

**Damory Veterinary
Clinic**

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Small Animal Department



VACCINATING YOUR RABBIT

Myxomatosis

Myxomatosis is a disease common in wild rabbits. It causes swelling of the eyelids and genitals and the rabbit is very unwell and can die. It can also cause skin lesions without the swellings.

It causes many deaths in wild rabbits and can be transferred to pet rabbits by fleas or other biting insects. It is common in this area and so we recommend that you vaccinate your rabbit against this disease yearly.

Viral Haemorrhagic Disease

Viral Haemorrhagic Disease (VHD also known as RHD) is a virus which can cause sudden death in rabbits and can cause large numbers of deaths within a colony. It is present in Britain having spread across from Europe but we do not know how common it is. Many rabbits that die suddenly are not presented for post mortem so we do not know if they could have died from this disease.

Rabbits having direct contact with wild rabbits are at higher risk although the virus can be carried on clothing and footwear as well, as such, indoor rabbits should also be vaccinated.

RHD-2

There have been a few cases of a new variant of RHD (RHD-2) confirmed in the UK. As this is a new disease little is known so far but it appears to not be covered by the current VHD vaccine. There is a new vaccine available but this requires importing from Europe and requires a booster every 6 months. Please talk to us if you feel your rabbit is at risk and would like to discuss having this new vaccination

Vaccination

Vaccination against myxomatosis used to consist of a single injection that lasted for 6 months. However, the manufacturers have now replaced it with a combined myxomatosis and VHD vaccine, which will provide immunity for one year. We strongly recommend you vaccinate your rabbit on a yearly basis. You can get your rabbit vaccinated from 5 weeks of age and a single starting dose is enough.

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