



Your new Kitten!

YOUR PET NEEDS PROTECTION:

If you have a new puppy or kitten, you owe it to yourself and to your new pet to provide optimum protection against the serious diseases seen in this area. We have developed a Comprehensive Wellness Program that allows you to provide the necessary preventive health care for your pet at the most affordable cost possible. It is an investment in love, companionship, security, loyalty, and devotion for both you and your new family member. Just as with children, new young pets require several preventive care visits during the first year of life, as well as yearly thereafter.

Each visit will include:

- Weighing the pet.
- Obtaining the pet's medical history.
- Wellness physical exam.
- Client education materials appropriate for each visit.
- Nutritional and behavioral counseling as needed.
- Appropriate vaccinations at each visit.
- Internal parasite testing and deworming as needed.
- External parasite control recommendations.

Tips to help make vet visits less stressful for your animal:

- Play with paws daily to help make nail trims less stressful
- Play with ears so doctors can easily look down ears
- Play with the mouth so your animal will feel more comfortable with doctors checking their teeth
- Socialize your kitten with other animals and people to help them feel more comfortable with new people at vet visits
- Bring familiar treats to vet appointments to reward your kitten for good behavior at visits

There is a national hotline for antidotes for poisoning: **(888) 426-4435**

For more information about kitten training and care please visit our website:

www.theveterinaryclinic.net

KITTEN VACCINATION SCHEDULE

A new kitten is an exciting addition to your family. The kitten's health is both your and our responsibility. Following is a schedule of vaccinations:

6 to 8 weeks:

Physical examination

Feline Rhinotracheitis, Chlamydia, Panleukopenia, Calici (FVRCP)

Feline Leukemia and FIV combo test

Intestinal parasite exam

Deworming Medication- used through 5 months of age

Cost estimate: \$190

9 to 11 weeks:

Physical examination

Feline Rhinotracheitis, Chlamydia, Panleukopenia, Calici (FVRCP)

Feline Leukemia vaccination

Intestinal parasite exam

Complementary flea and tick prevention

Cost Estimate:\$130

12-14 weeks:

Physical examination

Feline Rhinotracheitis, Chlamydia, Panleukopenia, Calici (FVRCP)

Feline Leukemia vaccination

Intestinal parasite exam

Rabies 1 year

Flea and tick medication

Cost Estimate: \$170

Return yearly for a wellness exam and the vaccinations based on your pets lifestyle.

SPAY-NEUTER FACTS

Spay or neuter at approximately 6 months of age.

All pets should be spayed or neutered for many reasons:

FEMALES (Spaying - Ovariohysterectomy)

- Prevents signs of estrus (heat).
- Prevents blood stains on the carpet from the "heat" cycle.
- Decreases the surplus of puppies and kittens.
- Decreases the chance of developing breast tumors later in life.
- Decreases the chance of cystic ovaries and uterine infections later in life.
- Anesthesia is a much less risk at the younger age.
- Prevents breast development if done before breeding age.

MALES (Neutering - Castration)

- Decreases the desire to roam the neighborhood.
- Decreasing aggression becomes more loving pets (more affectionate).
- Decreases incidence of prostate cancer later in life.
- Prevents odor of male cat urine.
- Prevents male cat spraying and marking furniture and walls.

Facts about Spaying/Neutering:

Spaying does not cause a pet to get fat or lazy. This comes from overfeeding and poor exercise. Personalities are not altered by spaying. Personalities do not fully develop until two years of age. Aggressiveness and viciousness are not the result of surgery. Personalities will **ONLY** get better! Surgical risk is very slight due to modern anesthesia and techniques, but there is always some small risk when an anesthetic is used. It is much easier on the pet to be spayed before going through a "heat" cycle, due to the smaller size of the reproductive tract. Best age to spay or neuter pets is 6-8 months of age. Surgery is performed painlessly while your pet is under general anesthesia. Post-surgical pain is minimal. Most pets go home the same day surgery is performed.

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WELLNESS VISITS PROVIDE FOR ALL STAGES OF YOUR PET'S LIFE:

Just as with children, new young pets require several preventive care visits during the first year of life, as well as yearly thereafter.

