

East- West Animal Hospital

Linda Register, DVM, CVA
1524 Land O Lakes Blvd
Lutz, FL 33549
813-948-6534/ fax 813-949-5533

Feline Vaccine Protocol

Adaptation protocol by Dr. Anne Lampru

Remember young kittens have young immune systems and are susceptible to contagious diseases! Do your best to keep him/her away from a lot of exposure until their immune system gets older and more effective. This means limited trips to visit kitty friends. It is important to socialize your kitten but do not expose him/her to cats or places that might be highly contagious.

8-9 weeks of age:

- Veterinary exam and check up.
- FVRCP (feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus & panleukopenia (i.e Distemper shot)
- Fecal test
 - Deworming- no matter what the test shows (kittens can still harbor parasites that don't always show up on the intestinal parasite screening)
- Start Heartworm prevention and flea control if over 2 pounds

11-12 weeks of age:

- Veterinary Exam and check up
- Repeat FVRCP vaccine
- Start/continue heartworm prevention
- Fecal test
- Deworming

15-16 weeks of age:

- Veterinary Exam and check up
- Repeat FVRCP vaccine- final
- Start/continue heartworm prevention
- Fecal test
- Deworming

Rabies vaccine can be given as early at 12 weeks of age. We prefer to give it at 16 weeks of age, ideally not at the same time as the distemper vaccine. Giving both vaccines at the same time increases the likelihood of vaccine reactions and overwhelming the immune system.

Spaying/Neutering- Should be done one month (or more) before or after the rabies vaccine, or at least 3 weeks after the last FVRCP vaccine.

We do not recommend vaccinations at the time of surgery. This overwhelms the immune system. In this instance the body is trying to heal from surgery & mount an immune response with the vaccinations.

We do not recommend FELV (feline leukemia) vaccine unless the kitten will be outside, lives with FELV positive cats, or is at risk to being bitten by FELV positive cats. They must test negative for FELV prior to being vaccinated.

We do not recommend the vaccine for FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus). The only test available at this time will show positive if a cat has been vaccinated.

We do not recommend the vaccine for FIP (Feline Infectious Peritonitis). There is the potential for the vaccination to cause the corona virus to mutate the pathogenic form. The lab tests for FIP are non-specific, even the non-pathogenic form will show up positive on the test.

We also do not recommend the vaccines for Girardia or Ringworm.

Cats should receive a booster for FVRCP one year after the completion of his/her kitten vaccines, then the 3 year rabies vaccine 1 month later, which is 1 year after the first rabies vaccine.

All 50 states now recognize the 3 year rabies vaccine.

If your pet has demonstrated serious illness directly related to vaccinations or has an immune compromised disease (diabetes, cancer, auto-immune disorders), then a medical exemption can be issued to exempt your pet from vaccinations, and a county tag can be issued in Hillsborough County and Pasco County. Pinellas County will only allow medical exemptions for those pets who have had a documented anaphylactic reaction to vaccination(s). Titer levels can be done to try to determine if there is antibody present, but no one will recognize this test in lieu of vaccination or medical exemption. **Rabies is a potential threat to human health and therefore can be a legal issue so we need to follow acceptable protocols.**

The FVRCP vaccine should then be boosted every 3 years. Some research shows that the Panleulopenia (Distemper) portion may last longer than labeled. The Upper Respiratory portion may not last as long. Indoor cats can still upper respiratory infections being that these are airborne diseases. Distemper titers can be done to check the antibody level to see if vaccination is indicated.

Physical exams and fecal tests should be done on an annual basis. Physical exams should be every 6 months in cats 7 -12 years of age and every 3 months in cats over 12 years. All cats should also be on heartworm prevention as well. Cats can be exposed to heartworms via mosquitoes even if they are indoors only.