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## **Prevent Distemper in Dogs & Cats Early in Your Pet's Life**

Distemper shot is a core vaccine for cats and dogs and is recommended for all pets. Many pets will come in contact with the distemper virus. The distemper illness is severe and highly contagious; however, the good news for pet owners is that distemper is easily vaccinated against. The distemper vaccine usually comes in combination with two-three other vaccinations. This vaccination is recommended by industry expert organizations like the American Animal Hospital Association and American Association of Feline Practitioners.

### **Canine Distemper**

- First signs of distemper disease include eye and nose discharge, fever, decreased appetite cough and pneumonia. After the initial signs, distemper moves to the GI tract causing vomiting and diarrhea. It may go on to affect the nervous system causing seizures, tremors, and imbalance.
- The distemper virus spreads from secretions in an infected pet such as saliva, nasal discharge and urine.
- Most affected dogs are puppies or pets that have not been vaccinated.
- Many pets will die from the virus. Some will get better but neurological signs can develop even years later.
- There is no specific test for distemper and a diagnosis is usually made based off of clinical signs.

### **Feline Distemper**

- Kittens or unvaccinated cats are the most susceptible to the virus.
- It damages the immune system and attacks the intestinal lining leading to diarrhea, dehydration and bacterial infection. Low white blood cell count along with clinical signs are used to reach a diagnosis.
- Feline distemper is also known as “Panleukopenia.”
- This virus is different from canine distemper and is actually a parvovirus.
- Feline distemper is highly contagious and very stable in the environment.
- It is considered ubiquitous, meaning it is present in every place not disinfected.

### **Vaccinate Your Pet for Distemper**

- Canine and Feline Distemper is a severe disease that can be easily prevented with a vaccination
- Puppies and Kittens should begin their vaccinations at 6-8 wks of age, typically the vaccine will be boosted every 3-4 wks until the puppy or kitten is 14-16 weeks of age

Disclaimer: This written content is meant to be educational and is not medical advice. Always consult a veterinarian about medical advice for your pet.