

# **Kitten Wellness Exam**

## ○ **Vaccines/Infectious Diseases**

FVRCP protects against Panleukopenia (distemper), Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calici and Chlamydia. This vaccine is given at 9, 12 and 16 weeks of age.

Feline Leukemia virus is a leading cause of death in cats. All cats that go outside (or are exposed to other cats) should be vaccinated

**We recommend all new kittens/cats have a Felv/FIV combo test before entering the household.**

Purevax Rabies – Required by Pennsylvania law. Rabies is given at 12 weeks of age.

## ○ **Internal Parasite Control**

Annual microscopic parasite exam is recommended to identify intestinal parasites that cannot be seen.

Kittens: Hookworms and roundworms can be transmitted to people (10,000 cases per year in children). We deworm all kittens for these parasites. A microscopic stool check is needed to rule out other parasites.

## ○ **External Parasite Control (Fleas/Ticks)**

Below is a list of products we recommend. Kittens have different needs, so our staff and veterinarians will help you choose the one that would best benefit your new kitten.

### ○ **Revolution**

§ safe as early as 8 weeks and also safe for pregnant and nursing cats

§ applied topically once a month

§ prevents and controls fleas, heartworm disease, ear mites, hookworms and roundworms

§ Ideal for outdoor cats

### ○ **Frontline**

§ 8 weeks or older

§ applied topically once a month

§ kills fleas, ticks, lice

### ○ **Advantage**

§ 8 weeks or older

§ applied topically once a month

§ kills fleas only

*Fleas and ticks are not only a nuisance, but can carry and transmit infectious diseases.*

## ○ **Spay/Neuter/Declaw**

We recommend spaying between 5 and 6 months. This can prevent breast cancer, and life-threatening uterine infections as well as unwanted kittens.

Neutering is recommended between 5 and 6 months of age. Neutering decreases the chance of behavior problems such as aggression, roaming and other undesirable male habits.

When declawing is elected, we prefer to perform the surgery as early as 3-4 months of age. To eliminate the need for a second anesthesia, we will also spay or castrate at this time.

## ○ **Microchip**

In case your cat would escape outside or get lost during a trip, we recommend microchipping. The microchipping procedure can be done at any time, but is often done at the time of spay/neuter.

## ○ **Nutrition**

We recommend a good quality kitten food (v.s. generic brand) for the first 6-12 months

## ○ **Dental Care**

Studies have strongly implicated mouth bacteria from periodontal disease as a cause of heart, lung and kidney disease.

Brushing teeth is recommended daily, or as often as you are able.

## ○ **Behavior Comments**

Litter box questions

Human playmates and biting

## ○ **Nails**

Optional – Complimentary Clip

Instruction on how to safely do at home

## How does Vaccination Work?

Vaccines are given to prepare the body's immune system against invasion by a particular disease-causing organism. Vaccines contain antigens which to the immune system "look" like the organism but don't, ideally, cause disease. When the vaccine is introduced by injection or some other means, the immune system responds by mounting a protective response. When the cat is subsequently exposed to the organism, the immune system is prepared and either prevents infection or reduces the severity of disease.

In many cases, vaccines against several diseases are combined, reducing the number of shots your pet must have. Despite progress to make vaccinations as comfortable as possible, substances in some vaccines can occasionally sting when injected.

The protection provided by a vaccine gradually declines after a pet is vaccinated. Annual revaccination is recommended for some cats. Your doctor will help decide an appropriate vaccine schedule for your pet.

## Why do kittens require a series of vaccinations?

Kittens receive antibody from colostrum (the first milk the mother produces) that is ingested during the early hours after birth. Maternal antibody helps protect against infectious disease until the kitten's own immune system is more mature.

Unfortunately, maternal antibody also interferes with a vaccine's ability to stimulate the kitten's immune system. To counteract this problem, veterinarians often administer a series of vaccines, usually beginning when the kitten is around six to eight weeks of age, and then repeating vaccination at three or four week intervals until maternal antibody has waned, usually at around twelve weeks of age. In some cases (e. g., rabies vaccines) the initial vaccine is not given until maternal antibody has disappeared.

### Feline Panleukopenia Virus Vaccine:

Feline panleukopenia (also called feline distemper) is a highly contagious and deadly viral disease of cats. Feline panleukopenia virus is extremely hardy, is able to survive extremes of temperature and humidity for many months, and is resistant to most available disinfectants. Until recent years, panleukopenia was the most serious infectious disease of cats, claiming the lives of thousands every year. Thanks to the highly effective vaccines currently available, panleukopenia is now considered to be an uncommon disease. However, because of the serious nature of the disease and the continued presence of virus in the environment, vaccination is highly recommended for all cats.

### Feline Calicivirus/Herpesvirus Vaccine:

Feline calicivirus and feline herpes virus type I are responsible for 80-90% of infectious feline upper respiratory tract diseases. Most cats are exposed to either or both of these viruses at some time in their lives. Once infected, many cats never completely rid themselves of virus. These "carrier" cats either continuously or intermittently shed the organisms for long periods of time -- perhaps for life -- and serve as a major source of infection to other cats. The currently available vaccines will minimize the severity of upper respiratory infections, although none will prevent disease in all situations. Vaccination is highly recommended for all cats.

### Rabies Virus Vaccine:

Rabies is an increasing threat to cats. At the present time, the number of reported feline rabies cases in the United States far exceeds that of all other domestic animals. Rabies in cats is also a major public health concern. Because of the routinely fatal outcome of infection in cats, and the potential for human exposure, rabies vaccination is highly recommended for all cats; it is required by law in most areas of the country.

### Feline Leukemia Virus Vaccine:

Feline leukemia virus (FeLV) is the leading viral killer of cats. The virus is spread from cat-to-cat through bite wounds, through casual contact with infected cats, and from an infected mother cat to her kittens. The individuals most at risk of infection are outdoor cats, indoor/outdoor cats, and cats exposed to such individuals. Cats living in households with FeLV-infected cats or with cats of unknown infection status are also at risk. Indoor-only cats with no exposure to potentially infected cats are extremely unlikely to become infected. FeLV vaccines are recommended for all cats at risk of exposure to the virus.

### Chlamydia

Feline chlamydiosis (also known as feline pneumonitis) is a relatively mild, chronic upper respiratory disease caused by the bacterium *Chlamydia psittaci*. The main symptom is conjunctivitis, an abnormal eye discharge due to inflammation of the conjunctiva, the membrane lining the inside of the eyelid. The infection can also cause nasal discharge, sneezing, and pneumonia. Left untreated, the infection tends to become chronic, lasting weeks or months. Chlamydia is included as a part of the FVRCP vaccine.