

Where do you start with Preventative Healthcare?

Dr. Paul Andrew Eynon BVMS PGCAP F(RET) MRCVS

Key Learning Objectives

Following this lecture, participants should be able to:

1. Advise clients regarding appropriate vaccination regimes for cats, dogs and rabbits, in the UK.
 2. Develop tailored preventative plans with clients, for cats, dogs and rabbits, in relation to worms, fleas, ticks and mites.
 3. Assist clients in making informed decisions when it comes to neutering their cats, dogs and rabbits.
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Vet School provides an environment for knowledge transfer to take place – from our lecturers to PowerPoint to our grey matter and finally onto our laptops (pen and paper in ‘my day’), whilst we hope and expect EMS to allow us to practice and hone our skills in transferring this knowledge to our clients. Many of us will be fortunate in being given the opportunity to do this, in practices we’ve considered as ‘home’ during our University careers. The skill in delivering what might be considered the ‘bread & butter’ of first opinion practice is one that requires trial and error, practise and being prepared to tackle some of the misconceptions around preventative healthcare. Making the most of preventative healthcare appointments and discussions can be and should be, a rewarding part of our job – interacting with a patient and client in, the most part, a non-emotionally heightened state – i.e. keeping the ‘healthy’ patient on the highway of health.

We’ll consider:

Vaccinations – in cats, dogs and rabbits:

- What can we vaccinate against?
- When do we start and booster vaccines?
- How can we improve the patient and client experience during a vaccine consult?
- How can we approach answering some of the client questions surrounding vaccination?

Worms – in cats, dogs and rabbits:

- What worms are we faced with in the UK?
- How can we de-worm and at what frequency should we do so?
- How might changes in pet travel and transport, pose a risk to human health?
- What are some of the common questions we face from clients regarding worms?

Fleas, Ticks & Mites – in cats, dogs and rabbits:

- How do we get clients on-board with prevention?
- What are some of the barriers to effective Flea and Tick prevention?
- What are some of the associated disease conditions associated with these ectoparasites?
- Approaching the over-the-counter versus veterinary products conversation with clients.

Neutering – in cats, dogs and rabbits:

- The why, why not and when to neuter?
- Complicated neuters – e.g. cryptorchid/monorchid and ethical considerations.
- The discussion re what to expect in the pet post-neutering and how to respond to client's concerns surrounding going ahead with neutering in the first place.
- Discussion around the how-to-methods of neutering – e.g. OVH vs. OV.

Often, we may only have time to discuss the basics of the above during first puppy and kitten consults, needing to strategise what are the key take home messages we'd like our clients to leave with. Therefore, developing your own dialogue and approach to these largely positive consults, is a task we can practise during our EMS placements and with our friends and family's pets before we start on day one out there in practice.

We have the perfect opportunity to impart our knowledge in a tailored way to our clients during preventative healthcare appointments and discussions. In helping clients get on-board with and feeling like they are in control of their pet's health, you'll quickly reap the benefits from the partnership.

MCQs

Correct Answer

- 1) What is important 'to do' during each physical examination for preventative healthcare interventions?
 - Measure temperature
 - Perform an ophthalmic examination
 - **Weigh the patient**
 - Obtain a urine sample

- 2) What other parasite is associated with fleas?
 - Harvest mite
 - **Tapeworm**
 - Ticks
 - Bladder-worm

3) Which virus do we NOT vaccinate against in cats, in the UK?

- Feline Immuno-deficiency virus
- Feline Calicivirus
- Feline Panleukopenia virus
- Feline Leukemia virus