

OCEAN COUNTY VETERINARY
HOSPITAL GROUP



Caring for the Cat
You Love

Ocean County Veterinary Hospital

838 River Avenue
Lakewood, NJ 08701
Phone: 732-363-7202
www.ocvh.com

Bridge Veterinary Hospital

2700 Bridge Avenue
Point Pleasant, NJ 08742

Fischer Veterinary Hospital

877 Fischer Boulevard
Toms River, NJ 08753

New Prospect Veterinary Hospital

165 S. New Prospect Road
Jackson, NJ 08527



Welcome!

Dear New Cat Owner,

Congratulations on the new addition to your family! We are excited to be part of what will surely be many wonderful and enjoyable years ahead, and we would like to start your kitten on a lifetime program of good health.

Our doctors and staff are pleased to provide you with this guide detailing the most current and optimum recommendations for your new kitten. Excellent preventative medicine through regularly scheduled examinations and vaccinations along with proper nutrition and behavior education can help foster a healthy and special bond between you and your new kitten. It is also an opportune time to address any questions or concerns that may arise as your kitten enters different life stages. Veterinary examinations are one of the most valuable investments you can make towards your kitten's health and happiness.

It is our hope that you will find this booklet very helpful, and that it will serve as a tool for your family for many years to come. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions about the information provided.

We welcome you and your new kitten to the family here at Ocean County Veterinary Hospital Group. We wish you the very best in the years to come.

Sincerely,

The Doctors and Staff of Ocean County Veterinary Hospital Group

Caring for the Pets You Love



OUR VETERINARIANS



DR. WARREN BRIGGS received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 1992 from the University of Guelph, Canada.



DR. LAURIE PEARLMAN received her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 2003 from Iowa State University.



DR. BILLY DANOWITZ received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 2003 from Virginia-Maryland Regional College of Veterinary Medicine.



DR. LORRI MITCHELL received her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 1997 from the University of Prince Edward Island, Canada.



DR. JENNA KOENIGSTEIN received her Veterinary Medicine Doctorate in 2012 from Tufts University Cummings School.



DR. ZACH WEINER received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 2006 from the Tufts University Veterinary School.



DR. ERICA IAQUINTO received her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 2003 from Texas A&M University.



DR. ROSS GOTTLIEB received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 2015 from Ohio State College of Veterinary Medicine.



DR. PAUL CRAWFORD received his Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 2014 from St. Georges School of Veterinary Medicine.



DR. CHRISTINA MARTINS received her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 2014 University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine.



DR. CORI BLAIR received her Doctorate of Veterinary Medicine in 2015 from Auburn University College of Veterinary Medicine.

Ocean County Veterinary Hospital has been caring for pets in the Monmouth/Ocean County area for over 50 years. In 2006, we opened our first affiliate facility in Toms River, Fischer Veterinary Hospital. In 2012, we opened our second affiliate facility in Jackson, New Prospect Veterinary Hospital and in 2015 we opened our 3rd affiliate facility in Point Pleasant, Bridge Veterinary Hospital . OCVH, FVH, NPVH and BVH offer a wide array of services for companion animals in modern and clean facilities. Although some services may not currently be available at all of our locations, your kitten will receive the same personal care at all of our hospitals. We are committed to a higher standard of care, constantly integrating new technologies and proven treatments into our practice. But most important, we provide each pet and owner with the individual attention they deserve.

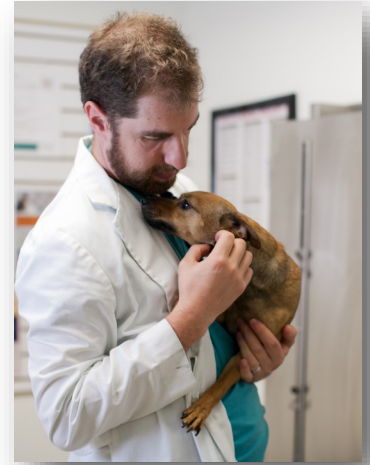
Our large staff of doctors has a variety of interests including internal medicine, surgery, dentistry, ophthalmology, cardiology, ultrasonography, and the care of exotic pets. This diverse staff of doctors enables us to consult with each other about your pet's health and provide a higher quality of care at no extra cost to you.

