



## Valley Veterinary Group Kitten Information Sheet

### Vaccination

Cats are vaccinated for feline flu, enteritis and leukemia. These can cause serious illness in unvaccinated cats, and in many cases they can be life threatening.

Kittens should be vaccinated from 9 weeks of age with a second one 3-4 weeks later. They are not protected until 4 weeks after the second vaccination, so must be kept inside until at least after this.

### Worming and Fleas

Worms are passed to kittens through the milk from their mother. Due to this they should be wormed regularly. It is recommended that kittens are wormed every 2 weeks until they are 12 weeks old then after this every 3 months as an adult cat. (Or more frequently in certain circumstances i.e. if they are big mousers!).

The two kinds of worm that cats get are round worm and tape worm. (Most veterinary prescribed wormers are active against both of these - check with your vet if you are unsure).

You should be cautious when buying wormers and flea treatment from places other than a veterinary practice. Most products bought from a veterinary practice are prescription medication which means they are regulated, have stringent safety tests and have proven to be effective. Many of the shop bought wormers are ineffective and do not have the same stringent safety tests. In addition to that, many flea preparations bought in the supermarket can be **extremely toxic to cats!**

Flea treatment should be applied every 4 weeks depending on the product used. Cats can pick up fleas from the grass or other animals, so it is important to treat all the cats and dogs in the house. Remember PREVENTION is always preferable to CURE where fleas are concerned! If your cat or dog gets fleas it can be a costly exercise to de-flea your house too as the fleas will live in your nice warm house happily and multiply quickly!

### Argghhh!!!...The cost of this!!!

Here at Valley Veterinary Group we **do** understand that doing your cat's preventative health care "properly" is a reasonably costly exercise so we have put together our **HEALTHY PET CLUB** that allows you to spread the cost of your cat's yearly vaccinations, his/her quarterly worming and monthly flea protection over 12 months. With this plan there is a **HUGE** saving in the cost of all these, and you also get a **free** health check halfway through the year (normal cost £25). The VIP Plan is a monthly direct debit. The plan also gives you the great benefit of saving **20% of neutering, 15% for all other products and services provided, includes microchip and free nail clipping**. Please ask for a leaflet.

### Neutering

#### Females - Spaying (Ovariohysterectomy)

This can be done from 4 months of age. This is in line with the Cats Protection League advice regarding early neutering. There are several advantages of neutering your female cat, not least of which is the prevention of unwanted litters of kittens. It will also prevent potentially life threatening womb infections, cancers of the reproductive tract and it will greatly reduce the risk of mammary cancers later in life.

#### Males – Castration

This can be done from 4 months of age (Again as recommended by the CPL)

Reasons to castrate

- No unwanted pregnancies.
- Reduces fighting with other cats, therefore reducing risk of diseases such as FIV (feline equivalent of HIV).
- Reduces the risk of wandering away from home/sexual behavior

- Reduces likelihood of your cat spraying to mark his territory.
- Removes the risk of testicular cancer.

### **Microchipping**

The microchip is a tiny chip with a number that is unique to your cat. It is implanted under the skin. When the animal is scanned this number comes up on the scanner. The owner's name and contact details are stored on a national database. Whenever any vet/rescue centre/police station etc. is presented with a stray animal, the animal will always be scanned for a microchip. The database is contacted and the owners can be located.

### **Insurance**

It is recommended that you insure your cat as sometimes an illness or injury can be very expensive to treat and if your pet is insured it takes the worry of cost out of the choice of treatment. When considering insurance important points to consider are:

- The level of "excess", i.e. how much you have to pay for any claim, before the insurance company starts to contribute.
- How long each condition is covered for. This is either for one year or lifelong or can be up to a certain amount of money per condition. For example a dog with an allergy will require lifelong treatment and if the policy only covers each condition for 1 year then this condition will only be covered during the 1<sup>st</sup> year and then after this, even though your pet is still insured for other conditions, you will need to pay ongoing costs for the allergy. If you change insurance company at this point, the new company will view the allergy as "pre-existing" and not cover it.
- Know what is covered and what is not covered.
- We recommend **MiPetCover** insurance as we feel they provide a good service to the owner and their pet at a reasonable cost.
- We can provide your kitten with **4 WEEKS FREE** insurance.

### **Diet**

Kittens should be fed good quality kitten food as it is specially formulated for growing the cat. Dried food is better for their teeth. Be careful not to over feed your cat and remember cat treats tend to have a lot of calories in them! It is not healthy for a pet to be overweight, it increases the strain on their joints (so increasing the risk of arthritis when they are older), it increases strain on the heart as well as increasing the risk of the cat developing diabetes. It is also harder to then get a cat to lose weight!!

If you are concerned about your cat's weight please speak to a vet or a nurse.

Valley Veterinary Group recommends the MiPet Food range because it is scientifically formulated for cats during their different life stages - kitten, neutered cat to older cat. It has nutrients that protect and support their digestive tract, vitamins to support the skin and nutrients that promote oral health by minimising tartar formation on teeth.

### **Teeth**

You can brush your cat's teeth!

Animal's teeth over time build up plaque and tartar which give rise to gum disease, the same as in people. As they get older this increases and they often require a dental procedure. This involves a general anesthetic to allow for the teeth to be scaled and polished (or extracted if they are very bad). To maintain healthier teeth for longer it is recommended to brush teeth daily using cat toothpaste (you can't use human toothpaste as they can't spit out the foam!). Start using a finger brush and work up to a tooth brush. Cats are more likely to be tolerant of this if you start at a young age (It can be difficult to do in cats!).