Each visit will include:

- Weighing the pet.
- Obtaining the pet's medical history.
- Wellness physical exam.
- Client education materials appropriate for each visit.
- Nutritional and behavioral counseling as needed.
- Appropriate vaccinations at each visit.
- Internal parasite testing and deworming as needed.
- External parasite control recommendations.

YOUR PET IS AT RISK UNTIL THE INITIAL SERIES OF VISITS IS COMPLETED:

If even one of the initial visits is missed or delayed, the window of opportunity for fatal disease is opened wide. It is important to complete the initial series of vaccinations on time. The temporary immunity a newborn pet receives from its mother weakens and is gone somewhere between 8-20 weeks of life. The rate at which this temporary immunity disappears varies with each specific disease and each individual pet. As this immunity disappears, it is important that the pet's immune system be properly stimulated through vaccination to begin production of its own protection. When vaccinations are given at proper intervals, they maximize the chances the pet will develop immunity sufficient to prevent disease.

THERE IS A DIFFERENCE IN VACCINATIONS:

Our staff veterinarians review all current information to ensure pets entrusted to our care receive the best, most effective vaccines and that they are given in the proper sequence to stimulate the best protection. Our Wellness Program has been developed so that our clients can provide the best care possible for their pets at the most reasonable costs.

VACCINATIONS

Many serious infectious diseases of cats can be controlled by vaccination. With over 20 million pet cats in the U.S., your cat is quite likely to come in contact with an infectious disease at one time or another. Even indoor cats can be exposed to viral diseases carried in the air, in dust, or on clothing. Vaccination is inexpensive protection against costly treatment, or even the premature death of your cat!

Feline Panleukopenia: Known as “cat distemper” is a highly contagious and often fatal disease in young cats. It is easily transmitted from cat to cat. Signs include depression, loss of appetite, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Feline Respiratory Diseases include several different infectious agents.

They are all highly contagious and are widespread. High death rates occur in young cats and “old” cats. Signs of these diseases include sneezing, fever, nasal discharges, runny nose, coughing, Conjunctivitis (eyelid infections), mouth ulcers, and general depression. These diseases include: Rhinotracheitis, Calici Virus and Chlamydia Sneezing, etc easily spread from upper respiratory infections. Even a stray cat that seems outwardly to be healthy may be a “carrier” infecting your pet, even through a screen window. Protection from all the above diseases is included in one injection. A series of the initial injection is necessary to build the antibody protection needed to help your cat develop a high degree of immunity against these diseases.

Feline Leukemia: Unknown 20 years ago, but is now considered to be the leading cause of death in cats. It is a cancer-causing virus that often suppresses the ability to fight other infections. Kittens can be born with the virus. Cats can have the leukemia virus for years before showing signs of the disease. Feline Leukemia is not transmissible to humans or dogs. There is no successful treatment once signs develop!

Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP): A progressive and fatal disease. It is now said to be the number 2 killer of cats in the U.S. Many infected cats also harbor Feline Leukemia. Signs include loss of weight, labored breathing, enlarged abdomen, and generalized illness. There is no successful treatment once signs appear!

Rabies: A fatal viral infection of the nervous system that attacks all warm-blooded animals, including humans. Cats have outnumbered dogs in reported cases since 1981. Rabies is a public health hazard and personal risk to you. It is transmitted through the bite of an infected animal. Even indoor cats may be infected through contact with a carrier in a basement, garage, or attic. There is no cure! Vaccination is very important for your safety, as well as the safety of your pet.

FATAL DISEASES

In the past, feline distemper, the major respiratory infections, and rabies killed millions of cats every year. Fortunately, the vaccinations that have been developed and available for many years have now controlled these diseases. They are, however, still common in outdoor and unvaccinated cats.

New diseases are now killing millions of cats each year. It is estimated that at least 10% of all cats in this country are infected with one or more of these viruses. Once your cat becomes infected with one of these diseases, your cat will die. There are no effective treatments or cures. Laboratory tests are also available to diagnose cats that are infected with these deadly viruses. Vaccinations are now available for at least some of them. Therefore our major strategy for maintaining a healthy pet is by preventing the spread of these infections through blood testing and vaccination.

