

While some infected cats show no sign of disease, others may display initial symptoms such as fever, loss of appetite, diarrhoea, lethargy and swollen lymph nodes.

As the disease progresses, symptoms may occur such as weight loss, sores in and around the mouth, eye lesions, poor coat and chronic infections.

Eventually, the immune system becomes too weak to fight off other infections or diseases. As a result, the cat will die from one of these subsequent infections.

Unfortunately in Australia and New Zealand, a lot of cats are infected with this disease.

**Vaccination is recommended.**

## AFTER VACCINATION CARE

Your cat may be "off colour" for a day or two and some may have slight swelling and tenderness or pain around the injection site. On rare occasions reactions may be more serious. Please contact your veterinarian immediately if your cat shows symptoms of distress.

## WHEN SHOULD YOUR CAT BE VACCINATED?

Kittens may be "temporarily" protected against many diseases by antibodies received through their mother's milk. Unfortunately, these maternal antibodies may also neutralise vaccines. A kitten will respond to vaccination when these maternal antibodies decline sufficiently. Under normal conditions the recommendation would be for two or three vaccination visits as specified by your veterinary surgeon and depending on when the first vaccination is given.

Thereafter **annual booster** vaccinations will provide the best protection for the life of your pet.

## FELINE VACCINATION GUIDELINES:

- c Initial vaccination programs should provide at least two immunisations at an intervaccination interval of 2-4 weeks against feline panleucopenia, calicivirus, rhinotracheitis, chlamydia and leukaemia at or after 8 weeks of age.
- c Three vaccinations against feline immunodeficiency virus are recommended at or after 8 weeks of age.
- c In the case of FIV, vaccination is not recommended under 8 weeks of age.



# Ask your Vet

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# “Vaccination is our only protection”



**Responsible pet care requires kittens to be taken to the vet for their initial course of vaccinations, but these cannot protect them for the rest of their lives. The immunity weakens over time and your pet can again become susceptible to disease.**

**Should your pet become infected, treatment can require frequent visits to your vet and possibly hospitalisation. Not all diseases can be cured and disability or death often results.**

**“The only practical means of protection is vaccination!”**



## **DANGEROUS INFECTIOUS DISEASES THAT COULD AFFECT YOUR CAT**

### **Feline Enteritis:**

Also known as Feline Panleucopenia, this viral disease is the most dangerous affecting cats. It is very contagious and the death rate is high, especially under 12 months of age. Pregnant cats may lose their young or give birth to kittens with abnormalities, quite often with brain damage.

Symptoms are depression, loss of appetite, uncontrollable vomiting and diarrhoea, often with blood and severe abdominal pain. The virus spreads so easily that heavily contaminated areas may need cleaning with a special disinfectant.

Cats that do recover may continue to carry the virus for some time and infect other cats.

**Vaccination is recommended.**



## **FELINE RESPIRATORY DISEASE**

### **Cat Flu:**

Otherwise known as “Cat Flu” it is caused in 90% of cases by Feline Herpes virus [Feline Rhinotracheitis (FR)] and/or Feline Calicivirus (FC).

Feline respiratory disease affects cats of all ages, especially young kittens, Siamese and Burmese cats. It is highly contagious and causes sneezing, coughing, running eyes, nasal discharge, loss of appetite and tongue ulcers.

Fortunately, the death rate is low except in young kittens, but the disease is distressing and may persist for several weeks.

Recovered cats can continue to carry and spread the infection for long periods.

### **Chlamydia:**

Feline Chlamydia (FChl) causes a severe persistent conjunctivitis in up to 30% of cats. Kittens are more severely affected by chlamydia following exposure to “Cat Flu”, and chlamydia can be shed for many months.

Vaccination against cat flu and chlamydia protects against clinical disease.

**Vaccination is recommended.**



## **FELINE LEUKAEMIA (FeLV)**

Feline Leukaemia is a serious disease of cats caused by feline leukaemia virus.

The virus attacks the immune system and may be associated with lack of appetite, weight loss and apathy, pale or yellow mucous membranes, vomiting, diarrhoea, reproductive problems, increased susceptibility to other infections, leukaemia and tumours. Many cats may be infected and show no signs at all.

About one third of infected cats remain chronically infected and may shed virus in their saliva, tears, nasal secretions and urine. The disease is then spread to uninfected cats by mutual grooming, fighting, sneezing or even flea bites.

**Vaccination is recommended.**

## **FELINE IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (FIV) DISEASE (Feline AIDS)**

FIV is another disease affecting the cat's immune system. Their natural defence against attack by other diseases may be seriously affected, much in the same way as HIV in humans.

***This disease is not transmittable to humans.***

FIV is almost always transmitted by bites from infected cats. The virus that causes the disease is present in saliva!

*Continued over*

