

# Henlow Veterinary Hospital

## VACCINES FOR RABBITS

Which vaccines we recommend for RABBITS.

Vaccinations are very important to prevent very serious and sometimes fatal diseases in our pets. We follow WSAVA and BSAVA guidelines to make sure that we use optimum protocols to safeguard your pets.

[Click here to view the BSAVA Vaccine guidelines.](#) [Click here to view the WSAVA Vaccine guidelines.](#)

[Click here to view the Rabbit Welfare website.](#)



### Can you TREAT Myxomatosis & RHD

Sadly in some cases euthanasia is recommended to stop the rabbit from suffering.

If appropriate supportive treatment can be given and is typically aimed at maintaining adequate nutrition and alleviating other symptoms while the immune system clears the virus. This may include;

- Fluid therapy
- Syringe feeding
- Antibiotics if there is a secondary infection
- Anti-inflammatories for the swelling
- Active warming

The most important step in preventing myxomatosis is annual vaccination of your pet rabbit. Vaccines are advised for all rabbits, even those kept indoors as they may still have contact with fleas or flies.

### Rabbits are VACCINATED Against:

Rabbits are vaccinated against myxomatosis and rabbit haemorrhagic disease (Myxo-RHD)

From 5 weeks of age rabbits require a single vaccine for MYXO-RHD. A yearly booster is then required.

**Myxomatosis** is a severe, viral disease that only affects rabbits. It affects their skin, eyes, lungs, liver and genitals, and spreads quickly among wild rabbits. It is inevitably fatal.

The most likely source of infection for pet rabbits is via insects such as mosquitoes and midges but also fleas- they transmit the virus via their mouthparts, from local wild or domestic infected rabbits. If wild rabbits have access to the garden, or can get close, e.g. through a mesh fence or run- direct infection is also possible from rabbit to rabbit via respiratory tract secretions. Where possible prevent contact with wild rabbits, consider providing fly netting on hutches and runs and cover stagnant water i.e. water butts.

Symptoms include swelling to eyes, genitals, discharge to eyes, loss of appetite and lethargy.

**RHD** is a deadly virus which can be transmitted both directly rabbit to rabbit and indirectly via clothes, shoes, food and bedding.

The RHD virus is currently divided into subtypes including RHD1 and RHD2. It is often fatal, causing sudden death in many rabbits.

