



New Kitten Information

Congratulations on getting a new kitten! This little furball can bring you years of friendship and love. All he or she will need in return is a warm place to sleep, lots of love, an occasional scratch behind the ears and proper health care. Meeting the first three needs seems to come naturally to most of us, but what is involved in proper health care for a cat?



VACCINATIONS: The routine vaccination called CPRT, begins at 6-8 weeks of age and is repeated every three weeks until kittens reach 4 months of age. We strongly recommend that all cats be vaccinated against FeLV, or leukemia, a disease which is always fatal and easily transmitted among cats. We test kittens at 3 months of age and recommend a 2 shot series for all kittens. The first rabies vaccine is given at 4 months of age. One year after we finish the kitten series, we recommend booster vaccines for CPRT, FeLV and Rabies. After this, we tailor a vaccine protocol to your cat's needs which will generally entail vaccine boosters only once every 3 years.

WORMING: Virtually all kittens are born with roundworms, a serious public health threat. People, especially children, can become infected with these worms. All kittens should be wormed for roundworms as early as 2 weeks of age. This should be repeated 2-3 times with at least one worming occurring after leaving the litter. A fecal exam should be done after this worming. After this, all outdoor cats should be on a year 'round deworming program such as monthly use of the topical product, Revolution Plus.

NUTRITION: Kittens need diets made especially for growing cats. After reaching 4-6 months of age they can be switched to an adult diet. Grocery store foods and many "fad" diets at the feed and pet stores are made from cheap ingredients and may meet minimum standards, but fail to meet optimum standards. We recommend Purina Pro Plan as the best diet for all stages of a healthy cat's life. Other premium diets such as Hill's Science Diet, Eukanuba, Iams and Nutro are also excellent. These diets may cost more than what is available in the grocery store, but you really do get what you pay for. "Premium" diets such as Pro Plan need to be fed in smaller volumes, will produce less feces to clean up, and generally lead to fewer visits to the doctor. Supplements are not necessary, and in fact can be harmful. Never feed your new friend table scraps - even a bowl of milk or a piece of Thanksgiving turkey can be harmful.

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SPAY/NEUTER: This may be one of the greatest things you can do for your new friend. Spayed or neutered pets tend to live longer and have healthier, happier lives, especially if the surgery is done when they are young. We recommend all cats be spayed or neutered at 4 months of age, unless they are part of a “complete” breeding program. Please talk to us if you are considering using your kitten for breeding.

FLEAS/TAPEWORMS: Fleas are a constant problem in our area. They cause itchiness and irritation, carry tapeworms and can cause severe allergic reactions. Good flea control is essential. If you can see tapeworms in your pet’s stool (they look like grains of rice), let us know and we can prescribe the proper dewormer.

DENTISTRY: This area of veterinary medicine can greatly increase your cat’s longevity and quality of life. Get your kitten used to having things put in his or her mouth. Train your friend to allow you to brush his teeth daily. Brushing your kitten’s teeth regularly will lead to him needing fewer teeth cleanings. If you notice red gums, broken or missing teeth or discolored teeth or reluctance to eat, please call us immediately.

YEARLY PHYSICAL EXAMS: Animals cannot tell us when something isn’t quite right. If we wait until they show obvious symptoms, often the prognosis for a problem becomes much worse. To help detect illnesses as early as possible, we suggest that a physical exam be done every year. As your cat reaches 6 years of age, we also suggest yearly bloodwork and urinalysis.

We hope that this information will be helpful in allowing you to take the best possible care of your kitten. If you would like more information on any of these subjects, please give us a call. We are here to help you!



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Your Kitten's Wellness Schedule



This basic schedule will be used to help keep your kitten as healthy as possible. This is a guideline only. We may need to remove or add items to the expected care list as time goes on. If you can't come in on the exact date listed, it is okay – we will adjust the rest of the schedule. These visits should occur as close to every 3 weeks as possible and it's important to not skip a visit.