These viral infections include:

FELINE LEUKEMIA, FELINE AIDS VIRUS, & FIP (Feline Infectious Peritonitis). All three of these infections can be carried and spread for long periods of time by cats who are harboring the viruses but show no obvious signs of disease. Cats who appear healthy can be infected yet not come down with the illness for months or years. During these months or years, however, they are contagious and can infect other cats.

FELINE LEUKEMIA (FeLV):

Feline infections are the number one killer today. Feline leukemia destroys the cat's immune system causing anemia, cancer, and a lowered resistance to fight off other diseases that a healthy cat would not get. A blood test is available to help diagnose the disease. It is recommended that all new cats brought into a household be tested before being exposed to other cats in the house. Effective vaccines have been available for more than 10 years and are recommended. Proper vaccination includes an initial series of 2 injections followed by annual boosters. To ensure immunity, testing the cat before vaccination is recommended to ensure the cat is not already infected even though no clinical signs are evident.

FELINE IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS (FIV) is also known as "**FELINE AIDS VIRUS**":

It is a relative to the HIV virus that causes AIDS in people. This virus does its damage by depressing the cat's own immune system, making it much more susceptible to other common cat infectious diseases. As of yet, there is **NO** vaccine available for this disease. However we do have an accurate blood test that will tell whether or not the cat is a carrier of the disease. For maximum accuracy, the cat should be 6 months of age before being tested. This particular test detects blood "antibodies" to the disease. It takes time for these antibodies to develop in the blood yielding the positive test. Therefore, a recent exposure of 30-90 days or less may not have provided sufficient time for antibodies to develop that would be detected by the test.

FELINE INFECTIOUS PERITONITIS (FIP):

This virus can survive in damp areas such as dirt in your garden or sandbox for several months. You can bring it into your house on your shoes, hands, or clothes to infect even the cat that never goes outside. Laboratory testing for this disease is not as accurate as for the other diseases, and requires testing twice at a 30-day interval. Vaccination for this disease is now possible. It requires an initial series of two doses followed by annual boosters. It is administered as a "nose drop" instead of being an actual injection.

RULES TO HELP PREVENT THE SPREAD OF THESE FATAL DISEASES:

- Keep your cat indoors all the time to minimize exposure.
- Always test and vaccinate any new cats **BEFORE** bringing into the household.
- Wash your hands after handling or petting any unfamiliar cats outside your home.

REMEMBER: There are no cures for these fatal diseases. Vaccination is your best line of defense.

INTESTINAL PARASITES

Dogs and cats can become hosts to many intestinal parasites and a few general statements apply to all parasitic infections:

- All deworming medicines are poisonous to some extent and should only be used as needed and under proper conditions.
- At this time there is no one dewormer that can eliminate all species of parasites. Consequently an accurate diagnosis is necessary to treat your pet properly.
- Diagnosis is usually made from a fresh stool sample (passed less than 12 hours) or, in the case of tapeworms, seeing the segments in the stool.
- Most puppies and kittens are infected before birth and, for this reason, will need deworming starting at 6 weeks of age.
- Occasionally, for a heavy parasitic infection, 3 or even 4 treatments may be necessary to eliminate the parasite.

The following is a brief description of the common intestinal parasites with their symptoms, diagnosis, treatment, prevention, and human transmission.

ROUNDWORMS:

This is a common worm of puppies and kittens, but can be seen in any age dog or cat. Diagnosis is made from a microscopic examination of the feces or from a description of the worm if it is seen in the stool or vomitus. Treatment is an oral medication given at 3-week intervals. Symptoms will vary from none to marked vomiting and diarrhea, and abdominal swelling. Transmission to adult dogs and cats occurs by infected feces contaminating the yard. As a result, prevention is accomplished by isolating your pet from infected feces of other animals. For dogs, the heartworm preventives also prevent roundworm infection. Transmission to humans is rare; young children can develop "visceral larval migrans" by eating dirt contaminated with feces.

HOOKWORMS:

This is also a common worm of puppies and kittens but is seen with equal frequency in adults. This parasite sucks your pet's blood and can cause a severe anemia. Diagnosis is made from a microscopic examination of your pet's stool. Treatment is either an oral medication or an injection or both. This is repeated 3 weeks later. Symptoms will vary from none to blood in the stool (dark tar-colored stool) with diarrhea. Severe cases may need a transfusion and hospitalization. Transmission to adults occurs by infected feces contaminating the grass or soil. Prevention, therefore, requires that the pet be kept away from contaminated areas. Two types of

heartworm preventive can also prevent hookworm infections in dogs. Transmission to humans is uncommon and usually shows up as skin lesions.

