

Rabbit Information Sheet

Vaccination

Vaccinations can be started from 5 weeks of age for Myxomatosis and Viral Haemorrhagic Disease. A single dose of vaccine is given with boosters required annually in May, as this is just before the high risk period. Immunity develops to these diseases in three weeks.



Neutering

Female rabbits reach sexual maturity at 4-5 month, males at 5-8 months, therefore the sexes must be kept separate to avoid unwanted litters. Female rabbits can be spayed at 6 months old which also helps prevent aggression and territorial behaviour. Spaying also prevents uterine hyperplasia and adenocarcinoma (cancer) in later life. Male rabbits can be castrated at 6 months old, also helping to reduce aggression and urine spraying. The risks with anaesthetics are higher than in cats and dogs as rabbits are more susceptible to stress and may be suffering from unrecognised lung disease.

Feeding

We would recommend feeding a complete balanced pelleted diet to maintain healthy teeth and prevent obesity. Hay is a very important part of a rabbit's diet and should be made available at all times as well as water.



Husbandry

It is not recommended that rabbits are kept with guinea pigs as bullying can occur.

Rabbits should never be picked up by their ears.

During warm summer months, flies are attracted to, and lay their eggs on rabbits with dirty tails. It is important at this time of year to keep fly papers next to your rabbit's hutch and check daily that the rabbit's bottom is clean. Fly strike is an emergency and you must contact the vet immediately if you see signs of maggots or if your rabbit appears off colour. Fat rabbits that cannot keep themselves clean have a higher risk of fly strike so it is important that your rabbit does not become obese.

