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ROYAL GOVERNMENT OF BHUTAN
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE & LIVESTOCK
DEPARTMENT OF LIVESTOCK
THIMPHU



Department of Livestock

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Public Notification on Feline panleukopenia

The Department of Livestock under the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock notifies the general public that there is an ongoing outbreak of Feline panleukopenia (also called feline distemper) in cats. Cases of Feline panleukopenia are reported in Thimphu and Paro.

Feline panleukopenia is a highly contagious viral disease of cats caused by the feline parvovirus, often with fatal outcomes. Kittens, sick cats, and unvaccinated cats are most susceptible to feline parvovirus; and it is most commonly seen in cats three *to five months* of age. However, the virus does not infect people.

The visible signs include loss of appetite, high fever, lethargy, vomiting, severe diarrhea, nasal discharge, and dehydration. Feline panleukopenia may be suspected based on a history of exposure to an infected cat, lack of vaccination, and the visible signs of illness.

Since the virus is shed through urine, stool, and nasal secretions of infected cats; transmission occurs when susceptible cats come in contact with these secretions. The virus can also be transmitted from bites of fleas that had blood meal from infected cats. The feline parvovirus can survive for up to a year in the environment, so cats may become infected without ever coming into direct contact with an infected cat. Bedding, cages, food and water bowls, and the hands or clothing of people who handle the infected cat may harbor the virus and transmit it to other cats. It is, therefore, very important to isolate infected cats to prevent spread of the virus.

Since there is no specific treatment, intensive care and supportive therapy are critical to support the cat's health.

However, Feline panleukopenia can be prevented through vaccination. Commercial vaccines to effectively protect the cats against Feline panleukopenia are available at **Kuenley Pharmacy in Thimphu**. Young kittens are vaccinated between *six to eight weeks of age* followed by a booster after 21 days. Adult vaccination schedules will vary with the age and health of the cat, as well as the risk of Feline panleukopenia in the area. Additionally, responsible pet ownership is essential to help protect your cat and others from feline panleukopenia and other infectious agents.

Consult your nearest veterinary hospital for advice on Feline panleukopenia prevention and treatment.

Issued in the interest of pet owners.

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