

## CARING FOR YOUR CAT

### Initial Physical Exam and Blood Tests

Cats should have a physical exam as soon as possible after being adopted and before being allowed to have contact with other cats in the household. The doctor will evaluate their overall health and check for common problems such as fleas, ear mites, and upper respiratory infection. All cats should be tested for the *feline leukemia virus (FeLV)* and the *feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV)*. Both of these viruses are potentially fatal. Re-testing may be necessary when cats are ill.

### Vaccination

**Rabies** – Vaccination against rabies is legally required in New York State, as this is a fatal disease which can be transmitted to humans. Kittens must be three months of age or older to receive their initial vaccination. A booster vaccination is needed every year thereafter. We use a non-adjuvanted Rabies vaccine made just for cats.

**FVRCP** – This is often called the “distemper” vaccination. It is actually a combination vaccine which protects against the following viral diseases: Panleukopenia (feline distemper), Rhinotracheitis (upper respiratory virus), and Calicivirus (upper respiratory virus). The initial FVRCP vaccination is usually given when the kitten is separated from the mother (six to eight weeks of age). Boosters are needed every three to four weeks until the kitten is fourteen weeks of age. A booster vaccination is given one year later, then every 1 to 3 years.

**FeLV** – We recommend that all cats be given the FeLV series early in life. Typically, the initial vaccination is given at 8-9 weeks of age. A booster is given two weeks later. At the first adult visit we recommend one more booster. Cats kept strictly indoors can then discontinue the FeLV, but for those who will be going outside or who will be exposed to cats that go outside, vaccination should be repeated yearly.

### Fecal analysis and deworming

A stool sample is examined for intestinal parasites. The sample must be fresh (within 24 hrs) for accurate results. Roundworms (intestinal parasite) are very common in kittens and are potentially transmissible to people and may cause blindness and other illnesses, especially in children. For this reason kittens are routinely dewormed. Further treatment may be needed based on the results of fecal analysis. Adult cats should be dewormed regularly.

### Heartworm preventative

Revolution, Advantage-Multi or Heartgard are recommended year round to prevent heartworm infection, a potentially fatal disease in cats. Revolution and Advantage-Multi also kill ear-mites, intestinal parasites and fleas.

### Declawing

Please ask us for advice on training your cat not to use its claws in an inappropriate manner. If declawing is necessary, it should be done at a young age when possible, to minimize complications. We use all anti-pain methods available for this procedure, which include pre-operative, local and postoperative pain prevention.

### Neutering

Surgery for neutering (spay or castration) is performed at 4 to 6 months of age. This procedure substantially reduces the risk of breast cancer when neutering is done before the first heat.

### KITTEN TIMELINE

#### 6-9 WEEKS

Physical exam  
1<sup>st</sup> FVRCP vaccine  
1<sup>st</sup> Fecal  
Deworming

#### 8-9 WEEKS

FeLV/FIV test  
1<sup>st</sup> FeLV vaccine  
Deworming

#### 10-12 WEEKS

2<sup>nd</sup> FVRCP vaccine  
Deworming

#### 12-16 WEEKS

RABIES vaccine  
2<sup>nd</sup> FeLV vaccine  
Deworming

#### 14-16 WEEKS

3<sup>rd</sup> FVRCP vaccine  
Deworming

#### 4-6 MONTHS

Female Spay/Male Neuter

#### 1<sup>st</sup> ADULT VISIT

Last Felv vaccine (if indoor cat)  
1 year Rabies  
FVRCP

