

A PET OWNER'S GUIDE TO VACCINATIONS & PREVENTATIVE CARE

We want your kitten to be healthy and happy. This guide gives recommendations and explanations on vaccinations, spaying/neutering, dental care, parasite control and microchipping.



CORE VACCINATIONS:

These should be given to all cats

- **DISTEMPER (PANLEUKOPENIA):** Can cause vomiting and diarrhea and is often fatal to young animals.
- **RHINOTRACHEITIS:** A highly contagious virus that can cause fever, sneezing, eye and nasal discharge and loss of appetite.
- **CALICVIRUS:** Similar to rhinotracheitis, but can also cause sores or ulcers on the tongue, mouth, or esophagus.
- **RABIES:** Affects the brain and central nervous system. Rabies can affect humans and is fatal if left untreated.

NON-CORE VACCINATIONS:

These should be given to cats on an individual, as-needed basis

- **FELINE INFECTIOUS PERITONITIS (FIP):** Primarily a disease of kittens, it can be difficult to diagnose because its symptoms mimic those of many other diseases. The available tests are not 100% accurate, and the available vaccine is poorly effective and not routinely recommended.
- **FELINE IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (FIV):** Very similar to the human AIDS virus, it's primarily transmitted through bite wounds involving blood transfer. Transmission from mother to kitten is also possible. A reliable diagnostic test is available, however no vaccine currently exists.

EXCEPTION:

FELINE LEUKEMIA (FeLV): This virus can produce a wide range of signs from fatigue to seizures, though some carriers show no symptoms at all. Feline leukemia virus is easily transmitted through saliva, urine, and feces. The FeLV vaccine should be part of the original core vaccines for kittens and one-year-old cats. Following the initial vaccination, the booster will be reserved for yearly use in cats that go outside.

CORE VACCINATIONS ARE GIVEN IN A SERIES OF THREE AT THE FOLLOWING INTERVALS:

6 - 8 WEEKS OLD	Exam FDRTC Fecal Exam
10 - 12 WEEKS OLD	Exam FDRTC
12 - 14 WEEKS OLD	Exam FDRTC Rabies

The CORE vaccinations will be boosted one year after the final kitten shot and then on a yearly basis for the life of the cat. Rabies vaccines may be given every two years if required by law.

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NEUTERING/SPAYING

We recommend spaying and neutering all pets as they will experience a lifetime of health benefits and behavioral improvements. By eliminating sexual instincts, pets become less aggressive and more loyal companions to their human family members. Sterilized pets also live longer lives. It is a win-win for everyone!

- **Spaying** is performed on female pets to remove the ovaries and uterus. This quick and safe procedure prevents unwanted litters, heat cycles, mammary and uterine complications and cancers, aggression, the urge to roam, and mood changes.
- **Neutering** is performed on male pets to remove the testicles. This quick and safe procedure prevents the urge to roam, aggressive behaviors, and the dangers of testicular cancer and an enlarged prostate.

Proper timing is determined based on factors such as age, breed, size, and lifestyle; however, we typically recommend the procedure be done around 6-months of age.

DENTAL CARE

Our doctors recommend yearly or bi-yearly dental exams and cleanings. Your pet's teeth are prone to disease just as your own teeth are. Over time,



oral bacteria colonize on the teeth, forming plaque and tartar build-up that leads to gingivitis, tooth decay, and dental disease. Oral bacteria is also linked to infections of the upper respiratory tract,

tonsillitis, pneumonia and even heart disease, all of which are life-threatening. Many of these painful conditions are preventable when proper dental care begins at a young age and continues throughout your pet's life. **Dental cleanings are performed under general anesthesia for the safety of your pet and our medical team.**

We do not recommend that your cat go outside.

There are many dangers outside for your cat. Most outdoor cats have shortened life-spans due to disease or accident.

PARASITE CONTROL

When it comes to external and internal parasites, year-round prevention is the key to a disease-free pet.

Fleas and ticks are external parasites that latch onto your pet's skin and puts them at risk for skin irritation and allergies. We recommend frequent grooming and monthly flea & tick preventives.

Heartworms are transmitted by mosquitoes and cause irreversible damage to the heart and lungs, also known as heartworm disease. Preventatives should be given monthly, and pets should be tested yearly for heartworm disease starting at 5 months of age.



Intestinal parasites are found in all areas of the US and are transmissible to people. An annual fecal test for your pet and keeping up with monthly preventatives are highly recommended.

MICROCHIPPING

Microchips are permanent, affordable, and help reunite pets with their owners. For this reason, we recommend all pets be microchipped! Unlike collars and tags, microchips are forever and cannot be removed. Still, we recommend all three for your pet's optimal safety in case of an accident. A microchip is as tiny as a grain of rice and implanted similarly to a routine vaccination beneath the skin between the shoulder blades. The entire process is quick and painless! What makes microchips so valuable is the unique, patented radio communication that provides quick and reliable information to identify an animal. **The Nebraska Humane Society requires all cats to either wear collars or be microchipped.**



INTRODUCING YOUR NEW KITTEN: If you are bringing a kitten into a household with other cats, we recommend testing your kitten for FeLV and FIV before introducing the cats to one another. We recommend confining the kitten for a slow introduction to the other cat(s). Some patience may be required as it can take days, weeks or even longer, but most cats learn to live in harmony.