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All about Kitten Vaccinations

Distemper is very contagious and widespread in cats. It causes severe vomiting and diarrhea that is often fatal, especially in kittens.

Rhinotracheitis is a virus that causes fever, runny eyes and nose, and sneezing. It can be fatal, and often occurs at the same time as a Calicivirus infection.

Calicivirus causes similar symptoms as Rhinotracheitis virus, but also causes mouth ulcers and pneumonia.

Feline Leukemia (FeLV) is a virus that is similar to the AIDS virus in people. Both AIDS and FeLV attack the immune system leaving the person or cat unable to fight off other infections. Both can also cause cancer. People do not get FeLV. Cats commonly get FeLV from contact with other cats, but they can also be born with it. Cats should be blood tested negative for FeLV before vaccination.

We recommend beginning to vaccinate your kitten at 6 - 8 weeks. It is at this time when the immunity that was passed to the kitten in the milk starts to be exhausted. This is also the earliest possible time when the kitten's immune system may have a response to the vaccine. Because a kitten's immune system is not fully mature at this age, two to four boosters are given (at three week intervals) before a kitten can be considered to be protected against these diseases.

Rabies is a virus that attacks the nervous system and is always fatal. Vaccination is required by law. It is given at four months of age.

Intestinal Parasites - Almost all kittens are born with roundworms. These long, spaghetti-like worms can obstruct the intestine, and slow down the kitten's growth. Young kittens should be wormed at least twice and have a negative stool test. Coccidia are also common and routine wormers are not effective against them. Coccidia can cause diarrhea, sometimes with blood.

We use PureVax Vaccine - This advanced vaccine is preferred for cats. It reduces the chances of reactions and complications! Ask a member of our Health Care Team for more information!

Kitten Vaccination Schedule

We recommend the following schedule of vaccinations and deworming for your new kitten. With these vaccinations, your pet will also receive a complete physical exam by the doctor. All kittens need a series of vaccinations to keep them protected from these various viruses!

First Visit (6-7 weeks of age)

- A physical examination is required to insure the health of the kitten.
- Feline Distemper, Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus vaccine.
- Intestinal parasites (worm) examination. *Please submit a fresh stool sample, 1 tsp. is plenty! It can have kitty litter on it as well.
- Worm medication depending on results of fecal test.
- Blood test for Feline Leukemia.

Second Visit (9-10 weeks of age)

- A physical examination is required to insure proper development and health.
- Feline Distemper, Rhinotracheitis, and Calicivirus vaccine.
- Second dose of worm medication.

Third Visit (12-13 weeks of age)

- A physical examination is required to insure proper development and health.
- Feline Distemper, Rhinotracheitis, and Calicivirus vaccine.
- 1st Feline Leukemia vaccine may be recommended

Fourth Visit (15-16 weeks of age)

- A final physical examination is required to insure proper development and health.
- Feline Distemper, Rhinotracheitis, and Calicivirus vaccine.
- 2nd Feline Leukemia vaccine if recommended
- Rabies vaccine (Be sure to ask for a licensing form if you live in Jefferson County!)
- Intestinal Parasite (worm) examination (Once again submit a fresh stool sample.)

All kittens need a *series* of vaccinations to keep them protected from these various viruses!