



Vaccines

Most vets will highly recommend the FVRCP and rabies vaccines. These diseases are highly infectious and seen worldwide. They are very dangerous to young cats, and the vaccines are considered to provide a good deal of protection with minimal risk.

The FeLV vaccine is tricky because it is required for kittens but optional for cats that are at least a year old.

Rabies Vaccine (Core)

[Rabies vaccination](#) is given every year or every three years, depending on state laws and the brand of vaccine used.

[Rabies](#) is significant not only for its effect on the cat but because it is a disease that is transmissible to humans and can be fatal.

While cats are not natural carriers for the disease, they can be infected by a bite from any infected mammal and then pass it on to others. After an incubation stage, clinical signs of aggression, disorientation, and death rapidly progress.

Rabies is endemic worldwide, and the vaccine is recommended for all pet cats.



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By the AAFCO guidelines, it is a core disease (it can be transmitted from cat to cat). Keep your cat up to date on their rabies

A single three-in-one vaccine called the FVRCP allows you to administer the vaccines all at once,

instead of having to inject a cat three separate times in one visit:

- Feline rhinotracheitis virus/herpesvirus 1 (FVR/FHV-1)

- Feline Calicivirus (FCV)
- Feline Panleukopenia (FPV)

If your cat is an indoor adult cat, FVRCP can be done every three years. If they are outdoor or indoor/outdoor, or they are young cats or seniors, your vet may recommend yearly FVRCP shots.

Cats heading into stressful situations, such as boarding, may benefit from a core vaccine booster 7-10 days before.

FeLV Vaccine (Core for Kittens)

The FeLV vaccine works to protect your cat against feline leukemia virus.

FeLV is found worldwide. Transmitted through body fluids including saliva, urine, and feces, FeLV is spread when an infected cat comes into close contact with another cat that they groom or share bowls with.

Infection with FeLV is not an automatic death sentence. Many cats are fortunate to go into a regressive state and appear perfectly healthy throughout their lives, but some do not fare as well.

After a latent period lasting months or even years, the disease often progresses to a variety of associated conditions: [lymphoma](#), [anemia](#), or immunosuppression resulting in secondary disease.

The FeLV vaccine is recommended as core for kittens. The initial vaccination series consists of two doses spaced three to four weeks apart, followed by revaccination one year later for all adult cats.

However, based on most recent data, the Vaccine Advisory Panel recommends that subsequent vaccines may be administered based on risk: yearly for high-risk cats, and every two years for lower-risk cats.

Your veterinarian can assess your cat's risk of FeLV infection and decide on an appropriate vaccination schedule.

Cat Vaccination Schedule

Many factors affect the likelihood of a cat developing an infectious disease. The factors that your veterinarian will consider to determine your cat's vaccination schedule include:

- Age
- Medical history
- Vaccination history
- How likely they are to be exposed to a pathogen
- Severity of disease caused by a pathogen
- State laws
- Brand of vaccine

Discuss your cat's lifestyle and risk factors with your veterinarian to determine an optimal, individualized vaccination protocol.

Here are the general cat vaccination guidelines to use as a starting point:

Kittens (up to 1 year of age)

- **6-8 weeks:**
 - FVRCP (core)
 - FeLV (core)
- **10-12 weeks:**
 - FVRCP (core; first or second shot)
 - FeLV (core; first or second shot)
- **14-16 weeks:**

10-12 weeks:

- FVRCP (core; only if first shot given at 10-12 weeks)
- Rabies
- FeLV (core; only if first shot given at 10-12 weeks)

• 1 year after initial series:

- FVRCP booster
- Rabies booster

Adult and Senior Cats (Over 1 year old)

• Every year:

- FELV (optional non-core vaccine)

• Every 1-3 years:

- FVRCP (every 3 years for indoor cats, and every year for indoor/outdoor, outdoor-only, very young, or senior cats)
- Rabies (1-year or 3-year vaccine depending on state laws)

Note: It's always best to discuss these things with your veterinarian.