TAPEWORMS:

This common worm affects both dogs and cats. Transmission occurs when your dog or cat bites and "eats" a flea. The intermediate form of the tapeworm is inside the flea's body and it then attaches to the intestine and begins to grow "segments". In about 3 weeks, these segments begin to pass in the stool. They are approximately ¼ to ½ inch long, flat, and white. After a short time in the air, they dry up to resemble a small yellow flat seed. Diagnosis is made from seeing these segments on the stool or on the pet's back end rather than a microscopic fecal exam. Treatment is either by oral tablets or by an injection. The tapeworm medication kills existing tapeworms but it does not prevent future infection. The only prevention is strict flea control. There is no direct transmission from dog or cat to a human.

GIARDIA:

This parasite is not a worm. It is a very tiny single-celled parasite that can live in the intestines of dogs, cats, and man. It is seen most commonly in dogs coming out of kennel-type situations (pet stores, shelters, dog pounds, etc.) but its incidence is increasing. Symptoms include intermittent or continuous diarrhea, weight loss, depression, and loss of appetite. Diagnosis is made from a very fresh fecal specimen that must be collected at the clinic for optimum results. A surprising number of affected animals are "occult"; that is, they are infected but are negative on these tests even with multiple examinations. As a result, this parasite is often treated without a confirming diagnosis. Treatment is an oral medication administered at home. Prevention involves careful disposal of all fecal material and cleaning contaminated areas. Humans can become infected with Giardia so special care must be taken to wash hands and utensils.

COCCIDIA:

This is also a single-celled parasite. It is seen primarily in puppies and kittens, although debilitated adults can also be affected. Transmission occurs by eating the infective stage of the parasite. It then reproduces in the intestinal tract causing no symptoms in mild cases to bloody diarrhea in severely affected pets. Diagnosis is made from a fresh stool sample. Treatment varies greatly. Animals showing no signs of illness are often not treated because a mild case is often self-limiting. Pets with diarrhea are treated at home with an oral medication. Severely affected pets may need hospitalization. Prevention involves disposal of all stools and cleaning the pet's living area. Human transmission is uncommon but can occur.

INTESTINAL PARASITE INFORMATION

Ascarids: ("Roundworms")

- Round; white; 2-4 inches long: may curl up when seen; resemble "spaghetti"
- May be vomited up from the stomach; or coughed up from the lungs.
- Are most commonly found in young puppies and kittens.
- May cause intestinal blockage when found in large numbers.
- Puppies & kittens are infected by the eggs that are ingested off the ground.
- Are transmittable to humans.

Hookworms:

- Very thin, almost transparent; 1/4 -1/2 inch long.
- Normally not visible to the naked eye.
- Hook on to the intestine and suck blood, which causes anemia.
- The mother may infect puppies through the milk when nursing.
- May be ingested orally or may actually penetrate the skin (usually through feet).
- Are transmittable to humans
- Causes bloody diarrhea and death when severe.
- Most harmful of all internal parasites!

Whipworms:

- Inhabit the lower part of the intestine (colon).
- Causes chronic diarrhea, sometimes containing blood.
- Normally not visible to the naked eye.
- Eggs are ingested off the ground.

Tapeworms:

- Short, flat segments (look similar to "rice" or "cucumber seeds").
- Causes a poor appearance and dry skin.
- Often seen on the hair around the rectum.
- Cannot be diagnosed by microscopic exam like other parasites, unless a segment just happens to be present—segments are not passed every day.
- Spread by fleas, rabbits, birds, and other rodents— not by dogs and cats.

Internal Parasite Prevention:

- Fecal examination of your pet's stool should be done every 12 months.
- Use specific dewormers for the type parasite present, as determined by microscopic

fecal examination. Over-the-counter deworming medications are usually not effective against most internal parasites that cause the real problems!

