



YOUR HEALTHY CAT FELOCELL[®] and LEUKOCELL[®] vaccines:



: **KNOW THE FACTS**

Be sure to read this booklet before your cat receives a Felocell[®] or Leukocell[®] vaccine. You should also review it each time your cat receives the same vaccine.

This booklet is only a summary. It does not replace what your veterinarian has told you. To learn more about Felocell[®] or Leukocell[®] vaccines, talk to your veterinarian.

: **FELOCELL[®] AND LEUKOCELL[®] VACCINES HELP KEEP YOUR CAT HEALTHY**

Protecting your cat from a disease is better than treating a disease once it occurs. That is why many veterinarians and cat owners rely on vaccines. They work so well that some cat diseases are rarely seen anymore. This is because most cats have developed protection by receiving the right vaccine for the right disease at the right time. Your veterinarian is your best source to help you determine what Felocell and Leukocell vaccines your cat needs and when to get them.

Felocell[®] vaccines help protect your cat against these common diseases:

- **Feline viral rhinotracheitis (FVR, feline herpes virus) and Calici virus (FCV):** These two viruses cause the majority of cat nose, throat

and breathing system illnesses (respiratory diseases). The signs are very similar and include runny nose and eyes, sneezing, difficulty breathing and painful mouth ulcers. Other signs often include loss of appetite and activity. In most cases cats get better in 1–2 weeks, but in rare cases death may occur. Cats may recover from the illness and have no signs but may still have the virus in their body. Later on they may develop signs again when they are stressed. In breeding female cats, FVR can cause abortions.

- **Panleukopenia (also called cat distemper):** This disease is caused by a parvovirus. This virus spreads easily from cat to cat, and is often fatal. The virus can survive for months in the environment and can be carried by people and this is a major source of infection for cats. It's important to know that your cat can get this disease even if it is not living with other cats. Kittens and unvaccinated cats are especially susceptible. Signs include fever, loss of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, and death.

Leukocell[®] vaccine helps protect your cat against **feline leukemia virus (FeLV)**. This virus is spread from cat to cat, or by contact with contaminated bowls or litter boxes. Feline leukemia virus causes cats' immune

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systems to weaken and allows them to catch other diseases very easily. Cats with leukemia often have problems with respiratory disease and with diarrhea that can be very hard to control or treat. FeLV can directly cause anemia (low red blood cell count). Even if the cat survives these problems, it may later develop cancer. Most cats who get infected with this virus do not recover and either die from the virus itself or another disease that it could not fight off.

: HOW DO VACCINES WORK?

Vaccines help your cat fight off certain viruses and bacteria that cause disease. The vaccine does this by showing your cat's immune system what the viruses and bacteria look like.

Vaccines are made from a harmless form of the virus or bacteria. When given to your cat they "train" your cat's immune system to recognize and fight off the virus and bacteria if it comes in contact with it in the future.

Some vaccines help prevent your cat from getting the disease altogether and others help reduce how sick your cat will get if it becomes infected.

If your cat is infected with a disease before he or she is vaccinated, a vaccine will not treat or cure the infection. This fact is especially important in kittens, so contact your veterinarian before or immediately after you get your kitten to discuss how to keep your kitten healthy.

: HOW EFFECTIVE ARE VACCINES?

Vaccines work very well—but they are not 100% effective. Some cats may not be protected by a vaccine if they have another disease or illness at the time of vaccination. Other cats may not be protected due to stress. These conditions may weaken your cat's immune system and keep the vaccine from doing its job.

Because of these factors, it is important to follow your veterinarian's recommendation for what and when vaccines should be given to your cat.

Situations that may cause your cat stress:

- A new cat or new pet in the house
- Moving to a new house, or major home improvements
- Poor diet
- A family member gone more often than usual
- Traveling
- Other illness

Ask your veterinarian about other things that may cause stress in your cat. And let him or her know if you think your cat is stressed now.

: HOW OFTEN SHOULD MY CAT BE VACCINATED?

Your veterinarian will recommend a vaccine program that is best for your cat based on your cat's lifestyle and risk of exposure to disease.

