



Fact Sheet - Vaccinations

Vaccinations are one of the most important preventive measures you can take for the health of your pet.



Why is it important to vaccinate?

Vaccines are very effective in preventing death and severe illness due to certain contagious diseases.

They have been useful in reducing several infectious diseases from spreading further and have almost eradicated some potentially fatal diseases. If the number of pets protected by vaccines drops our animal companions could be at risk from outbreaks of these serious infectious diseases again.

Vaccinations are extremely cost effective when you consider what treating a serious illness can cost you and your pet in terms of both money and distress.

How do vaccines work?

Vaccines help a body's immune system prepare in advance to fight infectious diseases.

Essentially, vaccines give the body a preview of a bacterium or a virus, allowing it to learn how to defend itself against that potential invader in advance. When your pet receives a vaccine, its immune system produces special substances called antibodies that work against the virus or bacteria that cause the disease. Later, if your pet is exposed to these viruses or bacteria, the formed antibodies will help destroy them, thus prevent your pet from becoming ill.

It is important that your pet is healthy at the time of vaccination so that the immune system can develop its protective response properly.

How often do we need to vaccinate?

When puppies and kittens are born they are usually protected from infections by their mother's milk. However, this protection only lasts for some weeks, so our little pets need regular vaccinations from an early age.

Puppies and kittens need a series of 2 or 3 vaccines given 3-4 weeks apart. After this they need a vaccine booster one year later. Once they have had these vaccines, the frequency of vaccinations varies depending on the lifestyle of the pet, the disease and vaccine type being considered as well as any kennel/boarder plans. Some vaccinations are 3-yearly while others are yearly.

Because of these varying factors, VetEnt recommends that you bring your pet in for routine annual examinations where a vaccination plan for your pet can be decided during a discussion between you and your vet.

Do vaccinations guarantee that your pet will not get sick?

Unfortunately no vaccine can

guarantee complete protection from a disease. However vaccines drastically reduce the chance of developing the disease. If your pet does become ill with a disease he or she has been vaccinated for, the vaccine is likely to reduce the symptoms and make recovery quicker.

Are there any side effects from vaccines?

Any vaccine can cause side effects. However side effects/adverse reactions are rare events.

Side effects are usually mild reactions such as fever, soreness at the injection site or loss of appetite. These minor reactions usually resolve within 24 hours. In a very few cases a pet can get an allergic reaction to the vaccine. Your VetEnt vet will discuss with you which symptoms to look for in these cases. Other adverse reactions can also occur, but are extremely rare.

The benefits of vaccines far outweigh the risks of any potential side effects.

Which diseases do we vaccinate against?

Vaccines for dogs and cats are divided into two classes: "core" vaccines and 'non-core' vaccines.





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Core vaccines are those vaccines which all cats or dogs, regardless of circumstances, should receive. Core vaccines protect animals from severe, sometimes life-threatening diseases which have global distribution.

Non-core vaccines are vaccines that are recommended when the cat's or dog's geographical location, local environment or lifestyle places them at risk of contracting specific infections. As these vaccines are used on a case-by-case basis, your VetEnt veterinarian will help you decide if such a vaccine is needed for your pet.

Vaccines for dogs:

- Core vaccines: canine parvovirus, canine distemper and canine infectious hepatitis.
- Non-core vaccines: kennel cough and leptospirosis

Vaccines for cats:

- Core vaccines: feline viral rhinotracheitis, feline calicivirus and feline panleukopenia
- Non-core vaccines: feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), feline leukaemia virus (FeLV) and feline chlamydiosis

Vaccines for pet rabbits:

- Rabbit Calicivirus (RCD).

Further information about these different diseases is available on the VetEnt webpage www.vetent.co.nz.

If you have any questions in regards to your pet's vaccines please do not hesitate to contact us.

