

When should your cat be vaccinated?

Very young kittens are usually temporarily protected against important infectious diseases by antibodies received through their mother's milk.

Kittens should then receive a course of vaccinations, usually **starting at 8 weeks of age**.

Thereafter, **regular booster vaccinations** are required to provide the best protection for your cat.

It's no vacation without vaccination

When staying in boarding facilities, cats are at higher risk of infectious diseases, so vaccination is especially important. Before you send your pets off to boarding facilities, make sure that they're up-to-date with all the vaccinations they're likely to need.

Please don't leave this to the last minute as the establishment of immune protection takes time. If you have any questions about vaccination and boarding, please talk to your veterinarian.



After Vaccination

Vaccines have an excellent safety record and side effects after vaccination are uncommon. However, if they do occur they are usually mild e.g. lethargy, loss of appetite or tenderness at the injection site, and usually last no longer than a few days.

If you are concerned about any signs which develop after vaccination, contact your veterinarian immediately.

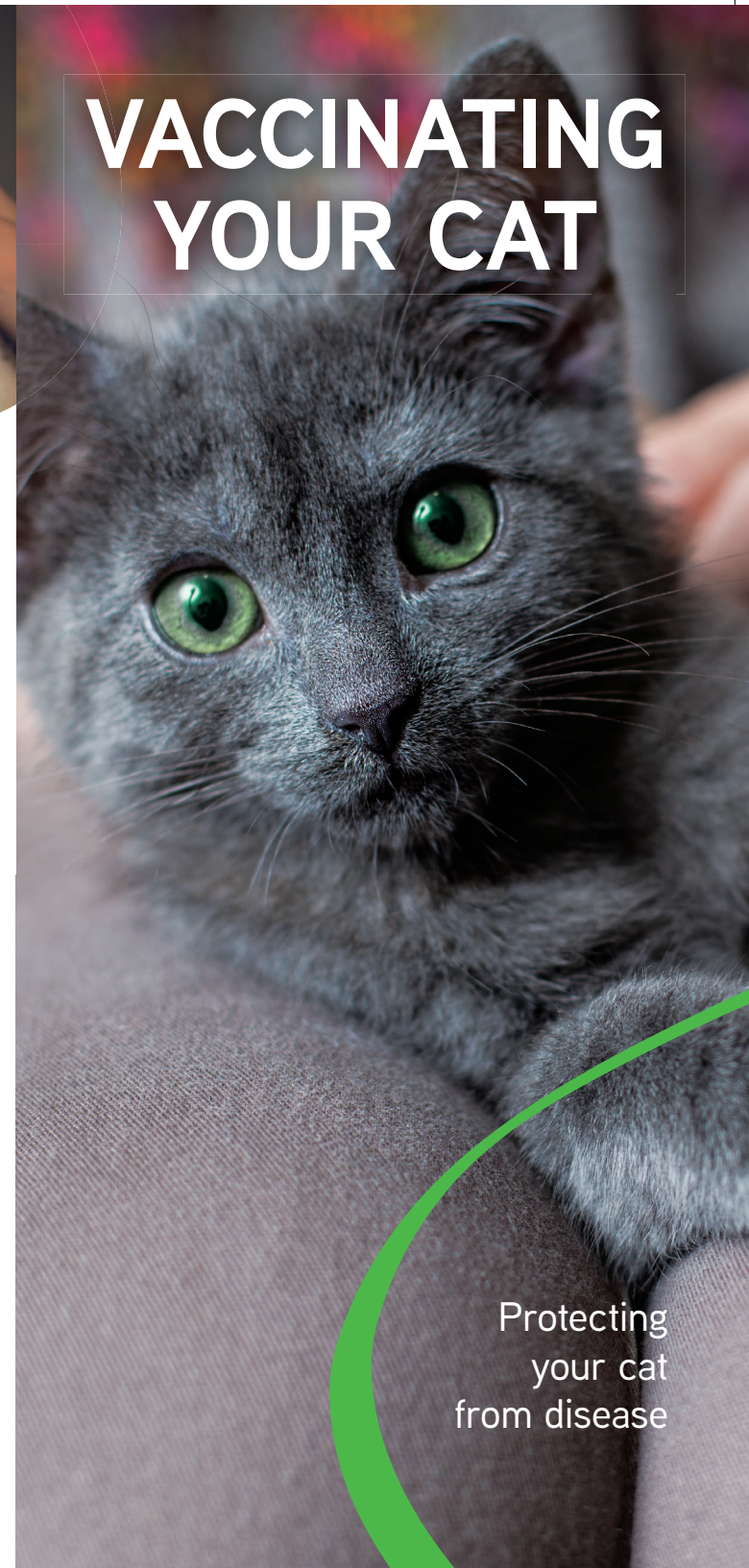
See your local Vet today

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of healthy, happy cats

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VACCINATING YOUR CAT



Protecting
your cat
from disease

Vaccinating your cat helps to protect against several serious and life-threatening diseases.

It is a critical part of a proper preventative healthcare programme.

A vaccine is a preparation designed to provide protection against a specific infectious disease. Vaccines work by stimulating an immune response that will protect your cat if it is subsequently exposed to the infection.

Feline upper respiratory tract infection or “Cat Flu”

This condition is mainly caused by two viruses, feline herpesvirus (also known as feline rhinotracheitis) and feline calicivirus.

Typical signs include sneezing, nasal discharge, conjunctivitis, discharge from the eyes, and mouth ulcers. Occasionally other complications such as pneumonia may develop. The viruses are often transmitted by direct or close contact between cats e.g. in sneezed droplets.

As feline herpesvirus and feline calicivirus are both common, and disease can be severe (especially in kittens), vaccination is very important for all cats.

Feline panleucopenia virus

Also known as: Feline infectious enteritis or Feline parvovirus

Feline panleucopenia virus causes severe gastroenteritis and is often fatal. The signs shown by infected cats include vomiting, diarrhoea (often containing blood), depression and loss of appetite.

The virus is highly contagious and can survive for long periods in the environment.

Vaccination against this virus is highly effective and has a critical role in protecting cats against infection.



Feline leukaemia virus

Feline leukaemia virus is an important viral infection of cats which causes a wide variety of problems including immunosuppression, anaemia and cancer. Some infected cats will die as a result of their infection.

The virus is mostly spread through social contact e.g. mutual grooming, sharing of food bowls and litter trays. However, the virus can also be transmitted through fighting.

Vaccination is very effective at preventing disease caused by feline leukaemia virus.

Chlamydia

Also known as: *Chlamydia felis*

Chlamydia felis is a type of bacteria that is a common cause of conjunctivitis in cats, especially kittens. Typical signs are swelling, redness and discharge affecting one or both eyes.

These signs are often painful and may persist for months. Treatment involves a prolonged course of antibiotics for the infected cat and all in-contact cats should also be treated.

Vaccination can markedly reduce the severity of the signs caused by Chlamydia.



Feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV)

FIV causes a potentially fatal viral disease that depresses the cat's immune system. The most common way for the virus to be transmitted from infected cats to healthy cats is by biting during cat fights.

As the disease progresses, signs which may develop include chronic gingivitis (inflammation of the gums), secondary infections (bacterial, viral or parasitic), weight loss, kidney disease and neurological disease.

In some cats the immune system becomes too weak to fight off other infections and disease. As a result, the cat may die from one of these infections.

FIV has also been linked to cancer e.g. lymphoma.

There is no cure for FIV. The only options for preventing infection are confinement to avoid any contact with infected cats, or vaccination.