

St Anne's Veterinary Group



Caring for your Rabbit

Rabbits are intelligent, social animals and make wonderful pets when cared for correctly. Our team of vets, nurses and receptionists are here to guide and advise you on the care and attention required to maintain your rabbit in excellent health.

At St. Anne's we recommend regular vaccination and parasite control, micro chipping, neutering and insurance. We are happy to accept responsibility for your rabbit's healthcare. We will reward your trust by delivering a high standard of veterinary care, a high level of service and a transparent and fair fee structure.

To guide you and your rabbit through the years ahead we offer a Rabbit Health Lifeplan. This is a series of veterinary nurse and veterinary surgeon consultations that will give information, explanation, advice and encouragement to enable you to enjoy a long and fulfilling relationship with your rabbit.

Rabbit Health Lifeplan

Caring for your new rabbit

As soon as possible after joining the practice we advise a free consultation with a veterinary nurse to give advice on how to care for your rabbit.

The veterinary nurse will discuss and advise on diet and good husbandry. The nurse will advise on common medical problems to watch out for and how to prevent these.

Vaccination

We advise an examination with a veterinary surgeon once your rabbit has settled in at home. A physical examination will ensure your rabbit is in good health. As long as your rabbit is at least 5 weeks of age we will give a combined vaccination against myxomatosis and viral haemorrhagic disease. Myxomatosis is a viral disease of rabbits that is spread by blood-sucking insects like rabbit fleas and mosquitoes. The disease is often rapidly fatal or will cause a long debilitating illness. With a large local wild rabbit population the disease is a constant threat and insect control and regular vaccination are both important to prevent the disease.

Viral haemorrhagic disease is spread by direct and indirect contact between rabbits. It is usually a rapidly fatal condition.

Both diseases are now preventable with a simple single annual injection. Please ask for the current price of vaccination.

Neutering your rabbit

Unless you wish to breed from your rabbit, we strongly recommend neutering pet rabbits of both sexes. Rabbits become sexually mature from 4 months of age and should be kept in single sex groups from this age unless neutered. Both male and female rabbits are better behaved after neutering and there are health advantages. For example cancer of the uterus is common in older rabbits that are not spayed. We prefer to neuter between 4 and 6 months old. For help and advice, or to arrange a date for surgery, please telephone 01323 640011.

Rabbit Health
Lifeplan

TEAMWORK

EMPATHY

EDUCATION

SERVICE

Six-monthly veterinary health check

We recommend that pet rabbits are examined on a six-monthly basis and offer a low cost health check 6 months following vaccination. We will weigh your rabbit and examine their teeth which can cause problems if not regularly checked.

Rabbit health check

You are welcome to make a free appointment with a veterinary nurse at any time if you have problems caring for your rabbit. The nurse will advise you whether a veterinary consultation is required.

Essential Rabbit Health care

Nutrition

Feeding the correct diet is fundamental to maintaining a healthy rabbit, particularly for the teeth and digestive system. Grass or good quality grass hay should always be available to your rabbit and should make up the bulk of the diet. Green foods are also important to rabbits providing micronutrients, fibre and a source of water. These fresh foods can be supplemented with good quality commercial rabbit food, but beware overfeeding dry foods. The right diet will keep your rabbit from boredom, provide all necessary nutrients for the body, encourage normal dental wear to avoid tooth problems and maintain healthy intestinal motility and function.

Parasite Control - 'fly strike'

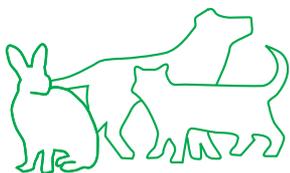
Some medical problems like obesity, diarrhoea, back pain or dental disease can lead to rabbits keeping poor hygiene, with matted soft droppings in the fur. In summer, flies may be attracted to these areas to lay eggs. These eggs hatch into maggots which proceed to feed on the skin and create nasty wounds. It is essential to check you rabbit twice daily in the summer for this problem. We also advise application of 'Rearguard' to the rabbit every 10 weeks in the warmer weather. This product stops maggots developing to a stage when they will cause damage. Alternatively application of the spot - on 'Xenex Ultra' to your rabbit every 2 weeks will help repel flies and kill maggots. If your rabbit suffers from poor hygiene then please consult a veterinary surgeon.

Parasite Control - E. cuniculi

Encephalitozoon cuniculi is a microscopic parasite that can cause a number of diseases in rabbits including fits and kidney disease. In a recent study, one in two domestic rabbits in the UK had been exposed to this parasite. Some rabbits recover from infection but a proportion becomes chronically affected.

Infection can be prevented or treated but once clinical signs show, they may be permanent. Prevention is better than cure.

'Panacur rabbit' contains fenbendazole which has been shown to help prevent E. cuniculi and deals with worms too. To control E. cuniculi in our pet rabbits we advise panacur rabbit to be administered to all rabbits at least once every 6 months.



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