Kittens A kitten's immune system is not fully developed at birth, and the kitten receives protection from its mother's milk. This protection decreases gradually over the first few weeks of life. How quickly this happens depends on the kitten, but in most kittens, the protection is gone by 16 weeks of age and sometimes earlier. While the mother's protection helps prevent disease in the kitten, it also may weaken the kitten's ability to respond to the first few vaccines it gets. This is why your kitten needs several vaccinations over the first few months of its life. Follow your veterinarian's directions about when to vaccinate your kitten.

Adult cats Many veterinarians suggest that adult cats receive a vaccine once a year after they have received their first series. You will see this stated on most vaccine labels. Others, however, think that the protection

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from vaccination lasts longer than one year. For this reason, they may recommend a vaccine every 3 years instead of every year. There is no one answer that applies to all cats.

Your cat may have different risks for different diseases. Make sure you talk to your veterinarian about this. And be sure to ask how often your cat should be vaccinated. Always follow the advice you receive. Your veterinarian is the best person to help you understand the healthcare needs of your cat.

: ARE THERE ANY POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF VACCINATION?

From time to time, cats may have side effects from a vaccine. Some cats may seem tired, feel warm to the touch, or lose interest in food. These signs are often caused by a low-grade fever. In many cats, this is a natural response to the vaccine's effect on the immune system.

These side effects often start within a day or so after vaccination. They should go away on their own within a day or two. If the signs continue beyond several days you should contact your veterinarian.

Some vaccines may cause a little sting when they are given and may hurt for a moment or two.

In some cases, there may be swelling, warmth, or redness where the vaccine was injected. This is a normal response for some cats. These signs often go away quickly but some may take a few days or weeks to completely disappear after the injection is given. You should check the area where the vaccine was given every so often.

That way you can see if these signs have gone away. If you are concerned, call your veterinarian.

Ask your veterinarian about the possibility of side effects before your cat is vaccinated.

: ARE THERE OTHER, LESS COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF VACCINATION?

Yes, but they are rare. No one can say for sure if they will happen to your cat or not. Here is a list of these rare side effects:

Anaphylaxis (allergic reaction) can occur within minutes to hours after a vaccine is given. The cat may vomit, have diarrhea, have trouble breathing, or collapse. Sometimes their face or body may begin to swell or get hives as if stung by a bee. Your pet may hide, lie down in a corner, and not feel like moving. In most cases, these side effects can be treated successfully. In rare cases, they may be fatal. If you see these signs in your cat, be sure to call your veterinarian right away.

There is scientific debate about whether or not immune system disorders can be caused by vaccination. We do know that immune system disorders suspected of being associated with vaccination are very rare. When they occur these diseases may harm the cat's blood cells, platelets, eyes or kidneys. When this happens, the cat may become very slow or weak. It may also eat less or be extra thirsty. Some cats may urinate more or bleed and bruise easily.

Feline sarcoma (a tumor) is also very rare. It can happen when a cat receives an injection of any kind—though no one knows why for sure. With this side effect, a lump appears at the injection site and doesn't go away and may even grow. Early treatment can be very helpful, so be sure to check your cat for this side effect. Your veterinarian can tell you how to check for this tumor and what to do if you notice one.

If your cat has any of these, or other unusual signs after getting a vaccine, call your veterinarian.

These effects are serious and important for you to understand. But you should

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also know that the diseases vaccines help protect against are much more common—and in some cases they cause death. Most veterinarians and cat owners feel that protecting their pet against these serious diseases is worth the small risk of getting a vaccine-related side effect.

■ SHOULD SOME CATS NOT BE VACCINATED?

In some cases, cats should not receive a vaccine. So be sure to tell your veterinarian if

- you think your cat is sick
- your cat is pregnant or nursing, or you plan to breed your cat soon
- vaccines have caused any problems for your cat in the past
- your cat has been around any sick animals lately
- your cat has—or had—medical problems or allergies
- you are giving, or plan to give, medicines to your cat (this includes medicines and products that you can get without a prescription)

You and your veterinarian can decide if your cat should get a vaccine today. Please talk to your veterinarian if you have any questions or concerns.

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