Date	Age	Expected Care
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete veterinary exam and consult ○ Review of our wellness plans and basic kitten care ○ Vaccines as needed ○ Discuss timing of spay/neuter ○ Intestinal parasite exam ○ Revolution (flea control and dewormer) ○ Discuss pet insurance ○
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre-vaccination exam by a veterinary nurse ○ CPRT vaccine ○ Toenail trimming demonstration ○ Revolution (flea control and dewormer) ○
	3 months (11-13 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre-vaccination exam by a veterinary nurse ○ CPRT vaccine ○ FELV vaccine ○ Feline Infectious disease screen (FELV test) ○ Toothbrushing demonstration ○ Revolution (flea control and dewormer) ○
	4 months (15-17 weeks)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Pre-vaccination exam by a veterinary nurse ○ Rabies vaccine 1 year ○ FELV vaccine ○ CPRT vaccine ○ Set up spay or neuter ○ Take home Revolution for monthly use if your cat goes outside ○ Cut back to twice daily feedings and switch to adult food ○





Feeding Your Cat

One of your most important responsibilities as a cat owner is to provide your cat with the necessary nutrients required for its growth and maintenance. To do this, it is first necessary to understand what cats need in their diet.

Cats are obligate carnivores and are very different from dogs-and people-in their nutritional needs. Cats are strict carnivores that rely on nutrients in animal tissue to meet their specific nutritional requirements. Cats need a diet that contains protein, fat, minerals, vitamins, and water. Those nutrients are the building blocks of various structural body tissues; are essential for chemical reactions (metabolism); transport substances into, around, and out of the body; supply energy for growth and maintenance; and provide palpability. The Feline Nutrition Expert (FNE) subcommittee of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) has established basic minimum nutritional requirements for cats. Pet food manufacturers use those standards when producing cat foods.

Types of Cat Foods

Commercial cat foods are formulated as dry, semi moist, and canned. The products differ in water content, protein level, caloric density, palatability and digestibility. The differences are primarily attributed to the processing methods used by pet-food manufacturers. A quality cat food provides the necessary nutrients in a properly balanced proportion.

Dry Foods

Dry food contains 6 to 10 percent moisture. Depending on the specific formulation, meats or meat byproducts, poultry or poultry byproducts, grain, grain byproducts, fishmeal, fiber sources, milk products, and vitamin and mineral supplements are combined, extruded, and dried into bite sized pieces. The pieces are then covered with flavor enhancers, such as animal fat, which give them increased palatability. It takes less dry food on an as-is basis than other types of food to satisfy a cat, because dry food has more dry matter and higher energy content per gram fed. The primary advantages of dry cat food are lower cost and convenience in allowing “ free choice” feeding. Generally, dry foods may be less palatable to a cat and have a lower digestibility than the moister types. However, premium dry cat foods are comparable in digestibility to grocery store brands of canned foods, and can exceed lower quality canned cat foods.

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Semi-Moist Foods

Semi-moist cat food may be more appealing to some cats than dry cat food. Moisture content is approximately 35%. However, after the package is opened, palatability decreases and spoilage increases because of dehydration. Semi-moist food resembles ground or whole meat tidbits. Meat and meat by products are the primary ingredient. They are combined with soybean meal, cereals, grain by-products, and preservatives. Manufacturers add organic acids, sorbitol and dextrose to prevent spoilage and retain moisture.

Canned Foods

Canned food is highly palatable and can be helpful if your cat is a finicky eater. Canned cat food has a water content of at least 75%, so it is a good dietary source of water. These diets can be helpful for cats with urinary or kidney problems. When unopened it has the longest shelf life. Canned food in ration sizes (12 to 22 ounce cans) or gourmet sizes (3 to 6 ounce cans). Gourmet canned cat foods often contain organ meats (kidney or liver) as their primary food ingredient. Because some brands maybe nutritionally incomplete, it is important to read the nutrition labels carefully on specialty cat-food items.



Common Feeding Problems

Overfeeding can lead to the number-one nutritional disease, OBESITY.

Excessive body weight can increase the risk of liver disease, heart disease, respiratory problems, and constipation. Furthermore, fat cats are at a greater risk of developing diabetes and arthritis. Most adult cats only require 1/4 cup of quality dry food twice daily.

