



SEADOWN

VETERINARY GROUP



Tel. Hythe (023) 8084 2237

Vaccination

Vaccination in animals induces immunity against a number of potentially life-threatening diseases and is part of responsible pet ownership. Most boarding kennels and catteries will require that your pet is vaccinated, and you may need to show documentation to prove this. Immunisation in people and animals has resulted in cases of many potentially life-threatening diseases being significantly reduced in number and severity.

When an animal is born and for the first few weeks of life it has some protection against disease acquired from the mother. This is transmitted via the bloodstream during pregnancy and then through the milk when lactating. From 6-8 weeks of age, this immunity begins to wane and the young animal needs to develop their own immune system. Vaccination involves giving a 'killed' or modified variant of a disease, to stimulate immunity in a safe way.

Kittens start their vaccination programme at nine weeks, followed by the second injection at twelve weeks. For our feline friends these important injections will protect them against cat flu and enteritis. We also recommend that cats (except indoor cats) should also be vaccinated against viral leukaemia, which is transmitted by other cats. Thereafter, adult cats are vaccinated yearly. The vet will also give your pet a full check-up at this time and discuss any other concerns you might have.

Puppies are vaccinated from eight weeks and a second injection is given two weeks later. The initial course protects them against distemper, hepatitis, leptospirosis, parvovirus and parainfluenza. The first 'booster' is given a year later, and is a repeat inoculation for all the diseases listed above. Thereafter a smaller vaccination for leptospirosis and parainfluenza is given at two and three years of age, with the full booster being given every three years in the adult dog. Dogs can also be vaccinated for kennel cough, which is often given before dogs go into kennels and should be repeated yearly to remain effective.

Vaccination against rabies can be carried out in dogs and cats for the Pet Passport Scheme www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-pets/pets/travel/index/htm

Rabbits should be vaccinated against myxomatosis, which is unfortunately common in the wild rabbit population and transmitted by insects. Rabbits can be vaccinated from six weeks of age and this should be repeated every 6-12 months. Outdoor rabbits, particularly those in rural areas are at greatest risk. Rabbits can also be vaccinated against Viral Haemorrhagic Disease, from 10 weeks of age. This vaccination should be repeated annually and cannot be carried out at the same time as the myxomatosis inoculation.

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