

# Pet Care Advice

## New Kitten

### FEEDING YOUR KITTEN

A healthy diet, properly balanced in nutrients, is essential for the optimum growth and development of your kitten. The best way to achieve this is to feed an all in one diet.

We stock the Hills diets which are formulated to meet the needs of cats during all stages of their life and development. Whilst all nutrient requirements for protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals are met, special attention has been paid to avoid unnecessarily high levels of these nutrients, particularly those high may be harmful in large amounts. These diets should not be supplemented as such additions may upset the nutritional balance.

Hills Vet Essentials Kitten should be fed from weaning until 12 months. At this time the diet should be changed to Hills Vet Essential Young Cat.



### VACCINATIONS

**The first vaccination is given from 9 weeks of age.** This protects against feline viral infectious respiratory disease (also called cat flu), feline panleucopaenia (or enteritis) and feline leukaemia, Feline Leukaemia, and Chlamydia. **A second vaccination is given 3–4 weeks later.** Afterwards your kitten should be kept indoors, away from other cats unless they are vaccinated, for a further 2 weeks. After this time, they can be allowed outside.

You will be given a certificate of vaccination once this primary vaccination course has been completed.

As all these diseases are still very common, it is important that your cat receives a regular yearly booster to maintain adequate protection. We will send you an annual booster reminder.

### MICROCHIPPING

This involves injecting a tiny microchip under the skin on the back of the neck. This chip remains there for life and carries a number, unique to your kitten. It is registered with Petlog and other pet databases so that if your kitten becomes lost he/she can be reunited with you as soon as possible. Unlike a collar or disc, the chip can never be lost. Your kitten may be going outside from 14 weeks old and we strongly recommend that a microchip is inserted at the second vaccination appointment.

### WORMS

There are two types of worms in cats, which need to be controlled:

**ROUNDWORMS** - These are white worms that look like pieces of string. The main roundworm of concern is *Toxocara cati*. Roundworm eggs are microscopic and cannot be seen although they can be passed into the environment via faeces, where they can pass worms onto other cats or be passed by mice and voles caught as prey. Roundworms can remain active in the soil for months if not cleared up and can contaminate your home and garden.

**TAPEWORMS** - If a cat has tapeworms, pale rice grain sized segments or flat ribbon shaped pieces may be seen moving in the faeces or around the cat's anus. Often cats pick up tapeworm from swallowing fleas whilst grooming.

Both types of worms are easily picked up by all cats and especially those that hunt as they are carried by their prey. For example, mice often contain the infective larval stages.

**ROUNDWORM & TAPEWORM CONTROL:** Kittens should be wormed at the time of their first vaccination and again at their second vaccination. Worming is then repeated at 4, 5, and 6 months of age and then every 3 months for life. We recommend **Milpro Kitten** and once your kitten is 6 months old, **Milpro Adult** or **Broadline** tablets can be used. These can both be concealed in food and usually have no side effects.

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## FLEAS

Like all insects, fleas lay eggs which cause most of the problem. Even if your pet has just one flea, each female flea can lay up to 2000 eggs. These drop off your kitten into carpets, upholstery and bedding. The eggs need warmth to hatch and so indoors, fleas will breed all year round. After forming pupae (cocoons), they can lie dormant for up to a year. When the pupae sense the movement and warmth of pets or people, the fleas emerge and are ready to feed.

### - *Apply treatment monthly to prevent and kill adult fleas*

We recommend **Broadline**. These 'spot on' treatments are easily applied to the skin at the back of the neck and are very effective. They kill any existing fleas within 24 hours, and do not contain organophosphates. One application will protect against fleas for 4 weeks. **Broadline** also includes round worm treatment.

### - *Where adult fleas have been present treat your home to kill flea larvae*

As well as treating your pet for fleas, vacuuming followed by environmental spraying with a **specialised household spray** is often required to break the life cycle of the flea. Our staff can recommend products.

## NEUTERING

Male kittens are castrated from 6 months of age before they start developing habits such as urine marking round the house.

On sexual maturity female kittens come in to heat every 3 weeks and become pregnant very easily. Therefore, we advise spaying at 5 - 6 months of age.

Our vets carry out both of these surgical procedures here in our fully equipped operating suite. The anaesthetic and recovery is carefully monitored by trained nurses. Your cat would normally be able to go home the same day.

Neutering can be done with 15% discount providing your pet has been vaccinated at Avonvale or is registered on our New Kitten Programme and is included at no extra charge with JUNIOR Pet Club membership.

## SOCIALISATION AND TRAINING

Ideally have one room with all resources such as a bed, water, food, litter tray, scratch post and Feliway. The Feliway plug in should be turned on 24 hours before introducing the new kitten. Allow the kitten to adjust to it's new surroundings as this helps build their confidence before investigation other rooms. Continue to use the Feliway plug in for at least a month whilst the kitten is settling in. The earlier you can introduce your kitten to new experiences and handling the better. Cats' behaviour can be influenced by stress so if you are having any issues with litter tray use, spraying or scratching please don't hesitate to call your Kitten Care Nurse at our surgery for tips and advice.

### **Gentle Handling**

Head	Ears	Tail	Paws/Legs/Belly
Neck	Mouth	Being lifted	Collar/harness/lead

### **Meeting people**

Children	Babies /Prams	Uniforms/boots	Men/women
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### **Meeting Other Animals**

Dogs	Wildlife / Birds	Other cats	Rabbits /Guinea Pigs
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### **Everyday Routine**

Household equipment sounds	Litter Tray	Cat Basket	Travelling in the car
Scratching surfaces	Cat Flap	Groups of people	Visiting the Vet Centre