



CARING FOR YOUR NEW KITTEN

VACCINATION :

Kittens require a course of vaccinations ; one at 8 weeks, one at 12 weeks , and one at 16 weeks of age. The diseases this covers are ; *Feline Enteritis, Chlamydia, Calicivirus and Rhinotracheitis (Cat Flu), Feline Leukaemia Virus, and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (Feline AIDS)* All cats must receive a booster vaccination every 12 months to maintain immunity against these diseases.

WORMING :

Cats should be wormed against ; *Roundworm, Hookworm and Tapeworm*. Worms can cause slow growth, poor condition and stomach upsets. If severe enough, they can cause death in kittens through anaemia and intestinal blockages. Some worms can cause medical problems in children, if infected.

As kittens are often born with and are susceptible to worms they should be wormed every 2 weeks until 12 weeks of age, and then they should be routinely wormed with an allwormer (such as Milbemax, Popantel Paste, or Drontal) every 3 months for life. Allwormers can be purchased economically at your vet clinic. Alternatively, some new worming products for cats will also prevent heartworm and kill fleas (such as “ADVOCATE”), and they are given topically (ie: not a tablet) so are very easy to administer.

FEEDING :

This is important as kittens are very active and growing, so they need sufficient nutrients to remain healthy. Kittens need more calories, protein and minerals than adult cats do, so feeding your kitten an adult cat food isn't enough. Ready made, good quality kitten food is ideal as it contains the right amount of nutrients they need, and it saves you from fussing around in the kitchen. We have some excellent premium quality kitten foods here, such as Eukanuba, and Science Diet - please ask if you are unsure of the “right” type.

You should start to feed your kitten adult cat food when he or she ceases growing, this is usually around 10 to 12 months. It is not good for your kitten / cat if you feed them dog food as there are some specific nutrients they need, such as taurine, in their diet – otherwise they can develop severe medical problems.

GROOMING & FLEAS :

If you have chosen a breed that has long hair, you will be required to comb / brush them very regularly to prevent their fur from becoming tangled and matted. If the fur becomes matted it is extremely uncomfortable and sometimes painful for them, and the matted fur will need to be clipped off. This most often will need to involve a sedative or a general anaesthetic.

If you groom your kitten regularly when young they will often become accustomed to it, and it can make it easier for you to groom them when they are older. Bathing your kitten should be done if needed. They soon learn to clean themselves, but can still be bathed if dirty.

If your kitten has fleas, or you would like to prevent them, you need to use a product that is suitable for kittens as some insecticides can be poisonous to them at such a young age. We have excellent “Top Spot” applications (Frontline Plus and Advocate) that can be used safely on kittens. Some flea preparations can also treat worms as well, which is great news for all those cats out there that hate being given worming tablets!

DESEXING :

We can desex both male and female kittens from 5 and a half months of age, onwards. Desexing your cat is strongly recommended to help reduce the unwanted and stray cat population. Letting your female cat have a litter before desexing her will not make her a better pet, and you have several kittens to find good homes for – which can be very difficult. Desexing your male cat early can help prevent antisocial behaviour such as aggression, fighting and spraying urine in your house. This is of benefit to both you and your cat, as fighting is the main way that *Feline AIDS* is transmitted from cat to cat.

We are happy to help you with any queries you may have. Please come in or phone us on : 9300 2322.