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Recommended Guidelines for Preventative Healthcare for Cat

*Here at Small Paws Veterinary Clinic we will be following the guidelines of the **American Association of Feline Practitioners, American Heartworm Society, and the Companion Animal Parasite Council.** These Guidelines are available online for your viewing.*

Core Vaccines:

- Panleukopenia Virus (FPV)/Feline Herpes Virus (FHV-I/FCV)/ 1 Feline Calicivirus

(This vaccine is highly recommended for all cats including indoor cats, but not to be given to pregnant cats)

- Kitten Series: *Begin as early as 6 weeks of age then booster every 3-4 weeks until 16 weeks of age.*

Our recommendation is at 8, 12, & 16 weeks of age.

- Non Vaccinated Cats: *Greater than 16 weeks of age receive 2 doses at 3 - 4 weeks apart. Boosters should be given at 1 year then every 3 years.*
- Rabies: *Single dose given at 12 weeks of age and older to be repeated in 1 year and thereafter every 3 years.*

(This vaccine is required by NC State law for all cats including indoor cats)

Non-Core Vaccines:

- **Feline Leukemia Vaccine (FELV)**

(Highly recommend that all cats be screened for feline leukemia.

Vaccine recommended for cats at risk, example: those that live or allowed to go outside)

Kittens: *Vaccinate at 8 - 12 weeks of age and 2nd dose 3 to 4 weeks later. Our suggestion is at 8 & 12 weeks of age.*

Cats: *Older than 16 weeks of age. Receive 2 doses at 3 – 4 weeks apart. Boosters are given at 1 year and then annually thereafter.*

- **Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)**

Highly recommended prescreening kittens for FIV, can be done in combination with FELV test.

Vaccination only given to cats with very high risk of infection, example: a cat living with a FIV positive cat.

Vaccination of a cat for FIV will interfere with any future FIV diagnostic testing.

- **Bordetella:** *Recommended for cats going to groomers and boarding facilities. A single intranasal vaccine is given as early as 8 weeks and then an annual booster.*
- **Chlamydomphila Felis/Feline Giardia** *Generally not recommended except in large catteries.*
- **Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP)** *(Not recommended)*
- **Deworming Litters** *of kittens should be dewormed starting at 2 weeks of age; this may be done by owner at home.*

Kittens:

We recommend kittens 1st visit at 8 weeks of age. At that time we recommend a stool check for intestinal parasites, FELV/FIV testing, institute external parasite control and start core vaccines.

At 12 weeks of age internal parasite control, continue vaccine series along with rabies. At this time we highly recommend heartworm prevention be started for cats. While cats may not be the species most associated with heartworms the outcome for them is much more devastating and unfortunately cats cannot be treated for adult heartworms. Prevention, prevention, prevention is the key to a healthy pet.

The last kitten visit at 16 weeks of age includes final vaccine series, intestinal parasite check and at this time we recommend scheduling spay/neuter for 4 – 6 months of age.

Adult Cats:

- ✓ *We recommend yearly physical exam with intestinal parasite checks for cats up to the age of 7 years.*
- ✓ *Once your cat is 7 years and older, of age we recommend twice yearly exams, as your feline friend is aging several years during this time.*
- ✓ *We also recommend routine wellness blood panels are at least every other year. This is a great way to find problems before they get out of hand. For the geriatric cat (over 7 years of age) they should have routine blood panels on a yearly basis.*

Remember checking your feline friend for internal parasites is very important. Not only for your cat but these parasites can be transmitted to humans particularly children.

Spay/Neuter:

We highly recommend that all pets be neutered. This applies to both male and females. The most obvious reason is to avoid unwanted litters of kittens & puppies. As you know abandoned number of pets in this country is astronomical. However, multiple health benefits such as decreased cancers, uterine issues, prostatic issues, and other health problems benefit from early spay/neuter. We recommend that pets be neutered between 4 – 5 months of age. Young animals have less recovery time. Cats that have been neutered are less likely to roam and be in cat fights resulting in cat bite abscesses.