

# 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.

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.

### 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 and fatal viral disease that affects only rabbits, damaging their skin, eyes, lungs, liver and genitals. It spreads quickly among wild rabbits. Pet rabbits are usually infected through biting insects such as mosquitoes, midges and fleas, which carry the virus from infected wild or domestic rabbits. Direct rabbit-to-rabbit transmission can also occur through respiratory secretions, especially if wild rabbits can access or approach gardens, hutches or runs. To reduce risk, prevent contact with wild rabbits, use fly netting on hutches and runs, and cover stagnant water sources like water butts.

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

### NEW Rabbit VACCINE!

In addition to the well-known RHD1 and RHD2, a new highly virulent strain of RHD-2 has now been identified in Europe, and may have already made its way into the UK rabbit population.

During 2025, a new vaccine became widely available for this new strain and at Henlow vets we recommend this as routine for all rabbits.

The vaccination needs to be given at least 2 weeks before or after the routine Myxo-RHD Plus vaccine.

