

CHECK LIST: FOR A HEALTHY CAT



Congrats on your new pet! This welcome kit is a great reference for tips from [Hospital Name] on how to keep your kitty healthy and happy.



NECESSITIES

- Premium Grade Food
- Bowls - Ceramic or Stainless Steel for Food & Water (Cats are Prone to Plastic Allergies)
- Litter Box & Litter
- Break-away Cat collar
- ID Tag & Microchipping
- Toys
- Pet Carrier (Appropriate for Size)
- Stain Remover & Odor Eliminator (Do Not Use Ammonia)
- Flea Comb & Flea & Tick Control Products
- Toothbrush Kit & Dental Aids
- Bi-Yearly Exam with your Veterinarian



OTHER SUGGESTED ITEMS

- Cat Treats for Training and Play, with or without Catnip
- Air-Tight Food Container & Scoop
- Regular Grooming Program
- Cat Bed
- Low-dust Cat Litter
- Change or Scoop Litter Daily
- Books on Cat Care (breed specific)
- Litter Genie
- De-Shedding Tool
- Vertical Cat Tree



DAILY PET CHECK: FOR A HEALTHY CAT



MY PET

- Does not tire easily after moderate exercise. Does not have seizures or fainting episodes.
- Has a normal appetite, with no significant weight change. Does not vomit or regurgitate food.
- Has normal appearing bowel movements (firm, formed, mucus-free). Doesn't scoot on the floor or chew under the tail excessively.
- Has a full glossy coat with no missing hair, mats or excessive shedding. Doesn't scratch, lick or chew excessively.
- Has skin that is free of dry flakes, not greasy, and is odor-free. Is free from fleas, ticks or mites.
- Has a body free from lumps and bumps. Has ears that are clean and odor-free.
- Doesn't shake head or scratch at ears.
- Doesn't rub face and ears on the carpet after eating.
- Has eyes that are bright, clear and free of discharge. (Nose is free of discharge as well)
- Has normal hearing and reactions to the environment.
- Walks without stiffness, pain or difficulty.
- Has healthy looking feet and short nails (including dewclaws).
- Breathes normally, without straining or coughing.
- Has normal thirst and drinks the usual amount of water at the same frequency.
- Urinates in the usual amount and frequency; color is normal, no unusual odor.
- Has clean white teeth, free from plaque, tartar or bad breath.
- Has gums that are moist and pink with no redness, swelling or offensive odor.
- Has no offensive habits (biting, chewing, scratching, or spraying urine, or aggressive behavior).





BRANDS WE RECOMMEND

- Purina Pro Plan
- Hill's Science Diet
- Royal Canin

When choosing a food, don't be afraid of the words "by-products" and "meal." The old definition of by-products included beaks, feet, feathers, etc. The new definition does NOT consider these to be by-products and are NOT included in your pet's food. The new definition of by-products includes cleaned bodily organs such as liver, kidney, stomach, heart, and intestines, which all contain vital nutrients for the health of your pet. High-quality does not always equal high price.

CATS

For kittens, feed wet or dry food 3x daily until 3 months of age, then switch to 2x daily through adulthood. We do not recommend free-feeding in multi-cat households. Feed kitten formula until after spay/neuter. The transition should occur over 7-14 days.



FAQ: SPAYING & NEUTERING FOR CATS



Q Will spaying or neutering cause my pet to become overweight and lazy?

A Spaying or neutering your pet will not necessarily make your pet become overweight and lazy. Heredity, diet, and how much and what type of exercise has more influence on the weight and attitude of your pet than does the surgery.

Q Is spaying or neutering dangerous?

A There is always a risk while a patient is under general anesthesia, whether the patient is human or animal. Veterinary procedures are very similar to human medical procedures. The risk is very small in healthy animals; and we take extra precautions for your pet's comfort, safety, and recovery.

Q Should I wait until my pet has had a litter?

A Absolutely not! Studies show a moderately increased link to cancer in delayed or non-sterilized cats.

Q When is the best time to have my pet undergo this procedure?

A The best age for spaying and neutering is around 6 months of age. The first heat cycle in a female cat usually occurs around this time. Neutering your pet prevents many undesirable behavior patterns.



