can affect any warm-blooded animal, including humans, and it causes inflammation of the brain. Rabies is commonly fatal.

This vaccine must be given when the cat is at least 12 weeks old and it lasts for 3 years. You must wait at least 21 days after vaccination before travel to the EU and longer for some other countries so do get in contact with us as soon as you know you're planning to travel for the most up to date information.

Join Our Pet Health Plan

At Abbey Vets we offer a pet health plan which includes the cost of our booster vaccinations and discounts off our additional vaccinations and initial vaccine courses, all for a low monthly cost. It also has other exciting benefits and discounts: more information can be found on our website; www.abbeyvets.co.uk/pet-health-plan

Contact Us:

Abergavenny: 01873 852391
Monmouth: 01600 711511

Tredeggar: 01495 711277
Brecon: 01874 622464

vets@abbeyvets.co.uk
www.abbeyvets.co.uk