Feeding dog food to cats is a common error, especially if dogs and cats are in the same household. Dog foods are developed for the nutritional needs of dogs, not cats. There can be serious consequences if a cat's diet is deficient in protein, taurine, niacin, vitamin A, and fatty acids.

Overdosing with vitamin and mineral supplements has been known to cause severe medical problems in cats. Physiological imbalances caused by excess vitamins and minerals can lead to the binding of other nutrients. Overdoses of vitamins A and D are more common than deficiencies of those vitamins, because of unnecessary supplementation of an already balanced diet.

Exclusively feeding meat or fish results in an unbalanced diet and causes related nutritional diseases. Diets containing large quantities of fish can cause yellow-fat disease (steatitis), a result of vitamin E deficiency. Nutritional secondary hyperparathyroidism is usually caused by all-meat homemade diets that are deficient in calcium, thus creating a mineral imbalance in the calcium-phosphorus ratio. The disease most commonly occurs in kittens that are rapidly growing.



What Should I Feed My Cat?

The answer depends largely on your lifestyle, preferences, and your cat's health. Generally it is a good idea to avoid grocery store brands. Although these diets are inexpensive, they barely meet the minimum nutritional requirements and can vary from one bag/case to another. These diets can be compared to fast food. It is best to feed your cat a premium diet. One that has been through AAFCO feeding trials and has been on the market for a while. A diet that has not been through feeding trials may be a quality diet but that cannot be known for sure. Premium and Super Premium diets are



more calorically and nutritionally dense than cheaper brands, so you can feed a smaller amount. Most adult cats should only require $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of a premium dry food twice daily.

Some diet recommendations:

- Purina Proplan (not Purina Cat Chow)
- Eukanuba/lams
- Science Diet
- Innova and Evo
- Wellness (Core)
- Nutro

Also remember that not eating can lead to serious medical problems in cats. This is true for sick cats that lack an appetite, for cats on a diet, and for the finicky cat that refuses to eat. A veterinarian should examine any cat that refuses to eat and is losing weight.

The Doctors and Staff of Animal Care Clinic are always available to answer any of your nutrition questions

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Do you get nervous when you go to the doctor or dentist? Do you feel vulnerable wearing that funny little gown while they poke and prod you in unusual ways? And you don't understand why it is happening! Imagine what dogs and cats feel when they come to the vet. Pacing, panting, whining, clinging to you, holding still better than usual or any sign of aggression are all signs that your pet is scared! We don't want that at ACC!

At Animal Care Clinic our team is committed to making veterinary visits the best experience possible, for you and your pet. All of our full time team members are Fear Free certified because we want your pet to be happy when they visit us. Fear Free doesn't mean that your pet will never experience anything uncomfortable at ACC - they may be injured or ill, after all - but it does mean that we make every effort to reduce the fear, anxiety, and stress that is related to examinations and procedures.

It's best to start young! Using Fear Free handling starting with the first visit, puppies and kittens grow up accepting gentle handling & even enjoying visits to the vet, which ensures they receive the best possible care throughout their lives. You can expect our team to be as concerned with your pet's emotional health as we are with their physical health.

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Dogs and cats are susceptible to a variety of internal parasites, or worms. These parasites vary in their importance and in the way they are diagnosed. The following are the most important “worms” in our area.

ROUNDWORMS: Virtually all puppies and kittens are born with roundworms. These parasites can rob the dog and cat of nutrients, and they are responsible for the common “pot belly” appearance of many youngsters. Adult dogs and cats can be infested with these worms, but they don’t often shed eggs in the stool. The **greatest threat roundworms pose is to people!** If these worms find their way into the body of a child or ill adult, they can cause serious damage to the eye, brain, or other organs. Diagnosis in dogs and cats is made via fecal flotation, but a negative fecal exam does not rule out an infestation. In general, it is best to treat all animals that are likely to be carriers. We recommend treatment of all puppies and kittens followed by a year round preventative program for every animal. These are extremely common parasites that should not be taken lightly!

