

ALTA VIEW VETERINARY CLINIC

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FELINE DISEASES AND VACCINATIONS

What you need to know:

FELINE VIRAL RHINOTRACHEITIS (FVR): FVR is a viral upper respiratory infection characterized by coughing, sneezing, nasal discharge, conjunctivitis, and sometimes fever and loss of appetite. The virus can also cause ulcers of the eyes and skin. It is highly contagious and is transmitted through the air and through direct contact with infected animals. It can also be transmitted through contaminated clothes, bedding, cages etc. Vaccination can lessen the severity of disease and may reduce shedding of the virus in cats who are exposed to the virus.

CALICIVIRUS: Calicivirus is another highly contagious upper respiratory virus causing fever, loss of appetite, conjunctivitis, sneezing, nasal discharge, and ulceration of the mouth. Painful inflammation of the joints can also occur. Like FVR, it is highly contagious and is transmitted through the air and through direct contact with infected animals or contaminated clothes, bedding, cages, etc. Vaccination may not always prevent disease, but should lessen the severity.

PANLEUKOPENIA: Panleukopenia is a highly contagious viral disease resulting in fever, loss of appetite, and severe vomiting and/or diarrhea. It is often fatal in kittens. Transmission is through direct contact with the fecal material and bodily fluids of sick cats, or with objects contaminated by such material. Vaccination is highly effective in preventing the disease.

RABIES: Rabies is a viral disease that can affect all warm-blooded mammals, including dogs, cats, wildlife and humans. The virus infects cells of the nervous system producing incoordination and behavioral abnormalities such as unusual aggression or withdrawal. Once the signs of Rabies appear, the disease is always fatal. Rabies is usually transmitted by bite wounds, often from infected wildlife. Rabies vaccination is required by law in most communities for cats. The one year vaccine (versus three year) may be less likely to cause adverse reactions (see below).

FELINE LEUKEMIA VIRUS (FELV): FELV is transmitted through long-term contact, mutual grooming or bite wounds from an infected cat. It may also be transmitted from mother to kitten. Some cats may fight off the virus (very rare) while others become persistently infected and will develop severe, usually fatal disease including anemia, other infections, and cancers. Adult cats appear to be more resistant to infection than kittens. Vaccination may not protect all cats or kittens. Therefore, the best protection is prevention of exposure to the virus.

RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH VACCINATION/REACTIONS:

Discomfort or swelling at the injection site, fever, lethargy, or anorexia. These reactions are relatively common and usually only last for 24 hours. You should contact your vet if they last longer or you are concerned.

More serious reactions can occur including anaphylaxis, vomiting, diarrhea, swelling of the face, difficulty breathing, weakness and rarely death. These reactions require immediate veterinary attention. A tumor called Sarcoma may develop at the vaccine site several weeks, months, or even longer following vaccination (1/10,000-10/10,000 in vaccinated cats). Therefore, any lumps at the injection site should be reported to your vet immediately.