



# KITTEN CARE

Congratulations on the arrival of your new furry feline friend ! During our first consultation there is so much to discuss and for you to remember so hopefully this sheet will answer most of your questions.

## Vaccination

The vaccines are usually given at 9 and 12wks of age and protect against viruses that cause cat flu and panleucopenia virus. There is an option to also include feline leukemia which is strongly recommended. The combined vaccine protects against a form of leukemia caused by a virus which can be fatal, young cats particularly those who have contact with other cats are most at risk. Your pet will be protected from these diseases 2wks after the second vaccination but we would advise keeping your kitten indoors until he/she is a bit bigger and neutered. Thereafter your cat will need an annual booster which is also an excellent opportunity for a health check.

## Worming

Intestinal worms can cause weight loss and diarrhoea which can sometimes be severe, they can also be involved in the transmission of fleas and can be hazardous to human health.

### 0-6 months

Milbemax kitten tablets, 1 tablet per cat every 4 weeks. This can be hidden in food, put directly into your pets mouth but are flavoured so some cats will take it as a treat. We are also happy to administer the tablet if you are struggling!

### 6 months onwards

Milbemax cat, 1 tablet per cat (unless your puss is less than 2kg or greater than 8kg!) every 3 months. If your cats are solely indoor pets the risk of worms is less than a cat that hunts regularly, remember

worms can be hazardous to human health so worming is for both your family and your cats benefit. Again the tablets are flavoured but can otherwise put in food or administered directly.

This practice runs a scheme whereby for every 3 milbemax wormers you purchase per animal you will get one tablet free of charge. You can purchase tablets as needed or 4 at a time to benefit from this offer. We can also organize for you to have a free text or e-mail reminder sent to you when the next dose is due if this is helpful to you.

Profender: This is an alternative to milbemax, it is a complete wormer but is applied directly on the skin between the shoulders and may be easier for those difficult to handle cats. Frequency of dosing is as milbemax. The dose is according to weight which we can check for you free of charge when you bring your pet in. This can be used from 8wks of age.

## Flea prevention (and treatment!)

Fleas can sometimes cause intense skin irritation to cats and kittens, can be involved in the transmission of intestinal worms and in some cases cause anaemia (which can be life threatening!) so treatment and prevention should be taken seriously. All pets in the house should be treated regularly as flea eggs can fall off your pet and hatch throughout the whole year which is not very nice for us humans!

### Frontline

This comes as a 'spot-on' preparation or a spray. Make sure cats can not groom each other for a short time after application with either product.

The spray can be used from 2 days of age and should be repeated every 2 months. The number of sprays depends



on the body weight and if you are unsure or have not used this product before please ask the vet for advice.

The spot-on preparation: frontline combo, is administered between the shoulder blades and can be used from 8 weeks old (min weight 1kg). This needs to be used monthly and will treat and prevent fleas and stop any eggs falling off the animal from hatching in the environment.

### Program

This is given by injection administered by the vet every 6 months

### Household spray

Where fleas or eggs may be present in the house a spray will be needed, this practice stocks 'Indorex' which has a lasting action of 12 months and is also useful for controlling house dust mites.

## Diet

Cats must be fed a properly formulated cat food, dog food doesn't provide them with enough protein. A kitten diet should be fed until 6 months or neutering then a young adult or adult diet.

Always provide water and position feeding bowls away from the litter tray. Whether you feed a dry diet or wet diet is up to you and your cats tastes and either have their advantages and disadvantages.

Do make sure everyone in the house knows what the portion size is and how often your pet is fed to prevent obesity. Feel free to ask us for more specific advice for your cat.

## Neutering

We strongly recommend neutering all cats as they soon become prolific breeders and are much more likely to suffer ill-health if they remain entire. Male cats can be quite unpleasant live when they start to spray and are far more likely to wander off and become involved in cat fights, road traffic accidents and contract infections including FIV. Female cats can breed at less than a year old and can have several litters a year and will be found by male cats! They easily become very thin and run down and much more susceptible to infections.

It is important to spread out 'stressful' events so we usually avoid neutering at the same time as vaccinations. However with modern anesthetics and good patient monitoring we are happy to neuter from 4 months of age, cats become sexually mature at 6 months so booking in prior to this age is advised!

We will ask you to feed your pet as usual the night before but pick their food bowl up at 7pm and make sure he/she is kept in with no access to food after that time. Leave their water bowl down overnight. You will be able to pick up your

cat on the same day and will be asked to keep them in for 10 days. Male cats will have no stitches but females have a small incision on the flank closed with about 3 stitches in the skin. We always give animals pain relief to minimize post-operative discomfort and usually they recover very quickly.

## Identichips

These are very small implants that are 'injected' beneath the skin and when scanned will enable vets to identify a lost pet and return him/her to the owners. They can not be removed, and will last a lifetime. They are inserted very much like the administration of an injection but involves a slightly bigger needle so if you prefer we can do this when your pet is anaesthetised for a neutering procedure, having said that some cats will not even notice. You can now buy cat flaps which can be programmed to only open with your pets identichip code which can be effective at preventing feline intruders.

## Collars

Flea collars are not very effective so we would advise using a 'spot-on' flea product now. They can be useful for identification but this is not strictly necessary if they are micro-chipped. Hunting cats do have an impact on the garden bird population and bells on collars can be an effective warning. If you buy a collar please make sure it is one that will snap easily if your cat gets caught up by it as we have seen some very unpleasant injuries associated with collars.

## Outdoors or indoors?

This varies from cat to cat some preferring the stress-free indoor life while others love to be outside. Either way cats need stimulation and enjoy interaction with their owners and play items. Keeping cats

in at night or certainly at dawn and dusk is advisable, these are the times when unfortunately road casualties are most likely to happen.

## Insurance

As a result of huge advancements in the field of veterinary medicine we are able to diagnose and treat a wide range of conditions caused by ill-health or accidents. Unfortunately treatment comes with a cost attached and pet insurance gives you the peace of mind to know you can treat your pet without worrying too much about cost. Good quality cat insurance can be very affordable. There are many insurance companies out there but make sure your pet will be covered for life, look at the excess you will have to pay for a condition and the maximum pay out for a single condition. Also check insurance will continue to provide cover for an ongoing condition for life.

## Websites

Good websites to look at (that give you reliable information!):

[www.fabcats.org](http://www.fabcats.org)

for excellent advice on cat ownership, information on pedigrees and 'well cat for life' section.

[www.wormfree.co.uk](http://www.wormfree.co.uk)

for information on worms

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