

From an MCA adopter:

I appreciate the opportunity to reach others with an important message: please do not allow a veterinarian to vaccinate your animals between the shoulder blades. In susceptible animals, a poor-quality vaccine may cause tumors at a vaccination site, sometimes years after the vaccination is given. If the tumor develops between the shoulder blades, it is inoperable given that it is so close to the spine.

In July 2006, we lost our dear Lanicat, an MCA graduate, to fibrosarcoma which developed in this way. The loss is particularly heartbreaking because it was preventable. Had the injection been given inside her leg, for example, the tumor might have been removed successfully. An amputation, while traumatic, might also have prevented the spread of the cancer, giving us more years to enjoy our bond with this devoted and adorable cat.

We adopted Lani at the end of January 2006. Her time with us was short, but she has left her mark. A lushly-furred, all-gray beauty, Lani specialized in loving head-butts and sweet little kisses. I was only too pleased to yield to her insistence on sharing my pillow. Since I am a court reporter, I spend many hours in front of a computer preparing transcripts. Lani provided expert supervision, reminding me from time to time that a cat-petting break was in order. Our time together was far too short, and she was irreplaceable.

We can only remember her, and we can spread the word so that other beloved animals are saved a similar fate. We have every right to question our vets about the quality of the vaccines they use, to question where injections will be given, and to insist that they do not ever vaccinate between the shoulder blades.

Cathryn Bauer

<http://www.avma.org/vafstf/sitercmd.asp>



Vaccine-Associated Feline Sarcoma Task Force

VAFSTF Vaccine Site Recommendations

For the last several years, veterinarians have noticed an increase in the incidence of sarcoma formation at commonly used feline vaccine sites. The Vaccine-Associated Feline Sarcoma Task Force (VAFSTF), formed to address this evolving and important issue, consists of representatives from the American

Animal Hospital Association, the American Veterinary Medical Association, the Veterinary Cancer Society, the American Association of Feline Practitioners, the Animal Health Institute, and the Cornell Feline Health Center.

The task force has made initial vaccine-site recommendations in concert with the American Association of Feline Practitioners (Feline Sarcoma Task Force Meets. *J.Amer.Vet.Med.Assn.* 210, 310-311). In short, the task force recommends that vaccines containing rabies antigen be given as distally as possible in the right rear limb, vaccines containing feline leukemia virus antigen (unless containing rabies antigen as well) be given as distally as possible in the left rear limb, and vaccines containing any other antigens except rabies or feline leukemia virus be given on the right shoulder, being careful to avoid the midline or interscapular space.

The VAFSTF recently funded four studies designed to further clarify the epidemiology, etiology, and treatment of these rare but uniformly aggressive tumors (Vaccine-Associated Feline Sarcoma Task Force Awards Research Grants. *J.Amer.Vet.Med.Assn.* 212, 162-163); financial support of appropriate studies is expected to be a continuing need for the foreseeable future.

The task force wishes to remind you of the importance of this syndrome by providing a [list of selected references](#).

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