

NEW GUIDELINES ON ROUTINE VETERINARY TREATMENT
ISSUED BY THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF VETERINARY SURGEONS
AND
THE BRITISH VETERINARY ASSOCIATION
12/04/2020

The RCVS has now issued new advice, including a simple flow chart, to help vets decide whether or not they can go ahead with a particular treatment. The main principle is that vets may go ahead with an essential treatment providing they can maintain effective social distancing for both the practice team and the public. For more detail see the link below.

<https://www.rcvs.org.uk/setting-standards/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus-covid-19/flowchart-guidance-for-clinical-practices-during-covid-19/>

The BVA, with RCVS approval, gives more specific advice for each category of animal. These changes do not mean that all of these activities/procedures now have to be, or should be, carried out. Vets must continue to risk assess each case and exercise their clinical and professional judgement.

The key points from the section on routine treatment in small animal practice is as follows:

Vaccinations – BVA guidance now says that following a risk assessment both for animal health and welfare and with regard to Covid-19, primary vaccinations and year 1 boosters in dogs and cats could go ahead due to the increased risk of disease outbreak over a longer period of time.

NB: The majority of booster vaccinations are not considered essential at this time.

Neutering – BVA are recommending that vets assess the domestic situation in each case. Where neutering is considered essential in the next two months, chemical options should first be considered, if appropriate.

For example, neutering in cats should be considered if they cannot be kept indoors or if they are in mixed sex pairings/groupings, for population control.

Microchipping – BVA are recommending microchipping can be undertaken if the animal is already in the practice for an essential service.

NB :

Please note that it is **NOT** practice as usual. These are only recommendations and some practices may not be able to satisfy all the requests for routine work due to short staffing and a heavy workload of emergency cases.

Unvaccinated kittens from multicat households are most at risk and therefore a priority. Please make it clear you are a multicat household when booking an appointment.

Early neutering will most probably not be considered a priority at the moment. Hence take care in rehoming, making sure as far as you possibly can that the new owners are genuine and have a positive attitude to neutering. Make them sign a contract agreement to neuter pet kittens before 6 months of age.

Genuine buyers are usually only too happy to send photos of their house and garden.

In addition, to help ensure buyers are genuine, make checks on the new home using Google Streetview.

Another precaution is to Google the telephone numbers you are given to ensure they do not appear as the vendor's contact number/s in any advert selling kittens. It is essential to obtain the address and land/mobile numbers of potential owners at the earliest opportunity as it is necessary for your own records and safety , as well as to be able to perform the extra checks above.

To read the full BVA statement see the link below:

<https://www.bva.co.uk/media/3430/bva-guidance-for-veterinary-practices-on-covid19-from-14-april-2020-final.pdf>