

## **Vaccinations at Affectionately Cats**

**We strive to offer you the most up-to-date and safest vaccines for your cat. We are committed to avoiding over-vaccinating a cat and assess each cat as an individual as to their specific vaccine needs.**

We avoid injection vaccines as much as possible as there is an association with injections causing inflammation, and inflammation being a trigger for development of fibrosarcoma later in life. Fibrosarcoma is a malignant tumor that has been associated with repeated vaccine injections.

We also avoid using adjuvanted vaccines as they, too, are associated with causing inflammation and potentially later fibrosarcoma. Adjuvants are added to killed virus vaccines to help enhance the cat's immune response to the vaccine.

**We are committed to only using non-adjuvanted vaccines at Affectionately Cats and to always use alternatives to injection vaccines whenever possible.**

The three most common vaccines we will be talking to you about are Distemper, Leukemia, and Rabies.

### **Feline Distemper/Upper Respiratory Vaccine**

For years we have been using an intranasal (nose drop) Distemper/upper respiratory vaccine. It is a small volume of liquid vaccine that is gently dropped into each side of the cat's nose. There is no risk for fibrosarcoma with this vaccine. About 20% of vaccinated cats will have some sneezing 4-7 days after vaccination which we accept as a side effect we can tolerate given otherwise its increased safety for the cat's body. Current recommendations are to booster kittens every 3-4 weeks until they are over 16 weeks of age. Once done a kitten series, most cats can then be boosted with this every three years.

### **Feline Leukemia Vaccine**

We have recently changed over to a new feline leukemia vaccine that is not only non-adjuvanted, but is given via a needling system directly through the skin (transdermal). This vaccine does need to be boosted each year once the 2 shot initial series is complete for all at-risk cats, such as those that go outdoors.

If you have a kitten, please note that kittens under 1 year of age are the most susceptible group for becoming leukemia infected as there appears to be a natural resistance to leukemia that develops with age. We recommend that ideally all kittens be tested and vaccinated against feline leukemia using a non-adjuvanted vaccine, boosted at 1 year, and then reassess their risk to determine whether to continue vaccination after that time.

If you have an entirely indoor cat then we would not advise vaccination against leukemia.

### **Feline Rabies Vaccine**

We have also recently changed over to a new Rabies vaccine that is non-adjuvanted. At this time Rabies vaccine is only available in injection form-there are no alternatives to how it is given. This vaccine needs to be boosted each year, although over time we expect the licensing on this to change to an every 3 year schedule. We feel strongly that it is better to vaccinate each year with a non-adjuvanted vaccine and cause no inflammation, then to vaccinate every 3 years with vaccine products that cause significant inflammation and its associated risks for fibrosarcoma to develop. It is required by Vermont State Law to have your cat vaccinated against Rabies.

Your cat's health is our top priority and we want to only vaccinate when needed and with the safest vaccines available. Please let us know if you have any questions.