BENEFITS OF SPAYING

- Eliminates Heat Cycles
- Prevents Accidental Pregnancies
- Significantly Reduces Undesirable Behavior
- Prevents Uterine Infections & Other Common In Pets
- Significantly Reduces Mammary Tumors



BENEFITS OF NEUTERING

- Significantly Reduces Prostate & Testicular Disease or Cancer
- Reduces Undesirable Behavior
- Reduces Urine Odor In Male Cats



EMERGENCY CONTACTS: INFO



Trusty Vet

256-489-8387

6945 Hwy 72 W. Ste. A

Huntsville, AL

35806 www.trustyvet.com

hello@trustyvet.com

For emergencies outside of our business hours, please contact one of the following emergency hospitals.



Huntsville Veterinary Specialists and Emergency

256-715-8389

800 Dr. Joseph E. Lowrey Blvd.

Huntsville, AL 35801

www.hvsevet.com

Animal Emergency and Critical Care

256-533-7600

2112 Memorial Pkwy SW

Huntsville, AL 35801

www.animalercriticalcare.com



FELINE TIPS: THE CAT CARRIER



Many loving cat owners discover the hard way that a kitty who showers them with affection every day can turn into a snarling, scheming wildcat once it's time to visit the vet. Take a 4-month-old kitten, Schmoozer. Schmoozer firmly believes he is the master of his domain, and that includes deciding if and when he will go into his super deluxe kitty carrier. When it comes to a trip to the vet, Schmoozer has a very simple philosophy: "I am Cat; Cat does not belong in carrier." With that and many stories, trials and tribulations, we've developed the Schmoozer-tested solutions for winning the cat carrier war.



6 TIPS TO WINNING THE CAT CARRIER WAR

- 1 Leave the cat carrier in an open place.**
Hiding the carrier and then bringing it out signals to a clever cat that it's time to play David Copperfield. Schmoozer now casually strolls into and out of HIS carrier, even occasionally dragging one of his favorite, much-mangled toys into it—you know, to show it who's boss.
- 2 Do some "in-house" carrier training.**
Some cat parents feed their cat an occasional meal or treat inside the carrier, or play games, such as "fetch the catnip mousy" by tossing a favored toy in. Once their cat is inside, they gently close the door, reopening it in five minutes, and report that these trial runs make the real process less painful.
- 3 Place a towel or small blanket upon which your cat often sleeps inside the carrier.**
When it's time to put your cat in his carrier, wrap him in his special blanket and slide them both in. The familiar scent is soothing and might also help diminish those painful cries.
- 4 Try a different type of carrier.**
Many people swear by a carrier with a door in the top. That way, they can lift and lower their cat into the carrier more easily than through the side (front door).
- 5 Remove escape routes.**
Keep the carrier in a bathroom cupboard or small room. When it's time for a trip in the kitty taxi, kitty is carried into the bathroom or small room and the door is closed, reducing the number of cumbersome places to escape and hide.
- 6 If you have more than one cat, use separate carriers.**
Even kitties who sleep together and wash each other tend to prefer their own kitty taxi.



SHEDDING: TIPS TO REDUCE SHEDDING



We all love our pets, but we do not love the fur they leave all over our homes and on us. Here are some tips to reduce shedding:

BATHING & GROOMING

Brush your pet regularly. Regular brushing reduces shedding, helps to reduce the undercoat without damaging the top-coat, and helps to bring out the pet's natural oils, promoting healthy skin and a shiny topcoat. Start brushing at a very young age to get your pet used to the sensation.

Bathe your pet as needed with an oatmeal-based shampoo. Cats benefit from bathing and grooming. A clean pet gets petted more and therefore a clean pet is a happy pet.

DIET

Provide a high-quality diet—look for foods that contain vitamins E and C (tocopherals and ascorbic acid) as a preservative rather than BHT, BHA, and ethoxyquin.

SUPPLEMENTS

Supplements you give to your animal should be tailored to them. Please consult with your Heartfelt veterinarian..



