



Glenway Animal Hospital
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Frequently Asked Kitten Questions

Congratulations on the arrival of your new kitten! The doctors and staff of Glenway Animal Hospital are committed to making sure that your newest family member lives a healthy, happy and long life. To help you and your kitten to start out on the right foot (and paw ☺) we've put together a list of some frequently asked questions and their corresponding answers. This list is not all-inclusive so if you have additional questions please don't hesitate to contact us!

What should I feed my new kitten?

You get what you pay for when it comes to pet food. Science Diet and Eukanuba are generally recognized as the best brands on the market but they're also the most expensive. As a general rule of thumb you should feed your kitten the most expensive food that will fit into your budget.

How much and how often should I feed my kitten?

Feed your kitten 2/3 of the amount suggested on the kitten food bag. If this amount seems inappropriate please call us. Your kitten is an individual and may have unique needs.

How do I litter box train my kitten?

Fortunately kittens usually will use a litter box without being trained to do so, but there are a few things you can do to encourage your cat to always use the litter box. These include:

- Don't change types of litter unless you call us first. Lack of consistency in litter is one of the most common causes of inappropriate elimination.
- You need to provide a litter box for each cat in the house plus one spare. For example, if you have three cats you should have four litter boxes.
- Clean the litter boxes frequently. If a box is too dirty your cat might not use it.

What should I do if I have an emergency?

If an emergency arises, call us first at 662-0224. Our office is open from 7 AM to 7 PM Monday through Friday, and from 8 AM to 12 Noon on Saturday. If we are not available you will be directed to call The Cincinnati Animal Referral and Emergency (CARE) Center at 530-0911. The CARE Center is open twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week. Because it is located in Blue Ash we recommend that you take a test drive to the CARE Center so if there is an emergency you are already familiar with the location.

What are Feline Leukemia and Feline Aids and how do I prevent my kitten from catching them?

Feline Leukemia and Feline Aids are fatal viruses that are passed between cats, usually through bite wounds. Kittens can catch these viruses from their mother too. We can protect your kitten from Feline Leukemia by vaccinating him. A new vaccine for Feline Aids has just been developed and soon we may be able to vaccinate our patients against this deadly disease too. It is important to test cats to be sure they are negative for Feline Leukemia and Feline Aids before introducing them to another cat.

How many shots will my kitten need in the first year?

Currently kittens are given a series of three FVR-CCP vaccinations during their first year. Rabies vaccinations can be given after twelve weeks of age and Hamilton County Law requires that puppies and kittens be vaccinated for Rabies before they are six months old. Also, if your cat is going to be an inside/outside cat your kitten needs to receive two vaccinations to protect against Feline Leukemia.

How do I know if my kitten has worms?

There are usually no visual signs of parasite infections, so you will need to bring in a fecal sample for us to examine under a microscope. Your kitten needs to have two negative worm screens before he can be considered worm free. This is an important test to perform because some of the worms that cats carry can be passed to people. Adult cats also need to be checked for worms annually.

Is there anything I can do to prevent fleas?

Some cats get fleas and some don't. Some clients prefer to prevent their cats from getting fleas while others prefer to take a "wait and see" approach. Inside cats are usually not at risk of catching fleas. If you would like to prevent fleas there are medications that can help. Check out our spring 2002 "Flea Guidelines" letter for more details.

When should I have my cat spayed or neutered?

It is best to schedule these surgeries just before your kitten turns six months old. Female cats go into heat at around six months of age and it is best to have their surgery done *before* they go into heat. This decreases their chance of developing mammary cancer later on, and eliminates the possibility of unwanted kittens.

Should I let my cat go outside?

Cats that are allowed to go outside have more health problems and usually a shorter lifespan than cats that are kept exclusively indoors. It is also more expensive to take care of outside cats due to the need for more vaccinations and flea prevention. If you decide to let your cat go outside please let us know so that we can make sure he is properly vaccinated.

What are microchips?

Microchips are a form of permanent identification for your kitten. The chip itself is the size of a grain of rice and is placed under the skin above the cat's shoulders. Once the chip is in place a scanner can be used to determine your cat's ID number. More and more humane societies, veterinary offices, and most research labs scan new cats so if your cat should get lost or stolen a microchip may help to get your pet safely home.

Is there such a thing as health insurance for cats?

There are several companies that offer pet health insurance, but because the concept is relatively new we advise a "buyer beware" attitude. The policies are different than human health insurance and, in fact, are more like car insurance since cats are legally considered to be property. Two companies that currently offer pet health insurance are:

- Veterinary Pet Insurance, 1-800-USA-PETS, www.petinsurance.com
- Pet Care Pet Insurance Programs, 1-866-275-PETS, www.petcareinsurance.com

Once again congratulations on the arrival of your newest family member! If all of your questions have not been answered please call us at **662-0224**. Our office is open:

Monday through Friday 7 AM to 6 PM
Select Saturdays 8 AM to 12 Noon

You can also reach us through our email address:

Glenwaypetdocs@fuse.net