TAPEWORMS: A very common external parasite, the flea, is the carrier for an internal parasite called tapeworms. These appear as little “grains of rice” in the stool of infected animals. Sometimes they may be mobile. The only way that a pet can get tapeworms is to ingest fleas. Tapeworms do not cause too much problem for pets - they do not cause weight loss or malnutrition. They may increase itchiness, however.



If you see these little worms in your pet’s stool, there is no need for a fecal sample - it won’t help diagnose the problem. Just let us know and we will prescribe Droncit or Drontal (and probably some flea control!).

HEARTWORMS: This worm that lives in the heart of dogs, and rarely cats, is much less common than roundworms or tapeworms. However, it has much more serious effects. In fact, both infection and treatment can be fatal! We recommend prevention in all dogs - this consists of yearly heartworm blood tests and year round preventative.

HOOKSWORMS & WHIPWORMS: These parasites are uncommon in San Luis County, but quite common in other areas. They can be diagnosed via a fecal exam.



SPAYS & NEUTERS AT ACC



Not all spays are created equal! That sounds funny, but it is true. Most pet owners assume that surgical procedures are performed the same way in every hospital, but that is not true. At Animal Care Clinic we always put the safety and comfort of our patients first. We are proud to have found ways to provide the highest quality of anesthetic and surgical care at a reasonable price.

The following is a list of services that we believe are essential to providing proper surgical and anesthetic care to a patient undergoing major surgery. All of these are included for every patient at ACC:

- a. A **Fear Free** approach to anesthesia and hospitalization – most patients are sedated immediately upon arrival so they do not worry before surgery. Your pets' emotional experience is very important to us!
- b. An **individualized anesthetic plan** for each patient based on a complete physical exam, laboratory testing and medical history.
- c. A dedicated team member monitors each patient to **ensure safety** during the procedure. Seven different parameters are monitored and recorded, including end tidal CO₂ which is unusual outside of a specialty hospital.
- d. A never-ending focus on **pain control** – before during and after surgery!
- e. Advanced warming systems – loss of body temperature is perhaps the greatest risk to veterinary anesthesia patients today. We keep your pet warm before, during and after surgery!
- f. Pre-anesthetic blood panel for all patients.
- g. IV catheter and warmed IV fluids before, during and after surgery.

Dogs and cats cannot express pain or anxiety easily, so we must make every effort to avoid and control it for them. We pledge to you that we will never take your pet's health, emotions or safety lightly. If you have any questions about this or any other subject, please call us. One of our doctors would be happy to talk to you.



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Why is my cat sneezing?

Cats are very susceptible to a disease complex commonly referred to as URI. The new kitty you have just adopted may already be showing signs of URI, or these may develop after your new friend has been home for a while.

What is URI?

Upper Respiratory Infection is a very common disease (especially in kittens) that is caused by several different viruses. The symptoms consist of runny eyes, sneezing, and a runny nose. It is much like the common cold in people. On occasion, the disease will become more severe and include fever, weakness and poor appetite. Please remember... THIS DISEASE CAN TAKE 6 WEEKS TO RUN ITS FULL COURSE!

How did my cat get URI?

A very high percentage of kittens, no matter where they come from, will be infected with URI. Many cats and kittens will be sneezing from the day they come home, but others won't start up for up to 2 weeks! This is because the stress of finding a new home, or even going to the vet, can make URI start its symptoms.

How does stress affect URI?

The viruses that cause URI can lay dormant in any cat. When an animal is stressed, the immune system is suppressed and thus the viruses can "do their thing!" This stress can be in the form of another illness, moving to a new home, or stress among human family members!

What should I do?

Treat your kitty like it has a cold. If it is eating, fairly playful, and does not have a thick discharge from the nose or eyes, then no treatment is likely to be necessary. If any of the above problems start, call us immediately. Your kitty may need antibiotics or antihistamines. If things get real bad, it may need to be hospitalized, but this is unusual. Most importantly, remember that it can take 6 weeks for URI to go away. Be sure all cats in your household are vaccinated and keep separate from your sick kitty until all symptoms have passed. Of course, never be afraid to call or drop by with questions. We are here to help you!