VACCINES: KITTEN CARE SCHEDULE



Please note not all vaccines are for all pets. Your veterinarian will discuss with you the vaccinations that are right for your pet and its lifestyle. In addition to the schedule below, we recommend year-round flea and tick prevention.

8 WEEKS	12 WEEKS	16 WEEKS	5-6 MONTHS	1+ YEAR
Comprehensive Examination	Comprehensive Examination	Comprehensive Examination	Spay or Neuter Procedure	Comprehensive Examination
1st FVRCP Vaccine (Feline Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, & Panleukopenia)	2nd FVRCP Vaccine (Feline Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, & Panleukopenia)	3rd FVRCP Vaccine (Feline Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, & Panleukopenia)	ID/ Microchip	Rabies Vaccine
Deworming Treatment	1st FeLV Vaccine (Feline Leukemia)	Rabies Vaccine 2nd FeLV Vaccine (Feline Leukemia)	Flea/Tick Preventative	FVRCP (Feline Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, & Panleukopenia)
Consider Pet Health Insurance & Preventive Plan	Deworming Treatment	Intestinal Parasite Screen	Pre-operative lab work	FeLV Vaccine (Feline Leukemia)- only if needed
Flea/Tick Preventative	Flea/Tick Preventative	Flea/Tick Preventative		Flea/Tick Preventative
FIV/Feline Leukemia Test	Rabies Vaccine			Routine Deworming Treatment
				Organ Function Screening



HOME HAZARDS: BE MINDFUL OF THESE



GENERAL HOME HAZARDS

Plants*	Lead	Fireplaces
Drugs, Medicine, Vitamins	Wax	Fire Pits & Grills
Fabric Softener	Cotton Swabs	Compost
Mothballs	Pins, Needles, Tacks Paper Clips	Fertilizers & Mulch
Bleach	Rubber Bands	Algae
Disinfectants, Detergents, & Cleaning Products	Hair Pins & Fasteners	Bodies of Water
Solvents & Removers	Twists & Ties	Sinks & Tubs
Potpourri	String, Yarn, Dental Floss	Washers & Dryers
Tobacco Products	Buttons	Toilets
Lighter Fluid	Coins	Doors & Windows
Gasoline	Small Balls/Toys	Balconies
Oil & Antifreeze/Coolant	Batteries	Fences & Gates
De-icing Salts	Electric Cords	Branches & Sticks
Pesticides, Insect or Rodent Traps & Bait	Glass & Sharp Objects	



HARMFUL FOODS

Avocados	Grapes & Raisins	Moldy/Spoiled Foods
Chocolate	Macadamia Nuts	Fatty Foods
Coffee	Tea Leaves	Raw Yeast Doug
Onions	Alcohol	Gum, Candies, & Foods
Garlic	Salt	Sweetened with Xylitol

For more information:

www.asPCA.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control/toxic-and-non-toxic-plants



HAZARDS: PLANTS



PLANT HAZARDS

Aloe	Corn Flower Crocus	Ferns (Most Forms)	Marble Queen	Pokeweed
Amaryllis	Castor Bean	Gladiolas	Morning Glory	Poppy
Andromeda Japonica	Caladium	Golden Pothos	Mother-In-Law	Potato
Avocado	Ceriman	Golden Glow	Mountain Laurel	Red Emerald
Asparagus Fern	Clematis	Heavenly Bamboo	Mistletoe	Rhododendron
Australian Nut	Cordatum	Honeysuckle	Monkshood	Ribbon Plant
Autumn Crocus	Corn Plant	Hurricane Plant	Mushrooms	Rhubarb
Azalea	Cycads	Hyacinth	Narcissus	Sage Palm
Anemone	Cyclamen	Hydrangea	Nephtysis	Satin Pothos
Apricot	Cactus	Henbane	Nightshade	Scheffera
Arrow Grass	Cherry (Most Forms)	Hemlock	Nutmeg	Striped Dracaena
Buttercup	Chrysanthemum	Horse Chestnut	Oleander	Sweetheart Ivy
Belladonna	Daphne	Iris	Panda	Scotch Broom
Bird of Paradise	Daffodil	Ivy (Most Forms)	Philodendron	Skunk Cabbage
Bittersweet	Delphinium	Jerusalem Cherry	Poison Hemlock	Star Of Bethlehem
Black Locust	Dieffenbachia	Jimson Weed	Precatory Bean	Sweet Pea
Burning Bush	Dumbcane	Jack In The Pulpit	Privet	Tulip
Buckeye	Euonymus	Japanese Plum	Peach	Tobacco
Buddhist Pine	Eucalyptus	Java Beans	Pear	Tomato
Balsam	Elephant Ears	Jonquil	Peony	Virginia Creeper
Baneberry	Fiddle Leaf Philodendron	Kalanchoe	Periwinkle	Water Hemlock
Black-Eyed Susan	Flax	Lantana	Pimpernel	Wisteria
Bleeding Heart	Four O-Clock	Lilies (Most Forms)	Poinsettia	Wild Barley
Bloodroot	Foxglove	Lupine	Poison Ivy	Yew
Boxwood		Locoweed	Poison Oak	

