

Things to consider and discuss with your Veterinarian

- ❖ **If your cat is sick, has ever had a vaccine reaction, or has an immune system disorder -**
Most experts agree that cats with these problems should not be vaccinated.
- ❖ **Is your cat at risk for the disease that the vaccine is designed to prevent?**
Not every cat needs every vaccine. Discuss your cat's age, health and environment with your vet prior to consenting for any vaccinations.
- ❖ **Ask your Vet about possible side-effects of each vaccine -**
Understanding that a vaccination is a medical procedure that may have harmful side effects is an important part of your decision to vaccinate. These side effects can range from a mild allergic reaction all the way to triggering one of these cancers.
- ❖ **Refuse "scruff shots" in the loose skin on the back of your cat's neck. Scruff shots are no longer considered to be the prevailing standard of care!**
With the exception of fluids to treat dehydration, NO shot should ever be given in the scruff of your cat's neck. Because it is so close to your cat's ribs, heart and lungs, successful treatment of VAS in this area is very difficult.
- ❖ **Be sure that your Vet records the manufacturer, lot number and injection locations on you cat's medical record -**
You or your vet will need to report this information if your cat has a vaccine reaction or develops VAS. You can also ask for a copy of the vaccine information to keep for your records!
- ❖ **Report an adverse vaccine reaction -**
All vaccine reactions need to be reported to both the USDA Center for Veterinary Biologics and the Vaccine Manufacturer. VAS/ISS is not only under-diagnosed, but also under-reported. Reporting adverse vaccine reactions will lead to better and safer products and a more accurate assessment of the incidence of VAS/ISS. Please ask your vet to be sure to report your cat's adverse reaction.

Make sure that your Veterinarian follows the Prevailing Standard of Care for Vaccine Injection Sites and ask for safer, adjuvant-free vaccines!

Rabies

RIGHT rear leg as distally as possible. Consider Merial's Non-Adjuvanted Purevax.

Feline Leukemia (FeLV)

LEFT rear leg as distally as possible. Strictly indoor adult cats should not need this vaccine. If necessary, consider Intervet's Protex FeLV.

FVRCP or "Upper Respiratory"

Over the **right shoulder** as distally as possible. Request Modified Live Virus vaccines or consider Intranasal vaccines from Heska and Pfizer, or Merial's injectable adjuvant-free vaccines called Purevax-2 and Purevax-3.

For more detailed information on these vaccines, please check out:
<http://avmajournals.avma.org/doi/pdf/10.2460/javma.229.9.1405>

Avoid COLD vaccines! A recent research study suggests that refrigerated vaccines may be more likely to trigger VAS! Ask your vet to allow vaccines to come to room temperature prior to administration!

Annual check-ups aren't just for vaccines anymore!

With the exception of areas where rabies vaccines are required annually by law, most vaccines are now recommended every three years. You should continue to take your cat(s) to your Veterinarian for a yearly check-up. Based on your cat's age, health and the veterinarian's findings, your vet may recommend other procedures that are important to your cat's health. Blood tests can help detect health issues in early stages. An annual dental exam is very important. Bacteria that form on teeth can enter your cat's bloodstream and cause heart or kidney diseases.

It is important that every new pet, whether vaccines are due or not, and regardless of age, to be seen by your Veterinarian for a baseline examination. A negative FeLV/FIV test is not a guarantee that a cat or kitten is 100% disease free. Viruses can take several days to incubate, so for the safety of pets already living in your home, always quarantine new animals for several days.