FeLV & FIV Silent Killers

Cats are presently the most popular pet in America. Cat owners are taking better care of their cats than ever before in the history of veterinary medicine. Still, there are two diseases that remain prevalent among cats and take many lives despite the fact that one may be prevented.

Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) is a highly contagious disease, but it not transferable to species other than cats. It causes the immune system to be suppressed much like the AIDS virus, and thus makes cats susceptible to many infectious diseases, but particularly to cancers. The virus is spread by close contact, especially via bite wounds, grooming of other cats and sharing of food bowls. The symptoms may go unnoticed when a cat is first infected. All unvaccinated cats that are ill or have received a bite wound should be suspected of having FeLV.



The Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) is a close relative to the human AIDS virus, but does not affect people. It too causes immune deficiency and is contagious among cats. The most common sings are chronic or long-term infections of any kind. FIV is often associated with persistent dental disease, upper respiratory disease and diarrhea. Any cat with a long-standing problem that is not responsive to treatment should be tested for FIV.

Excellent tests exist for both diseases. We suggest that all cats entering a household be tested for FeLV prior to exposure to other cats. Because FeLV cannot be cured and is rather common, we also suggest that all cats be tested before undergoing any major procedure. This will allow for more accurate prognosis, and will prevent your kitty from enduring any unnecessary procedure. All severely ill cats should be tested for both diseases.

Any cat that may have contact with another cat, even by accident, should be vaccinated for leukemia. Although the first vaccines produced were of marginal efficacy, recent vaccines have proven to be effective. Good protection can be achieved by starting your car with a two-shot series and then follow with at least one yearly booster. This is not a substitute for testing in the case of bite wounds or severe illness.

We hope this information will help you take the best possible care of your feline friend. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to call!

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Destructive Scratching



Scratching is a necessary behavior for cats. When their territory is limited to the indoors they transfer this behavior to furniture, carpet, drapes, and walls.

Why They Do It

Cats scratch for various reasons:

- To mark their territory (as they scratch they release pheromones from their foot pads scent marking that area, as well as leaving a visual mark.)
- In play
- While stretching and for exercise.
- To relieve anxiety.
- To remove exterior nail layers, which are frayed and worn.
- They scratch because it feels good.

What To Do

- Scratching is a normal behavior that cats are highly motivated to display; it is unrealistic to try to prevent them from scratching. Instead, the goal in resolving scratching problems is to redirect the scratching onto acceptable objects. Provide your cat with a variety of scratching posts – carpeting, wood, rope, upholstery, cardboard, etc. Some cats prefer vertical posts others prefer horizontal, and some favor slanted. Some cats will only scratch pile carpeting while others prefer sisal. The post should be large enough for your cat to stretch fully. When you determine your cats' preferences provide additional scratching posts in various locations. All cats should have a sturdy post that won't shift or collapse.
- Encourage your cat to investigate the scratching posts by scenting them with catnip or by placing a treat on them. Place them in areas where your cat will be inclined to use them. Give praise when you see him using the scratching post.
- Discourage inappropriate scratching by removing or covering desirable objects. Turn speakers to the wall. Uses double-sided tape on furniture. Vinyl carpet runners (turned upside down to expose the knobby side) could be placed over carpet. These are temporary modifications to help your cat develop healthy habits. Once acclimated to the scratching posts many of these deterrents can be removed.
- Scent aversion can be a powerful tool. Placing a bowl of citrus potpourri or cut up Irish Spring soap in a specific location can deter your cat from that area.
- Trim your cats nail regularly. If you are unable to do so the nursing staff at ACC is always available to help.





- Consider using soft nail caps (sold at many pet stores). These caps attach to the cat's nails with adhesive so when she scratches no damage is done. These nail covers are temporary usually lasting 4 to 6 weeks.

