

## The importance of Vaccinations: when should my kitten have its first vaccination?



Bringing a new kitten into your home can be a big step, but also very rewarding. Now you've decided you want to share your home with a new kitten, you have on average the next 14 to 15 years with your new feline friend.

**Over this time frame a lot can happen that can affect your cats health, but there's serious and common diseases that can be avoided.**

### Vaccinations

Having your kitten vaccinated is very important as it prevents against some serious and common diseases that can prove costly. It also prevents them from passing on diseases to other animals.

When it comes to getting your kitten vaccinated, in general, an initial vaccination course is made up of two separate injections three to four weeks apart. In the UK, most kittens have their first vaccination at nine weeks and the second vaccination at 12 weeks. After this, kittens and cats usually need 'booster' vaccinations every twelve months.

What do vaccinations protect against?

The vaccinations your cat receives will vary, but in the most part they cover a combination of serious and common diseases, which include:

- Feline Infectious Enteritis (FIE, feline panleukopenia, feline parvovirus)
- Feline herpesvirus (FHV-1) and feline calicivirus (FCV)- Cat flu
- Feline chlamydia (Chlamydia felis, feline chlamydia infection)
- Feline leukaemia virus (FeLV)

These diseases are thankfully fairly uncommon amongst vaccinated animals these days, but this is mainly due to the widespread vaccination regime in operation. In areas where animals aren't vaccinated, these diseases are very common and often fatal to the animals affected.

### **?I've read that annual vaccinations are a way for my vets to make money and are not needed?**

Ultimately it's up to you to decide if you want your cat to have annual vaccinations. Annual vaccinations are important as viruses change over time (think flu), by vaccinating your kitten/cat annually, this will provide them the best cover.

If you live in an area with low vaccination rates, many of the diseases listed above are still common. It's heart breaking to see an animal die of a readily preventable disease and while they may have had their two vaccinations early on in life, they could still come into contact with new diseases that weren't around then, this is why it's important for your cat to keep up to date with annual vaccinations.

Are annual vaccinations expensive?



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Annual vaccinations aren't going to leave a hole in your purse; in fact they can prevent against any costly treatments.

Our 365 Care Plan which includes annual vaccinations\* can be paid in easy and affordable monthly direct debits. ([Click here to view the full 365 Plan](#)).

Are kittens vaccinated when adopted?

This would depend entirely on where the kitten was adopted. Cat centres such as Cat Protection and the RSPCA will vaccinate a kitten or cat before they move to their new home.

If your kitten has come from a private breeder or anywhere else, it's important to ask the person who has been looking after the kitten/ cat if they've had them vaccinated, if they say yes- make sure they provide you with a vaccination record.