

## What vaccines are required for a house cat and kitten?

**CatChannel veterinary expert, Arnold Plotnick, DVM, gives advice on the required vaccines for cats and kittens.**

**Q:** What vaccines are required for a house cat? We brought our cat home two years ago as a kitten from a shelter. She was vaccinated and spayed. What further care does she require?

**A:** I think it's great that you adopted your cat from a shelter. The first thing you want to do is to confirm that the kitten was negative for the feline leukemia virus (FeLV) and the feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV). Once that is done, you're ready to start the pediatric vaccination series. Kittens should receive three or four FVRCP (feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus, and panleukopenia) vaccines, starting at around 7 or 8 weeks of age, and continuing until 16 weeks of age. At 16 weeks of age, she also should have received a rabies vaccination.

One year later, she needs to have another FVRCP vaccine, and another rabies vaccine. From that point on, the FVRCP vaccine can be given every three years. The frequency of the rabies vaccine varies, depending on the type of vaccine used. Some rabies vaccines are labeled for use every three years, while others are labeled for annual use. Check with the shelter to see which type of rabies vaccine was given.

If your cat is completely indoors and there's no chance of her being exposed to another cat, then you do not need the FeLV vaccine or the FIV vaccine, or any other vaccinations, in my opinion.

Regards,  
Arnold Plotnick, DVM