



Kingdom Animal Shelter
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THE BASICS OF CAT HEALTH CARE by Krista McCoy, MS

There's more to keeping your cat healthy and happy than food, water, toys, and your love —cats need regular vet visits for vaccinations and screening tests. In fact, proper cat health can help protect your cat from infections, serious diseases, parasites, and other health problems.

How should you get started? When you bring a new cat into your family, whether it is a kitten or adult cat, one of the first things you need to do is take your cat to a vet for a pet healthy checkup. "Any new pet should always come in for a health check as soon as possible to see if there are problems," says Susan Nelson, DVM, assistant professor of clinical sciences at Kansas State University College of Veterinary Medicine. Before taking your cat to this first vet visit, gather any health information you have on your cat from its breeder, previous owner, or animal shelter, if adopted. "Any history you have on your pet should go to the vet," says Dr. Nelson.

Nelson says that a cat's first vet visit will involve a very thorough physical exam to determine if there are any medical conditions. In addition, your cat may need certain tests, vaccinations, and treatments, depending on its health history, environment, and age. This first visit is also a good time to talk about heartworm and flea prevention, depending on where you live and your cat's environment.

Cat Health Care at Every Age and Stage Healthy pet care for your cat will change over time, depending on the cat's age. For kittens and new cats without documentation of health history, your vet will likely run certain health screening tests. "Generally, we are going to recommend a feline leukemia and feline AIDS screening," says Nelson. Both are health conditions that weaken a cat's immune system, putting him at risk of developing cancer and other serious diseases. Your vet will also want to test for heartworms and obtain a fecal sample to test for intestinal parasites, which can put your cat at risk of infection and future health problems. To help maintain their health, kittens need a series of vaccinations to protect them from feline diseases. These vaccinations always include rabies and distemper combination (a vaccination against distemper and two respiratory conditions). Your vet may also recommend additional vaccinations, such as protection against feline leukemia, depending on your cat's individual needs. These initial vaccinations are generally given when your cat is between 6 and 16 weeks of age. Once your cat has the initial vaccinations, Nelson recommends that cats get spayed or neutered to prevent unwanted pregnancies and other problems; this is generally done at six months of age, but some vets recommend the procedure be done earlier. Regular wellness visits with your vet are also needed to monitor your cat's health and boost vaccinations. Nelson says that adult cats should have wellness exams at least annually—sometimes more if your cat has any health problems. The distemper combination and rabies vaccines will need to be boosted at regular intervals, usually every 1 to 3 years. Even if your healthy pet doesn't act like a "senior," Nelson says that cat health care needs generally begin to change when cats are 8 to 10 years old. As cats get older, vets often begin recommending blood, urine, and other tests to screen for anemia, diabetes, kidney problems, liver problems, electrolyte imbalances, hyperthyroidism, heart problems, and other diseases. "As animals age, wellness exams are recommended twice yearly," says Nelson. This is because older cats are at increased risk of potentially serious health problems. Regular wellness exams, vaccinations, and preventative health measures can help keep your cat healthy, but that doesn't mean he won't get sick. Call your vet if your cat is behaving unusually or exhibiting any worrisome symptoms, such as changes in his coat, lack of appetite, vomiting, diarrhea, eyes that are red or watery, nasal discharge, sneezing, problems with urination, or swelling.

With love, attention, and regular visits, you'll be taking all the needed steps to promote optimal cat health for your furry feline.

Source: <http://www.everydayhealth.com/pet-health/healthy-cats.aspx> Copyright © 2014 Everyday Health Media, LLC retrieved 5/22/2014



Thorny and May-May are siblings. Thorny is a 3 year old male, and May-May is a 3 year old female. Their formal names are Hawthorne and May. Thorny likes to go under rugs while playing, race around a house, and chase a laser. He also likes to lie on laps and be petted on his own accord. May-May likes to race around a house, play, and chase a laser. She also likes to lie beside quiet people on couches.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 17 Dime-A-Dip Pot Luck and Pie/Cake Auction South Congregational Church, St. Johnsbury, 5:00 to 8:00 P.M. Join us!
- December 12 Share the Love St. J. Subaru, Route 5, St. Johnsbury 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M. Photos with Santa Paws, bake sale, etc., more details in future issues

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2016 KAS Calendars Now Available!

The new 2016 calendars are out and ready for your holiday giving. They are \$12 and are available at several area businesses, including Western Ave Vet Care, AquaRealm, Locally Social Coffee, Morrison's, Green Mt. Books, Freight House Restaurant, Agway, The Danville Inn, Diamond Hill, Hastings Store, Joe's Pond Crafts, and from our volunteers at White's Markets on select Saturdays in Oct., Nov., and Dec. They will also be available at the Dime-a-Dip dinner and the Subaru event. Get yours today!



Did you know....Cats use their whiskers to figure out how wide an opening is and whether they will fit through it.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT The purpose of the Kingdom Animal Shelter is to facilitate the placement of stray and unwanted animals and pets in desirable homes; to establish and maintain an animal shelter and associated procedures that promote health, care and handling; and to prevent overpopulation and the prevention of cruelty to animals. The animals in our care, our guests, are never euthanized merely because we lack space or because the animal's stay with us has exceeded a predefined amount of time.

Please forward this to your friends, family, co-workers, or anyone interested in supporting our shelter. If you no longer wish to receive emails from Kingdom Animal Shelter, please hit "Reply" and change the subject line to UNSUBSCRIBE. Kingdom Animal Shelter respects your privacy and will never share or sell your email address or other information.