



Common diseases

Dogs

Distemper –a.k.a. hardpad. This is a devastating disease with a high mortality rate. Those that do survive are often left with neurological conditions such as epileptic seizures. This disease is now uncommon thanks to vaccination.

Parvovirus - This virus causes severe gastroenteritis and is often fatal especially in young dogs. This is a particularly nasty virus, which is much less common than in the past due to vaccination.

Leptospirosis - Weels disease in man - This disease is caught from rat urine and in unvaccinated animal causes severe and often fatal liver and kidney disease. This disease can be prevented by vaccination.

Hepatitis - Dogs can be vaccinated against the coronal virus that can cause fatal liver failure. Infectious hepatitis is now the largest killer of dogs in the UK. This disease can also be prevented by vaccination.

Allergies - This is a very common problem in dogs. They can be allergic to many things from grasses, weeds, trees, food, fleas and house dust mites. There are many different types of treatment. Generally we would recommend taking blood samples to find what an animal is allergic to. We can then either try and avoid what they are allergic to (especially in food allergies) or use a weakened dose to desensitise the animal (immunotherapy). However there are many different treatment options available.

Cats

Cat flu – this is caused by two viruses (herpesvirus and calici virus) and can cause a severe and debilitating upper respiratory infection in cats. This disease once caught in some animals is never overcome and they can become chronically infected. Again vaccination can prevent this.

Feline leukaemia - This virus is a retrovirus that is very similar to human AIDS. Cats affected can seem perfectly normal for up to 3 years when the virus usually starts to cause problems. It can severely affect the immune system, cause cancers, and lead to severe anaemia and death. Vaccination is a highly reliable way of preventing this disease

Feline aids - This is also a retrovirus similar to human AIDS. It is most common in older neutered stray male cats. Unfortunately there is no vaccine.

Rabbits

Myxomatosis - This man-made virus has a high mortality rate in rabbits. It causes a severe upper respiratory tract infection and a severe eye infection. It is highly transmissible between rabbits, rabbit fleas, midges and mosquitoes. It can be prevented by six monthly vaccination.

Rabbit haemorrhagic viral disease - This is another man-made virus that has three characteristics. Rabbits may have mild diarrhoea and survive, severe diarrhoea and a higher mortality rate or maybe just found dead. It is transmitted by fomites. It is perhaps less prevalent than 10 years ago. It can be prevented by vaccination.

All pets

Diarrhoea - There are many causes of diarrhoea from viruses and bacteria, to food allergies, and genetic disorders. For a mild simple diarrhoea we would advise starving an animal for one-day then putting them on a bland diet e.g. whitefish, chicken, rice and pasta. If it is not settled down, or blood is seen, or the animal appears unwell we would advise you seek veterinary attention.

Mites - There are many different types of mites that can infect a range of species. Rabbits and guinea pigs in particular seem to suffer with mites. A simple course of treatment is available.