



# nantwich | veterinary group

## Vaccination

### Dogs

*Canine distemper* - The virus targets the gut, respiratory tract and nervous system. Distemper is often fatal and has a long incubation period so it is usually too late to vaccinate after an outbreak has begun.

*Infectious canine hepatitis* – This virus attacks the liver, kidneys, eyes and lungs of dogs. The disease is rapid and causes death within 24-36 hours. Some dogs can recover and then shed the virus for many months, posing a threat to other dogs.

*Canine parvovirus* – Parvovirus was first seen in the late seventies, killing thousands of dogs. Although it has a reduced frequency the disease is still seen today. Symptoms include vomiting and diarrhoea leading to anorexia, dehydration and death. The virus can be picked up from the environment, from infected dogs or can be spread easily on footwear. The virus is very persistent in the environment, lasting for years and is unaffected by many household disinfectants. Dogs of all ages can become infected but puppies are particularly susceptible. Many affected dogs die in spite of veterinary care. Vaccination has been very successful in reducing the frequency of this disease but has by no means eliminated it.

*Leptospirosis* – This is a bacterial condition which has two forms. One is picked up from watercourses contaminated with the urine of infected rats. It attacks the liver and kidneys and is often fatal. It can also be transmitted to humans. The second is caught from the urine of other infected dogs. It attacks the kidneys but sometimes the damage only becomes evident as the dog gets older and develops kidney failure.

*Canine parainfluenza* – This is a viral cause of infectious bronchitis, commonly called “kennel cough”. The main signs are a harsh hacking cough with gagging and retching. It can be a very debilitating disease and may last several weeks.

*Bordetella* – This is a bacterial cause of infectious bronchitis. The infectious agents of kennel cough are transmitted to other dogs via airborne droplets when an infected dog coughs. Even after the coughing has stopped your dog can remain infectious for up to three months.

*Rabies* – Recent changes in the quarantine rules means that dogs which can now travel abroad need protection against rabies.

## **Cats**

*Cat 'flu* – The two most important causes of cat 'flu are feline herpesvirus (FHV) and feline calicivirus (FCV). FHV is a highly contagious severe respiratory disease causing sneezing, loss of appetite, fever and sore eyes. It can be fatal in kittens. FCV has similar symptoms but also causes mouth and tongue ulcers. Direct contact with infected cats is the most likely method of transmission. Secondary bacterial infections can cause pneumonia. Cats can become carriers of the virus which means that they appear healthy but are capable of transmitting the disease to unvaccinated cats. Carrier cats are common

*Feline infectious enteritis* – This is an extremely contagious viral infection associated with a high death rate in young kittens although cats of all ages can be affected. It causes vomiting and diarrhea. It is difficult to treat and even cats that recover may never regain full health.

*Feline leukaemia virus* – This is the single most important infectious cause of mortality in cats. Symptoms may not develop for months or years but most cats die within three years of becoming persistently infected. FeLV can cause tumours or destroy the cat's immune system. It is transmitted directly from cat to cat. Cats can become carriers of the virus which means that they appear healthy but are capable of transmitting the disease to unvaccinated cats. Carrier cats are common

## **Rabbits**

*Myxomatosis* – This viral disease is spread by blood sucking insects such as fleas and biting flies. Large swellings develop around the eyes, ears and anus. These swellings make it impossible for the rabbit to see, eat or drink. Death may take up to 12 days.

*Viral haemorrhagic disease* – This is a deadly disease affecting any rabbit over six weeks of age. This disease was first seen in the UK in 1992 since which time it has spread throughout the country. It attacks the liver and causes severe bleeding which kills the rabbit. Most animals die very rapidly often with little or no warning. This virus is very persistent in the environment and can be spread easily on footwear or by birds and insects.