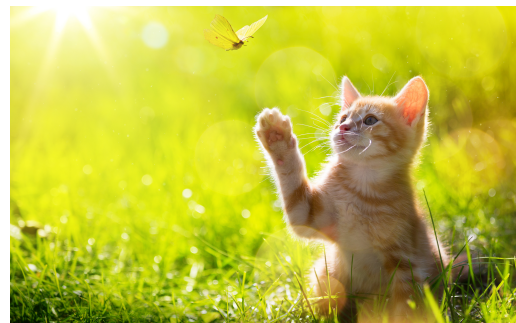
What Not To Do

- Do not try to force your cat to use the scratching post. This may frighten her and force your cat to avoid the post completely.
- Do not allow your cat to scratch old furniture, as she will transfer this behavior to new pieces.
- Do not throw away your cat's old scratching post. It may be unsightly but cats prefer shredded and torn objects. They cat really get their claws into the fabric and it is infiltrated with their sent.
- **Never** physically reprimand your cat for scratching inappropriately.

Feline Declaw (Onychectomy)

The term Onychectomy refers to the removal of claws; however a feline declaw involves removing the distal phalanx, or end bone of the cat's toes in addition to the nail. If that part of the nail is not removed the nail would grow back. The declaw procedure is performed under general anesthesia usually at the time of spay or neuter. Pain control is extremely important. All patients will receive a fentanyl patch the evening prior to surgery. They will also go home with pain medication.

Even with proper pain management there can be lasting effects from declawing your cat. Older cats may limp or hold a paw up while sitting for the rest of their lives. Some cats may develop inappropriate urination issues or become biters. Declawing will not stop a cat from the act of scratching, they will still go through the motions, and may become anxious when they are unable to complete this natural behavior. A declawed cat must remain strictly indoors, as they cannot easily climb to escape predators and have lost their number one defense.



Declaw should **never** be the first option. We recommend behavior modification and proper socialization and handling during kittenhood. We are always available to answer your questions and offer behavioral consultations if needed.

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Thirteen Signs that Mean “Call Us Now”

1. **Bleeding** - bleeding from any part of the body especially if not easily stopped. Bloody urine or stool could be an indicator of underlying disease or infection.
2. **Vomiting or Diarrhea** – frequent vomiting or diarrhea during a short period or intermittently. It is not normal for cats or dogs to vomit regularly. Quick onset of unproductive retching and/or bloating is an emergency.
3. **Changes in Appetite** – If your pet has not eaten in 24-48 hours it is an emergency, especially for felines. If your pet is suddenly ravenous with no change in diet this could be an indicator of a problem, but not likely an emergency.
4. **Convulsions** – seizures or uncontrolled tremors, especially if your pet is nonresponsive during an episode.
5. **Lethargy** – lack of energy and motivation, not wanting to engage in normal activities or routine. Weakness or collapse during exercise is an emergency.
6. **Pain** – limping or lameness, crying out or seeming painful when touched or lifted. Severe itching, pain from an ear infections, etc.
7. **Eye Abnormalities** – redness, discharge, cloudiness, squinting or loss of vision.
8. **Weight Loss** – sudden weight loss with no alteration in diet or exercise.
9. **Masses** – Any lump that is new, bleeding or growing rapidly.
10. **Scratching** – frequent biting, chewing, or licking at any part of the body. Pawing at the face, ear and/or tilting the head are emergencies.
11. **Changes in Urination** – Straining or inability to urinate. Increased consumption of water, with or without increased urination is not an emergency but should be evaluated
12. **Coughing or Sneezing** – Violent sneezing that comes on suddenly, with or without discharge. Coughing that is effecting exercise or sleep.
13. **Any Form of trauma or ingestion of unusual substance** – Even if your pet seems fine after an accident, internal injuries can take time to show themselves. Many plants and medications are toxic and take days to cause problems. Get your pet assessed as early as possible!

Early recognition & treatment is the key to a successful recovery.

If your pet has been injured, take caution! Animals in discomfort are fearful and not always aware of their owners. They may bite even their best friend on mistake!

For after hours emergencies we suggest:

PETS Hospital

4854 S Bradley Rd #109

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(805) 250-5600

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