



Big Lake Area Veterinary Hospital

50 County Road 43
Big Lake MN 55309
763-263-8387

Recommended Kitten Care Vaccine Schedule:

~8-10 weeks of age: FVRCP (Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, Panleukopenia)

~12-14 weeks of age: FVRCP

Feline Leukemia/ Feline Immunodeficiency Virus Test
Feline Leukemia Vaccine

~15-16 weeks of age: FVRCP

Feline Leukemia
Rabies

Continue reading for more details on these vaccines and discuss with your veterinarian if they would be a good fit for your kitten.

Feline Leukemia/ FIV Testing

We strongly recommend a Feline Triple test (a blood test that checks for heartworm, feline leukemia, and feline immunodeficiency virus) at least once as a kitten at or after the age of 12 weeks. Feline Leukemia and FIV are both transmissible diseases that cats can give to one another. If your cat has tested negative and you are bringing a new kitten into the home; it is recommended to test the new kitten prior to interaction with the current cat.

Intestinal Parasite Prevention/ Control

We strongly recommend a fecal exam at 6-12 weeks of age and then annually thereafter, even for indoor cats. Typically we deworm kittens at the initial visit and then continue depending on exposure / fecal results.

Heartworm, Flea & Tick Control

We strongly recommend the use of prevention on cats that are primarily outdoors or indoor/outdoor. Heartworm is transmitted by mosquitoes and even though it is rare for a cat to be infected with heartworm, it is deadly if they do become infected. Cats can bring fleas and ticks into the home the same way a dog can. They can also be exposed to the same tickborne diseases that dogs can.

Parasites can infect your pet anytime of the year. Be proactive and use prevention year round to eliminate risks of a parasitic infection in your household.



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Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, Panleukopenia

This vaccine goes by many names, “Feline Distemper Vaccine”, “FVRCP”, and a few others. Whatever you call it, this vaccine protects against 3 main airborne viruses that cats can transmit to each other.

Rhinotracheitis is a form of feline herpes, a common virus that causes runny eyes, nasal discharge, sneezing, and other URI signs. Most cats can recover fine from this but kittens are particularly susceptible and can be hit much harder by the virus. Feline herpes will often lay dormant after initial infection and can cause the cat to have flare ups during periods of stress.

Calicivirus is similar to Rhinotracheitis in the symptoms that it causes. However, in addition it can cause painful mouth ulcers, and in rare cases be deadly.

Panleukopenia is in the same family as the canine parvovirus. Perhaps that is why the vaccine itself is referred to as the “Feline Distemper Vaccine”. Panleukopenia affects the brain, intestinal tract, bone marrow, and even the red blood cells of a cat or kitten. Symptoms include lethargy, vomiting and diarrhea, fever, and a severe drop in a cat's white blood cell count- making it more prone to secondary infections. Without proper treatment panleukopenia is often deadly. If a pregnant cat has panleukopenia it can be transmitted to her kittens causing brain development delays including cerebellar hypoplasia (wobbly kittens). These kittens can often go on to live happy lives; they just need a special home for their special needs.

Rabies

Rabies is a 100% fatal viral disease. The virus is secreted in the saliva and is typically transmitted via a bite from an infected animal. Rabies is a zoonotic disease that is transmittable and lethal to humans. Once there are clinical signs of rabies, there is no treatment. Animals with rabies show a variety of signs, including fearfulness, aggression, excessive drooling, difficulty swallowing, paralysis and seizures. All pets should be vaccinated against rabies not only for the safety of the pet but for all humans that interact with the pet. Rabies is a core vaccine that should be given as listed above, 1 year later, and every 3 years thereafter.

Feline Leukemia

Feline Leukemia is an infection spread by cats to other cats primarily via saliva and feces. It is the cause for more deaths in cats than any other feline specific disease. There are 4 different types of leukemia infections that can cause different issues. Primarily the disease causes a lowered white blood cell count making it harder for cats to fight infection. In kittens specifically, the virus tends to be deadly as their body does not have a well developed immune system. Cats that are going to be outdoors should always be vaccinated for Feline Leukemia.



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Spaying and Neutering

It is recommended to have cats “fixed” (spayed or neutered) between 6-12 months of age. We provide general anesthesia for these procedures with proper analgesic and antibiotic protocol. Including monitoring of temperature, heart and respiratory rates, and blood pressure. We also offer microchipping (with HomeAgain), custom cone collars, take home pain medication, and toe nail trims.

