

## WHEN TO VACCINATE?

**FOR PUPPIES AND KITTENS:** If their mother has a healthy immune system, a puppy/kitten will most likely receive antibodies in their mother's milk while nursing. They should receive a series of vaccinations starting at six to eight weeks of age and given every 3-4 weeks. The final dose should be administered at 16 weeks of age for distemper/parvo (dogs) or FVRCP (cats).

\*\*Especially important to vaccinate until 16 weeks of age because the maternal "mother" antibodies are interfering with protection. These maternal derived antibodies are crucial for early life protection, but they also inhibit the pup/kitten from making their own antibody response to the vaccine. Maternal antibodies may persist in 10% at 12 weeks of age, and 25% at 10 weeks of age. It is only at 14-16 weeks of age that we believe that all pups/kittens are capable of responding to the vaccine fully. Early-life vaccination requires 'priming' of the immune system followed by a 'boost' to stimulated lymphocytes.

\*\* Certain breeds (Rottweilers) are low responders to vaccines (parvo virus).

\*\*It is important not to be late for vaccines during the initial series! If 6 weeks or longer after the previous vaccine the pet needs to be vaccinated again with a minimum of two doses 3-4 weeks apart that we are "priming" the immune system properly.

**FOR ADULT DOGS AND CATS:** They might receive certain vaccines every 6 months, annually, or every three years.