

Why Does My Cat Need a Rabies Vaccine?

What Is Rabies in Cats?

Rabies is a preventable contagious disease that causes brain and spine inflammation. Since most states require vaccinations for domestic pets, rabies is typically only seen in wildlife.



Common Wildlife That Can Have Rabies Includes:

- Raccoons
- Skunks
- Foxes
- Coyotes
- Bats

If your cat has rabies, it can be transmitted to other pets and people through bite wounds.

If an unvaccinated cat who is past due for their rabies vaccine is exposed to a potentially rabid animal and accidentally bites someone, it can result in the cat being quarantined and most often humanely euthanized. In most cases, cats do not survive rabies.

Always keep your cat away from wildlife to prevent the possible spread of rabies.

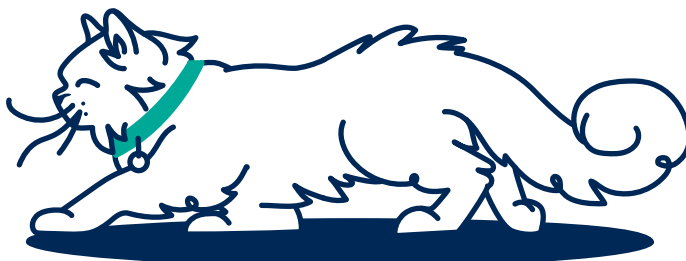
When Do Symptoms Appear?

If your pet is infected with the rabies virus, the symptoms will not appear right away.

The average incubation period is three to eight weeks, but it can range from 10 days to a year.

The rate at which symptoms appear is entirely dependent on the site of infection.

A bite that is closer to the spine or brain develops much faster than others, and the severity of the bite also plays a role. Bite wounds are not always obvious, especially from animals like bats.



The Most Common Signs of a Bite From a Rabid Animal Include:

- Abrupt decrease in appetite
- Nervousness
- Irritability
- Excitability
- Lack of coordination
- Abnormal vocalizations
- Aggression
- Excessive drooling
- Inability to swallow
- Dilated pupils
- Seizures
- Paralysis



What Is the Rabies Vaccine for Cats? When Do Cats Get It?

The rabies vaccine for cats is a core vaccine that pets get every one to three years, starting at 12 weeks old.

This vaccine is the safest and most effective way to protect your cat from this disease, which can be fatal to both animals and humans.

The rabies vaccine is safe, and side effects are minimal and short-lived—typically lethargy and tenderness at the injection site.

The timeframe and need of the rabies vaccine and its renewals may depend on state laws and your pet's health. Consult your veterinarian for more information and regional requirements.

Does My Cat Need the Rabies Vaccine?

The rabies vaccine for cats is required by law in several parts of the United States.

Due to the fatality and zoonosis (meaning it can be transmitted from animals to people) associated with rabies, there may be legal ramifications if your pet is not current on their rabies vaccine.

Therefore, it's extremely important to keep your pet up to date.

If your cat is vaccinated and encounters a rabid animal, contact your veterinarian. They will likely need a booster shot.

Benefits of the Rabies Vaccine for Cats

The rabies vaccine stops the spread of rabies among cats and prevents your cat from becoming sick if they accidentally encounter infected wildlife.

When you get your cat vaccinated against rabies, you are not only protecting them—you are also protecting yourself, your family, and your community.