

Rabbit myths

Once a baby bunny is vaccinated, it's immune to common diseases for life

Not true! Rabbits can be vaccinated from five weeks old, and then need a booster every year for the rest of their lives.' These vaccinations protect against the most common rabbit diseases: myxomatosis (myxi), RVHD and RVHD2.

The same vaccine will protect a rabbit against RVHD and RVHD2

This is partly true, but it's not the whole story. Most vets recommend two vaccines: one for myxomatosis and RVHD1, and a second for both RVHD1 and RVHD2. These vaccines should be given at least two weeks apart, so it will mean two separate trips to the vet.

Vaccinations can damage a rabbit's health

While a vaccination is very unlikely to have a negative impact on your bunnies, it can make them feel a little poorly for a day or two. If you're worried that your rabbit seems very unwell, check with us. Some rabbits can develop a mild case of myxomatosis after vaccination, although this can usually be treated successfully. Keep in mind that as a vaccine can take a week or two to become fully effective, there's always a chance your rabbit was exposed to the disease before vaccination took place.

RVHD is not a common disease in the UK

Although less common than myxomatosis, RVHD and RVHD2 are on the rise. These diseases cause internal or external bleeding, but the signs aren't always obvious as your pet may just seem lethargic.

House rabbits don't need to be vaccinated

Not true! Myxi is spread by fleas and mosquitoes, which fly indoors as well as outside, and RVHD can be carried inside on hay and vegetables, or even on your clothes or shoes. Rabbit diseases exist in both urban and rural areas, especially if there's a wild rabbit population nearby.

Myxomatosis vaccinations don't always work

While a myxomatosis vaccination can't guarantee absolute protection, vaccinated rabbits with myxi usually survive whereas the disease is likely to be fatal in unvaccinated ones.