

Vaccination of cats with relation to catteries

Vaccination and protection from disease of cats in a cattery is very important. Anywhere where numbers of cats are kept closely together gives potential for diseases to spread. The cat viruses are very adept at this. The veterinary profession has been looking at guidelines for vaccinating cats and we have used these guidelines in general here to help catteries to understand what they need to ask of owners to try and maximise protection.

For all cats, including those entering a cattery, it is essential that they have received vaccines for the 'core' infectious agents — these are:

- ❖ Feline panleucopenia virus (FPV)
- ❖ Feline herpesvirus (FHV), and
- ❖ Feline calicivirus (FCV)

Vaccines are available against other infectious diseases including *Bordetella bronchiseptica*, *Chlamydomphila felis* and feline leukaemia virus. However, vaccination against these agents in the well-constructed and well-run cattery situation is not required, as construction and routine hygiene precautions should be adequate to prevent exposure of cats to these agents in this environment.

Vaccinations in general

In keeping with the recommendations from the World Small Animal Veterinary Association (WSAVA) Guidelines for the Vaccination of Dogs and Cats (2010), the FAB recommends that for vaccination against FPV, FHV and FCV:

- ❖ Kittens should routinely be vaccinated at 8-9 weeks of age with a second vaccine three to four weeks later, with a final dose being administered at 14-16 weeks of age.
- ❖ All cats should receive a first booster vaccine within 12 months of completing the kitten course.
- ❖ Subsequent booster vaccinations for FPV should be given no more frequently than **every three years**, as vaccine-induced immunity is long-lived.
- ❖ Subsequent booster vaccinations for FHV and FCV should be given **every three years**, unless special conditions apply.

- ❖ An adult cat that has previously been vaccinated as a kitten and received its first annual booster, but has not been vaccinated regularly since, will only require a **single booster vaccination**.
- ❖ An adult cat with a previously unknown vaccination status should receive two injections of vaccine three to four weeks apart.

Cattery situation

As boarding a cat in a cattery represents a relatively high risk and therefore a special condition, it is prudent to seek a **booster vaccine within the previous 12 months for FHV and FCV** in this circumstance, and maximum protection may be afforded by giving a booster vaccine in the one to two months prior to entry into a boarding cattery.

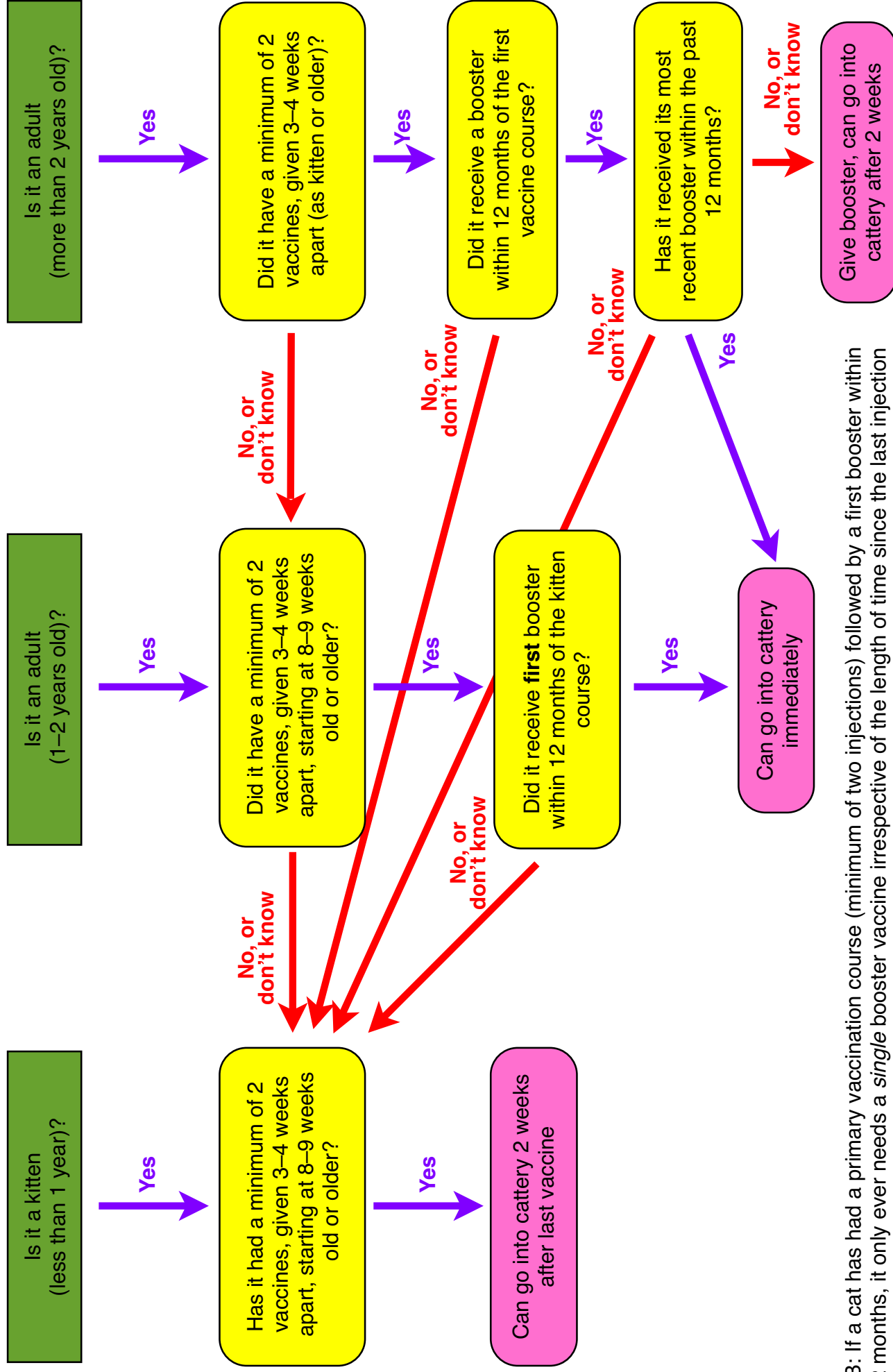
If a cat has had a primary vaccination course (minimum of two injections) followed by a first booster within 12 months, it only needs a **single booster injection** irrespective of the length of time since the last injection. It can then go into the cattery after 2 weeks.

A veterinary vaccination record where the cat is clearly identified (preferably by microchip) should be used to ensure relevant (FPV, FHV and FCV) vaccinations have been administered.

The flow diagram (below) will help proprietors to understand what is required for each cat in different vaccination scenarios and help with decision making.



FAB vaccination for catteries flow chart (based on WSAVA Vaccine guidelines 2010)



NB: If a cat has had a primary vaccination course (minimum of two injections) followed by a first booster within 12 months, it only ever needs a *single* booster vaccine irrespective of the length of time since the last injection