



## Booster Alert!

Did you know vaccinations can help to protect your pet against a range of potentially life threatening infectious diseases?

Puppies, kittens and rabbits will require a course of vaccines as young pets, followed by regular booster vaccinations throughout their lives.



**Cats:** We recommend vaccinating cats against Cat flu, Feline Leukaemia and Feline Enteritis.

**Cat Flu** is spread by airborne virus droplets, so even house cats are at risk. Signs include runny noses, sneezing and sore eyes.

**Feline Leukaemia (FeLV)** is transmitted through cat fights and direct cat to cat contact. FeLV is usually fatal, typically within a couple of years of contracting the virus.

**Feline Enteritis** is thankfully rare, mainly due to vaccination.



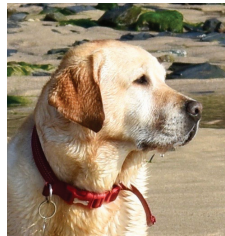
**Dogs** should be vaccinated against a range of infectious diseases. One is **parvovirus** which can cause a fatal diarrhoea, especially in young animals. We also vaccinate against **Distemper, Hepatitis, and Leptospirosis**. We can also protect dogs against **Kennel Cough**, which although less serious, is highly infectious. The length of protection for each disease varies, so what we vaccinate against will change annually.



**Rabbits** should be vaccinated against **Myxomatosis** and **Viral Haemorrhagic Disease** (which exists in two strains RVHD1 and RVHD2). All three of these viruses are frequently deadly, and often occur with very little warning.

So – as you can see, vaccines are really vital! The vaccine visit is also a great opportunity for us to give your pet a nose to tail check and also for you to ask us about any pet related health issues. If your pet's boosters are out of date, please call us today for an appointment!

## Should I have my pet neutered?



One of the many decisions facing pet owners is that of neutering. The good news is that apart from preventing unwanted pregnancies, there are several other benefits to having pets neutered as outlined below. Neutered pets are likely to live longer, healthier lives thanks to surgical procedures which are safe, quick and relatively painless.

**Dogs: Un-neutered female dogs** typically come into season twice a year. Their vulva will become prominent, they will be more attractive to male dogs and can have light or heavy bleeding for up to three weeks. In this time they need to be walked away from other dogs and kept on the lead. Both sexes are prone to roam in an effort to mate, with the associated risks of becoming permanently lost or injured whilst roaming. In addition to avoiding further seasons, spaying your female pet will reduce her chances of mammary cancer later in life and prevents a life threatening condition called a pyometra. This causes a pus filled uterus which sometimes needs emergency surgery.

**Un-neutered male dogs** may be less easy to recall when off the lead, urine mark their territory, or show excessive sexual behaviours. Castrating them reduces the risk of some prostatic disease later in life and removes the risk of testicular cancer.



**Cats** can be neutered at an early age, usually before sexual maturity. Your **female cat** typically comes into season every three weeks making pregnancy a strong possibility. When she is in season (or on heat) she will become vocal and want to go outside. This can happen as early as six months of age! **Male cats** who are not castrated are more likely to roam, looking for females, increasing their risk of being in car accidents and cat fights. Some cats can spread Feline Leukemia from bites which can be life threatening. Male cats are also more likely to spray strong smelling urine inside the house, marking their territory.

The good news is that there are a range of benefits to neutering your pets! Please contact us if you would like any further information or to get your pet booked in for an operation!



**Rabbits:** Both sexes of rabbits benefit hugely from being neutered. Rabbits are sociable animals and neutering is very important to allow them to live harmoniously in pairs. The best bonded pairs are typically spayed females and castrated males. Neutered rabbits are easier to handle and also less prone to fighting.

## Brrr! In Winter, the fleas don't flee!



Now the weather is colder, it is easy to assume that you don't need to protect your pets against parasites, especially fleas. However, it is actually more important than ever!

In summer, fleas can happily survive outside, especially on wildlife but in the winter it isn't so easy for them, unless they move somewhere that is warm, cosy and has lots of bodies to keep them fed! Remind you of anywhere?! Yes, it is your home!

Our centrally heated homes, with plenty of soft furnishings to hide in and pets to feed off, are an ideal winter breeding ground for these little biters, so we can't take our eyes off the ball!

We have lots of products to help kill fleas and larvae, including collars, spot-ons and tablets. Some last for one month, whilst others considerably longer. Make sure you are applying them correctly, at the right interval and treating all pets in the household. If any family members have small bites or itches on their legs you may need to use a flea control spray in the house. Don't forget to vacuum and wash any fabrics such as bedding on a high heat setting. Have a chat to our team about how to ensure you and your pets don't end up with a winter flea infestation!