- Remove feces from your lawn, street, or kennel daily.
- Exercise your pets in grassy areas not frequented by other animals.
- Prevent your pet from eating rodents, such as mice, rats, and rabbits.
- Prevent your pet from eating earthworms, which spread "roundworms."
- Control fleas!
- Deworm pregnant pets before breeding, and again before whelping to help prevent infection to newborn pets.

ZOONOSES (Transmission to humans)

Please contact your family doctor regarding treatment for humans.

RABIES:

Deadly to people as well as many species of animals. Law must vaccinate all dogs & cats. Raccoons, skunks, foxes, and bats are common carriers. Rodents and rabbits are uncommon carriers. Wild animals cannot be vaccinated. There is no effective treatment for the disease. Prevention by vaccination is a must.

TOXOPLASMOSIS:

A protozoan disease carried by some cats. Eggs of the parasite (oocysts) are shed in the cat's feces, and then ingested by other animals (and people) causing disease. The primary concern in people is the potential for causing birth defects. Litter boxes should be changed daily and pregnant women should not be allowed to change the litter box, even though the stools are not infective until they have remained in the litter box for 48 hours or more. Ask for a specific handout on this disease.

ROUNDWORMS:

Toxocara canis is the scientific name for a parasite that can migrate through body tissues and eyes in children from ingesting the eggs, which can be in the soil or pet's feces. Puppies and kittens should be routinely dewormed with the appropriate drug 3 times at 2-week intervals to control this parasite.

HOOKWORMS:

Larvae from the soil can migrate through the skin. Signs include itchy skin and skin rashes. It is self-limiting. The parasite-affecting pets will not reproduce in humans and therefore dies out without treatment unless re-infection occurs. Routine deworming of pets eliminates the potential for soil contamination.

RINGWORM:

60% of all kittens are thought to be carriers, even though they show no clinical signs of the skin disease. It can spread to the entire family. A fungal culture is recommended for all new cats brought into a household to screen for this disease. All cases of hair loss in your cat should be presented to a veterinarian promptly for a definite diagnosis

GIARDIA:

An intestinal parasite carried by dogs and cats that may possibly be transmitted to humans. The major clinical sign is diarrhea although carriers may not show any sign of the disease. Routine internal parasite tests should be performed on all pets at least once each year. This disease is commonly present in wild animals.

CAT SCRATCH DISEASE:

A bacterial infection characterized by slight fever and enlarged lymph nodes. This disease is usually self-limiting. The most common cause is a cat scratch. There is no reason to euthanize a cat that has caused this problem.

PNEUMONITIS:

This disease is caused by a "Chlamydia" organism and can cause human eyelid infections (conjunctivitis). Best prevention is vaccination of the cat for the disease and good sanitation, such as washing your hands after handling a cat.

HEARTWORMS:

Heartworms can cause disease in both dogs and cats, and has been reported in people. It has been confused with cancer in the lungs of humans. The heartworm has also been found in the eye of humans. All pets should be on prevention.

KITTEN BEHAVIOR

By nature, cats are inquisitive and playful, which frequently gets them into trouble. Cat-proofing your home is important to prevent accidents and illness.

TIPS FOR KEEPING YOUR CAT SAFE:

- Physical punishment is the least effective method for training cats. Do not discipline your cat by hitting or striking it. This will only frighten or anger it, frequently leading to biting and clawing. Keep a squirt gun or bottle available. A squirt of water in the face doesn't hurt them but deters most kittens from doing things they shouldn't, such as jumping up on counters.
- Spend lots of time playing with your kitten. Drag a string around the house or tie an object to a string on a pole and wave it around while watching TV. Do not play with your kitten by wiggling your fingers or toes as this only encourages biting.
- Never force a kitten to stay in your lap if it wants to get down. Do not grab at your cat or scare it to prevent the development of biting reactions. Rough play also encourages aggression. Play gently using a toy, not your fingers.
- Confine your kitten to one room that has no plants or dangerous objects when you aren't home. Swallowing or choking on small objects is very common in kittens & cats. Beware of things such as rubber bands, pencil erasers, ear plugs, needles & thread, small toys, metal objects such as paper clips, fabric scraps, earrings, etc. Anything smaller than 1" diameter can potentially be swallowed and needs to be kept out of the kitten's reach. Don't give your kitten string or yarn to play with! These are among the most common and deadly of intestinal obstructions.
- Provide at least one scratching post for your cat to use. Even declawed cats like to stretch and knead their paws. Rubbing catnip on the scratching post will encourage its use. Keep the post in a place where the kitten spends a lot of time. Cats usually prefer a larger post that they can climb up and down. Use your squirt bottle if you see him scratching in inappropriate places.
- To prevent chewing on cords and shoes, use unscented roll-on antiperspirant on these items once or twice each week. Cats don't like the drying, bitter taste and will soon learn to avoid these things.
- Aluminum foil can be placed around your plant pots and counter tops or tables, especially when you can't be home to use the squirt bottle! Cats don't like shiny, noisy foil and will generally avoid it. Many types of plants are poisonous to your pet, so it's best to keep them all out of reach. Double-sided sticky tape works well on couches and chairs.