Prior to anesthesia it is recommended to evaluate your pets internal organ function via blood chemistry. This can be done the morning of a procedure or the week prior to.

Benefits of Spaying

- Prevents unwanted litters, and eliminates the risk of a pyometra (an uterine infection that is fatal without surgical intervention)
- Eliminates the attracting of other cats to your property during an estrus
- When done prior to the first heat cycle, spaying greatly reduces the risk of mammary cancer to 0.5%
 - In veterinary medicine mammary tumors represent the most frequently diagnosed tumor in intact females. 50% of which were malignant

Benefits of Neutering

- Eliminates the risk for testicular cancer
- Reduces the likelihood of enlarged prostate
- Reduces behavioral spraying, aggression, and wandering

Cats are induced ovulators, meaning they can go into heat almost any time. Spaying your cat early will not help prevent unwanted litters and the overpopulation of cats. It will also help decrease the chances of an intact stray coming to your home looking for a girlfriend.

Often people worry that their spayed or neutered pet will get fat. However, the aging process probably affects weight gain more than anything—as many of us are painfully aware from our human experience. It’s true that lowered hormone levels may decrease your pet’s activity. The key to this problem is simple—give your pet less food and more exercise.

Altering your pet can also add an additional 1-3 years to their life. That’s a lot of extra cuddles!



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Vaccine Reactions

While vaccines are very safe some animals will have a reaction to one or more vaccines. These reactions can vary from mild signs such as localized swelling and pain to a swollen face, hives, to more severe / possibly life threatening signs such as difficulty breathing, vomiting/ diarrhea, or sudden collapse. If you see the following please let us know immediately

- Mild reactions- these should be reported but typically do not require veterinary intervention
 - Quiet behavior, mild loss of appetite, and or soreness at the injection site. Typically seen in the first 24-48 hours after vaccination
 - Vaccination Granuloma
 - Swelling at the injection site that lasts beyond the 48 hours after vaccination
 - Non painful, doesn't change in size or cause hair loss/ other changes
- Severe reactions- these should be addressed immediately
 - Swelling of the face, muzzle, or head
 - Hives, or welt like lesions across body
 - Drainage from eyes and pawing at face
 - Typically seen 10-30 minutes after vaccination
- Anaphylactic Shock- this needs to be addressed immediately
 - Vomiting/ diarrhea- more than once or twice
 - Collapse / restlessness that then leads to collapse
 - Seizures
 - Typically happens 10-30 minutes after vaccination

After an animal has recovered from a vaccine reaction there are several things we can do in the future to reduce risk of further reactions.

- Premedication (at home or in clinic prior to vaccination) with Diphenhydramine can help to prevent a reaction.
- Splitting vaccines- giving one vaccine at a time and spreading out the vaccines by 1-2 weeks.

If you are concerned your pet is having a vaccine reaction please give a dose of Diphenhydramine and contact us or a local emergency clinic right away.



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Recommended Diphenhydramine Doses:

*When giving Benadryl® / Diphenhydramine- Make sure Xylitol is **NOT** listed in the ingredients. Make sure there is **NO** decongestant in the medication

If your pet weighs:

2-4#; give ¼ teaspoon liquid (childrens) Diphenhydramine

4-6#; give ½ teaspoon liquid (childrens) Diphenhydramine

6-8#; give ¾ teaspoon liquid (childrens) Diphenhydramine

8-16#; give 1 teaspoon liquid (childrens) Diphenhydramine

16-35#; give 1 tablet of (adult 25mg) Diphenhydramine

35-65#; give 2 tablets of (adult 25mg) Diphenhydramine

65-85#; give 3 tablets of (adult 25mg) Diphenhydramine

Over 85#; give 4 tablets of (adult 25mg) Diphenhydramine

Emergency clinics in Minnesota

Animal Emergency and Referral-
Oakdale, MN 651-501-3766
St. Paul, MN 651-293-1800

Blue Pearl-
Arden Hills, MN (24hr) 763-754-5000
Blaine 763-754-9434
Duluth 218-302-8000
Eden Prairie (24hr) 952-942-8272
Golden Valley 763-529-6560
St. Cloud 320-258-3481

Como Park Animal Hospital- St. Paul, MN 651-487-3255

See our website for a full list of emergency and urgent care pet hospitals.

Remember to always call an emergency clinic on your way to the clinic so they can anticipate your arrival and make sure they are able to accommodate you