



# Cat Vaccinations

Cats require vaccinations annually, to protect them against disease such as: Cat flu (feline herpes virus and feline calicivirus), Feline infectious enteritis and feline leukaemia virus. They will also ensure your pet won't pass on any illnesses to others. The vaccines start with a course of two, with the first one being administered around 8 weeks and the second 3-4 weeks later. Yearly boosters are required thereafter to maintain immunity.

Cat flu is a common illness affecting the upper respiratory tract in cats, much like a cold or the flu in humans. It is mainly caused by one of two viruses; feline herpes virus and feline calicivirus. Very young and mature cats, as well as those with compromised immune systems are they most vulnerable to this condition. If left untreated, it can sadly become fatal.

It is spread much like a cold, through your cat coughing and sneezing then other cats picking up the germs. Once cats have recovered from cat flu, it's possible for some cats to continue to harbour the infection and come down with cat flu again, particularly during times of stress or other illness.

Common symptoms for Cat flu include: sneezing, coughing runny nose and eyes, drooling, inappetence, fever and mouth ulcers.

Feline infectious enteritis (also known as parvovirus) is a nasty virus of the gut that can cause severe disease and illness in cats, particularly kittens. Sadly, this can spread rapidly in cat groups, such as multi-cat households, catteries or breeders where individuals are not vaccinated and can be fatal. If a pregnant cat contracts this it can affect the kittens' brain development.

The symptoms of this virus include: vomiting, initial high temperature, lack of appetite, watery diarrhoea- sometimes containing blood, lethargy, inappetence, and abdominal pain. However, not all infected cats will show all of these ailments. It is important to thoroughly disinfect any areas where your cat has been if they have been exhibiting the above symptoms.

Feline Leukaemia Virus, or FeLV, is a virus that causes a fatal disease by affecting the immune system. Once contracted, it can cause vulnerability to other infections, anaemia or tumours. It is not zoonotic and so does not affect humans.

This can be diagnosed through a blood test.

This virus can be spread direct contact with the saliva of infected cats, via grooming, sharing food or water bowls, or through mating behaviour. There is an incubation period of months, or sometimes years, before signs of infection show in those that are infected.

Common symptoms include recurrent respiratory infections, sore gums or digestive problems, general malaise or have a high temperature, in some cases, enlarged lymph nodes, severe anaemia and breeding problems may be observed.

It is important to keep your cat indoors and isolated from others if you suspect your cat may have the virus or is showing signs mentioned above to prevent spreading. All of these conditions can be either prevented or minimised with vaccinations. If you are concerned your cat is exhibiting any of the above signs, please contact us immediately.