- Be aware the laundry room and kitchen contain many things that can be toxic to a cat when licked off the paws after walking through it. Laundry soap and bleach are prime examples. Many cats die each year after exploring the washing machine, taking a nap in the dryer, or jumping on or in a hot stove or oven. Cats are also very good at learning how to open cabinet doors.
- A collar and ID tag ensures your cat can be identified if it escapes outside. Use breakaway collars to prevent choking. Microchips are now available to permanently identify your cat. Be sure that the litter pan is accessible, in a quiet place, and changed frequently. If your house is large, it is best to have more than one box placed in convenient areas. It is recommended that there be one more litter pan than cats in multicat households. Avoid heavily scented litter—cats don't like perfume. Avoid changing brands of litter. Changing the litter every day is much healthier than using the new "scoopable" litters. Be sure to remove "clumps" daily if "scoopable" litter is used. Any time the cat eliminates outside the litter box, be sure to have the cat checked for a medical problem.

IN THE KITTEN'S NEW HOME

By selecting a kitten as your pet, you have chosen an extremely clean pet with legendary skills for hunting and one that usually needs little house training because its mother usually has already taught it to use a litter box. All these advantages come in one furry package that requires little care but provides excellent companionship. Cats, however, demand that their love and loyalty be earned.

Cats must have regular meals, clean litter, grooming, and attention in the form of play. A cat will be quite content to live its entire life indoors provided that its owner offers companionship.

Male or female, kittens and cats are affectionate, intelligent, and playful. However, unless you plan to breed your cat, neutering is recommended to keep males from spraying, and females from producing unwanted litters. Neutering and spaying should be performed at 6-7 months of age.

Needed supplies for a new kitten include a proper health record with dates of vaccinations and deworming's, high quality food, bowl for water and food, a litter pan with litter and scoop, kitten shampoo, grooming tools, a pet carrier, and of course, toys.

Prepare your home for the new kitten before letting it loose. Be sure all doors and windows are closed to prevent escape. Place the kitten's bed (crate) in a secluded area and the litter box in another secluded area. Take the kitten out and let it explore the room where it is to stay. Kittens and cats will explore endlessly until it feels totally comfortable in the surroundings.

When the kitten becomes comfortable, its tail will go straight up. Once it feels comfortable, it will start to groom itself.

Show the kitten the litter box, and place the kitten in it several times. It's rare for a kitten to reject the box. If this does happen, the litter box should be moved to another more secluded area. If the problem continues, it may be necessary to place several boxes around the home. The kitten will find one that suits its need for privacy within 24 hours. Remember, cats are extremely clean pets.

It is surprisingly easy for kittens and even dogs to adapt to each other—if they are gradually and gently.

NUTRITION FOR KITTENS

Unlike most pets, cats remain true to their “meat-eater” heritage, and have special food requirements.

Cats cannot process vitamins directly from vegetables, so a cat must eat the meat of animals that can convert vegetable vitamins to a digestible form. That's why, in the wild, a cat must eat ALL of its prey's carcass to derive essential proteins, minerals, and vitamins. Taurine, for example, is an amino acid that is vital to eyesight. Non-meat eaters can make taurine in their body, but cats cannot. Therefore, they must eat foods that contain taurine.