For more information:

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VALENTINE'S DAY

Many types of flowers and plants found in bouquets are harmful to dogs and cats if they are ingested (see our list of hazardous plants).

Chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactivity, abnormal heart rhythm, seizures, and in severe cases chocolate poisoning can be fatal (see our list of harmful foods).

EASTER

Fake grass may look appetizing to your pets, but it could cause them to choke or obstruct their intestines if ingested.

Small toys and plastic Easter eggs can cause your pet to choke or damage their intestinal tract.

Chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactivity, abnormal heart rhythm, seizures, and in severe cases chocolate poisoning can be fatal. Xylitol (artificial sweetener) in candy and gum is toxic to your pet (see our list of harmful foods).

4TH OF JULY

Fireworks can scare your pets, making them highly nervous or even run off. Fireworks can also cause serious injuries if detonated near your pet. If ingested, they are toxic.

With more people and food around during picnics and parties, be mindful of food accessible to your pet (see our list of harmful foods).

HALLOWEEN

Repeatedly opening doors for trick-or-treaters can increase the chances of your pet running out. If your pet likes to run out or is not friendly to other people, consider crating or keeping them in a secure area.

Pets are naturally curious and may be attracted to lights and flames. Dogs and cats could get burned on candles or knock them over and cause a fire.

Chocolate can cause vomiting, diarrhea, hyperactivity, abnormal heart rhythm, seizures, and in severe cases chocolate poisoning can be fatal. Xylitol (artificial sweetener) in candy, gum and mints is toxic to your pet (see our list of harmful foods).

THANKSGIVING

Animal bones, especially turkey, chicken, and other small animals, are very different from the large bones you find in the pet store. These small bones splinter easily and can cause serious internal damage if swallowed. Never give them to your pet.

Your pet will most likely become curious when they smell something cooking. Keep an eye on hot containers so that your pet does not tip them over and get burned.

There are many foods that are dangerous to your pet (see our list of harmful foods).





CHRISTMAS

Holiday plants like poinsettia, holly, lilies and mistletoe are all toxic to dogs and cats. (see our list of harmful plants).

Ribbons may look adorable on your pet but placing them around your pet's neck may cause them to choke. If swallowed, your pet could choke, or it could cause internal trauma.

Antique bubbling lights are attractive decorations, but may contain methylene chloride, which is a highly toxic chemical.

Fire salts contain chemicals that could be harmful to your pets.

Angel hair is a form of spun glass and can be irritating to the eyes and skin and could cause intestinal obstruction if eaten.

Christmas tree water containing preservatives or stagnant water could result in stomach upset if ingested. Styrofoam can cause your pets to choke if swallowed.

Ornaments can look like toys to your pet, but they can cause serious injury, especially if your pet breaks or swallows them.

Tinsel can cause choking or internal trauma if swallowed.

Pets are naturally curious and may be attracted to lights and flames. Dogs and cats could get burned on candles or knock them over and cause a fire.

Your pet will most likely become curious when they smell something cooking or baking. Keep an eye on hot containers so that your pet does not tip them over and get burned.

There are many foods that are dangerous to your pet (see our list of harmful foods).

NEW YEAR'S EVE

Balloons and confetti can cause your pet to choke or obstruct their intestines if ingested. Keep an eye on your pets when they're around these items or move them to an area that is not decorated.