Commercial diets for cats must be balanced and nutritional, specialized, and concentrated in small portions. Therefore feline foods are slightly more expensive than dog foods. Wet or dry food for a cat should contain 30-40% protein.

We highly recommend High Quality Kitten Food for all kittens. It can be fed free-choice. Only put out what the kitten will probably eat in the one day period. We prefer to put fresh food out every day. Some canned food should be fed for the first couple of weeks if the kitten is small or does not eat well.

Water is extremely important to the cat. Insufficient fluid intake can cause the urine to become too concentrated leading to urinary stone problems. It is interesting to note that cats do **not** have a “thirst” reflex. This makes it easy for the cat not to drink sufficient water each day, since they do not sense the need to drink since they are not thirsty. Grown cats should drink a cup of water daily.

If the kitten does not eat well within the first 36 hours in the new home, it may be that it misses familiar surroundings. It may be necessary to force feed the kitten to stimulate appetite. We also recommend feeding some **strong smelling canned foods** during the early growing months.

The major appetite stimulant for the cat is SMELL!! Since dry foods do not have as strong a smell as canned foods, some cats are more reluctant to eat dry food.

Make diet changes slowly. Any abrupt change can cause digestive upsets resulting in vomiting and/or diarrhea.

Milk is NOT necessary in the diet. Never feed milk without first diluting it at least half with water.

Allow the kitten plenty of REST TIME. Cats sleep about 22 hours each day. Adequate rest is necessary for optimum growth and development. Shaking when sleeping is "mother nature's way" of exercising the muscles.

Guard against the kitten swallowing foreign objects. Quite often, we must perform surgery to remove foreign objects from the stomach and intestinal tract. These objects include string, fishing line, marbles, needles, or just about any other small object you can think of.

By reducing stress and allowing the kitten to feel comfortable on its own terms, you will enjoy many years of affection, love, and loyal companionship.

PREVENTING PICKY EATERS

Poor eaters are made, not born. It is very important to develop good eating habits in your cat, as this will affect his health for the remainder of his life. The following list of rules will help you establish good patterns of eating for your cat.

- 1) Set up a regular feeding schedule and keep it, even on weekends.
- 2) Do not feed free choice.
- 3) Do not feed table scraps.
- 4) Do not feed anything between meals.
- 5) At feeding time, put down a measured amount of food and leave the room for five minutes.
- 6) Return after five minutes and remove any leftover food. Do not feed the cat anything until the next scheduled meal time. (The cat will not starve)
- 7) The cat may not eat for a few days, but will be eating properly in a short time.

HAVE A GREAT TIME TOGETHER!!!!

“PET-PROOFING” YOUR HOME

Kittens are lively and curious, which can get them into serious trouble. Remember that your young pet sees everything from a much lower vantage point than you—like a baby who has begun to crawl—and may be attracted to things you do not see while standing up.

It's impossible to totally “pet-proof” your home against accidents, but here are some recommendations:

- Securely screen all windows to help prevent falls, and keep your pet off of balconies, upper porches, and high decks.
- Securely store cleaning supplies, laundry detergent, bleach, paint, paint thinner, pesticides, fertilizer, disinfectants, mothballs, roach & rat poisons, medications, and antifreeze.
- Remove poisonous house- plants, or place them in hanging baskets completely out of reach of all pets. Some plants that are poisonous include amaryllis, English ivy, narcissus, dieffenbachia, mistletoe, poinsettia, holly, philodendron, azalea, rhododendron, daffodil daphne, foxglove, bleeding heart, potato, iris, ivy, oleander, rubber plant, tobacco, tulip, clematis, morning glory, and weeping fig.
- Keep toilet lids down. Young pets may decide to play in the water, and the lid could close and trap them; also, toilet bowl cleansers are harmful if swallowed.
- Store plastic bags where the young pet cannot get inside them and suffocate or chew/tear them and swallow bits of plastic. Plastic six-pack holders used for packaging beverages should be cut apart.
- Keep exposed electrical cords as short as possible, or tack them against a baseboard so the pet cannot play with or chew on them.
- Never give your pet any medication without first consulting with your veterinarian. Never use over-the-counter products on pets without first checking with your veterinarian. Veterinarians are the true pet experts. Guard against potential exposure to human medications. Even in small doses, aspirin, acetaminophen, diet pills, sleeping pills, and tranquilizers can all be fatal to your pet.
- Keep all dresser drawers, trunks, and closets closed. Always check to see where the pet is before closing refrigerator doors, the oven, washer, or dryer.
- Always be sure your pet is secure before leaving the pet alone. We strongly recommend the pet be confined in a plastic travel crate for at least the first few months.
- If the pet is allowed outdoors, always be sure to blow your horn and hang on the hood before starting and moving your vehicle. Kittens especially like to crawl up under the hood to keep warm.
- Keep sewing supplies out of your pet's reach. Buttons, needles, pins, and thread can hurt his mouth or cause intestinal obstructions if swallowed. The same goes for nails, staples, screws, brads, earplugs, and aluminum can tabs.
- Do not use electric blankets for the pet's bedding.

- Never put anything other than the appropriate collar around a pet's neck. Ribbons can easily choke the pet if they should get caught on anything.

TRAVELING WITH YOUR PET

This checklist should help you have a more enjoyable vacation when traveling with your pet.

- Crate train your pet. The crate actually becomes security to your pet. Keep the pet crated when the vehicle is moving for security and safety. The crate will help protect the pet in case of an accident.
- Be sure the pet wears a collar, Rabies Tag, and ID Tag in case it should become lost.
- Take the usual food. Sudden diet changes are the most common causes of vomiting and diarrhea.
- Never assume you will be able to find special diets away from home carry ample amounts. Stick to a routine feeding schedule.
- A supply of drinking water should also be considered to allow gradual change. Simply take a gallon jug, add new water to the jug as the home water is used out of the container.
- Don't forget any prescribed medications required by your pet.
- Take the pet's vaccinations records and rabies certificate. Many motels and campgrounds are now requiring proof of vaccinations.
- When driving, stop every two (2) hours to exercise the pet and give water.
- Tranquilizers and car sickness medications are available from our hospital. Over-the-counter products will not work. They work best if given on an empty stomach. Do not feed the pet for 4-6 hours prior to administering the medication. We usually recommend only feeding the pet once you reach each day's destination each day for best effect.
- Be responsible for your pet's eliminations. Take it to suitable places for urination. Carry a supply of plastic bags which can be placed on the hand-then turned inside out after the stool is grasped in your hand.
- **Never leave your pet unattended in the car.**
- Consider the feelings of others before taking your pet to visit friends or relatives. Be

sure they have no allergy problems and really do not mind the pet accompanying you. Otherwise, everyone will have a better time (including your pet) if the pet is left in our care. Ask to see our boarding facilities.

HEARTWORM DISEASE

Cats get heartworms too!!!! Even cats living totally indoors have been diagnosed with heartworms.

HOW DO CATS GET HEARTWORM DISEASE?

Cats get heartworm disease in the same way that dogs do. MOSQUITOES transmit the disease by biting an already infected animal, and then pass the infection on to other animals they bite. Indoor cats are not totally safe. Any mosquito that enters the house may bite the cat transmitting heartworm disease to them.

EVEN ONE WORM IS A BAD THING:

Even one worm can be fatal in the cat.

SIGNS OF HEARTWORM DISEASE ARE NOT USUALLY SEEN UNTIL VERY LATE IN THE DISEASE PROCESS:

Coughing, breathing difficulties, vomiting, and weight loss may be observed. However, most cats **DIE** before showing any clinical signs.

DIAGNOSIS IS DIFFICULT:

Specific diagnostic tests are not totally accurate in diagnosing the disease.

THERE IS NO GOOD SOLUTION ONCE THE CAT IS INFECTED WITH HEARTWORMS:

Treatment of the infection has a high chance of serious complications, including death! Without treatment, the risks of lung damage and death remain.

PREVENTION IS AVAILABLE:

A preventive, **HEARTGARD** For Cats, is available as meat-based chewable tablets. It may be given whole by hand, in pieces, or mixed in food. Each dose gives your cat a full month of protection and gives you peace of mind that your kitty is protected. The medication should be given all year long in this area.

REVOLUTION for cats is also available as a topical application. Revolution also prevents ear mites, hookworms, roundworms, and fleas. Each dose lasts for a full month. The medication is designed to be given every month.