New Year's Eve can be a loud holiday. Unfortunately, loud noises can frighten pets and cause them to be overly nervous or run off. Keep your pets away from noise makers, loud music and other sounds that startle them.

Watch your pets around party foods and alcoholic beverages, that are often left unattended. There are many foods that are dangerous to your pet (see our list of harmful foods).



EARLY DETECTION: URINARY TRACT DISEASE



If you are a cat owner, it is important that you are aware of this potentially life-threatening condition. Cats are prone to urinary tract disease, especially at times of stress.

Symptoms include:

- Straining to urinate
- Increased frequency of urination
- Crying and licking at genitals
- Vomiting and loss of appetite

In most cases this is a non-bacterial cystitis, like interstitial cystitis in women. In some cases, however, tiny stones may form in the bladder. Female cats are usually able to pass these stones, but males are unable to pass them due to their anatomy. The urine flow becomes blocked, causing the bladder to continue to fill with urine, which backs up to the kidneys. This causes the cat severe pain, increase in kidney levels, and will cause death if left untreated.

It is critical for any male cat showing these signs to see a veterinarian IMMEDIATELY. This is an EMERGENCY.

Female cats showing these signs should also be seen by a veterinarian, but generally, this is not a life-threatening situation for them.

Overweight indoor male cats on all dry food diets have the highest incidence of this condition.





Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis

This virus causes upper respiratory tract infection that is easily transmitted from cat to cat, so vaccination is imperative if your pet will come in contact with other cats. Signs may take the form of moderate fever, loss of appetite, sneezing, and/or eye and nasal discharges. Kittens are particularly affected, but this disease can be dangerous in any unprotected cat, as effective treatment is limited. Even if a cat recovers, it can remain a carrier for life.

Feline Calicivirus

This virus is a major cause of upper respiratory tract infection. Widespread and highly contagious, its signs include fever, ulcers and blisters on the tongue, and pneumonia that can range from mild to severe. Treatment of feline calicivirus can be difficult. Even a recovered cat can continue to infect other animals, as well as experience chronic sneezing, runny eyes, and severe gum disease. Vaccination is very important.

Feline Panleukopenia

Also known as feline distemper, feline panleukopenia is caused by a highly resistant virus that can survive up to 1 year outside a cat's body. Most cats will be exposed to it at some point, and infection rates in unprotected cats can run as high as 90% to 100%, making vaccination against this potentially fatal disease essential. Signs include listlessness, diarrhea, vomiting, severe dehydration, fever and death. The vaccine is very effective in preventing the disease, but treatment is difficult and expensive.

Rabies

This incurable disease affects the central nervous system of almost all mammals, including humans. It spreads through contact with the saliva of infected animals through bites or any break in the skin. Many municipalities require that cats receive regular rabies vaccinations.



IMPORTANT TESTS: FOR YOUR CAT



Intestinal Parasite Exam

Cats may carry internal parasites that are not often evident in the stool. A sample once or twice yearly, based on exposure, will allow us to test for parasites and treat appropriately.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus/Feline Leukemia Virus

FeLV infection can result in many serious health problems—from cancers such as leukemia to a wide range of secondary infections. In fact, FeLV is the leading cause of death from infectious disease in North American cats. After initial exposure, a cat may show no signs for months or years.

Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) Transmission occurs from exposure to the saliva, urine, feces and milk of infected cats. Cat to cat transfer of virus may occur from a bite wound, during mutual grooming, and rarely through shared litter boxes and feeding dishes. An infected mother may also transfer virus to her kittens.

Testing is available to determine the FeLV status of your cat. In most cases a quick in-house ELISA (enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay) test will determine the presence of the virus. In some cases, the doctor will order an IFA (indirect immunofluorescent antibody assay) for a more complicated case.

Keeping a cat indoors will eliminate the possibility of exposure but for those cats that go outside an effective vaccine is available. If your cat is likely to come in contact with infected cats, vaccination against this potentially fatal disease is highly recommended. This disease is not contagious to humans.

For more information about these tests, visit: www.vet.cornell.edu/fhc