About OCVH GROUP

Office Care

At every visit, your pet will receive a complete physical examination. During your appointment the doctor will inform you about all your pet's healthcare needs and can provide:

- Wellness evaluations and preventative care
- Vaccinations that are appropriate for your pet's age and lifestyle
- Health profiles specifically tailored to puppies, kittens or senior pets
- Post-purchase/Post-adoption examinations of newly acquired pets
- Parasite control (fleas, ticks, worms, etc.)
- Treatment for acute illness or injury
- Care and monitoring of chronic conditions
- Nutritional advice
- Prescription medications
- Behavioral counseling
- Referral to Board-Certified Specialists when uncommon procedures are required
- Humane and compassionate end of life services



Laboratory & Diagnostic Testing

The veterinarians at OCEAN COUNTY VETERINARY HOSPITAL GROUP can perform a wide array of diagnostic tests to quickly assess your pet's health and determine what therapy is required. These include:

- Blood tests performed on premises or at an accredited lab with rapid turnaround time
- Ultrasound examinations of the chest and abdomen (OCVH)
- Telemedicine consultations with Board Certified Specialists
- Endoscopy (OCVH)
- X-rays
- Electrocardiograms
- Blood pressure screening
- Glaucoma screening
- Microscopic examinations of skin, hair, etc.
- Fecal examinations for parasites

Hospitalization at OCVH

If your pet needs to be hospitalized we will work as a team to provide the special attention your pet deserves. Your pet's comfort and recovery will be top priority with our competent doctors and staff.

- Inpatient examinations, evaluations and diagnostics
- Emergency and critical care
- IV fluid therapy
- Oxygen therapy
- Special feeding and nutrition
- Doctor supervised nursing care



About OCVH GROUP

Surgery & Dentistry at OCVH

Our doctors are qualified to perform a wide range of surgical and dental procedures in modern facilities. Services provided include:

- Sedation and Anesthesia
- State of the Art Anesthetic Monitoring
- Spaying and Neutering
- Laparoscopic Spaying and Neutering
- Obstetrics
- Soft Tissue and Orthopedic Surgery
- Laparoscopy
- Endoscopy
- Biopsies
- Routine Dental Cleaning
- Digital Dental X-rays
- Tooth Extractions and Oral Surgery
- Pre and Post-Operative Pain Management



Therapy at OCVH



- Laser therapy—Advanced pain relief, drug and surgery free

Boarding & Grooming at OCVH

- Supervised boarding for pets that need a home away from home
- Professional grooming to keep your pet looking and feeling great
- Veterinarian-supervised sedation

To learn more about these recommendations, please refer to the Vaccinations section.

Intestinal parasites, or “worms”, are common in kittens and also in adult cats that spend time

Recommended Lifetime Health Plan

6 Weeks of age

- Complete physical examination
- FeRCP vaccination
- Fecal analysis
- Deworming
- Grooming and bathing
- Oral care and brushing teeth

8 weeks of age

- Ear and skin care
- Complete physical examination
- FeRCP vaccine booster
- Fecal analysis
- Deworming
- Licensing

12 weeks of age

- Complete physical examination
- Fecal analysis
- FeRCP vaccine booster
- FeLV / FIV blood test
- FeLV vaccine
- Begin flea and tick preventative

16 weeks of age

- Complete physical examination
- FeRCP vaccine booster
- FeLV vaccine booster
- Rabies vaccine (1 year)
- Fecal analysis

4 to 6 months of age

- Pre-surgical physical examination
- Pre-surgical blood test
- Spaying or neutering

Remember:

- Regular Physical Examinations
- Vaccines
- Nutrition
- Parasites, flea and tick control
- Grooming and bathing
- Oral care and brushing teeth
- Spay or neuter decision
- Declawing decision (ideally 2-6 months)
- Blood testing and panels
- Feline Leukemia and Feline AIDS
- Licensing



Always transport your kitten in a carrier when out of the home.

Recommended Lifetime Health Plan

One Year to Four Years of Age

- Annual physical examination
- FeRCP vaccine
- FeLV vaccine (depending on risk)
- Rabies vaccine (1-year)
- Fecal analysis
- Early detection profile (annually starting at 2 years of age)



Five Years and Beyond of Age

- Annual physical examination
- FeRCP vaccine
- FeLV vaccine (depending on risk)
- Rabies vaccine (1-year)
- Feline health screen

A feline health screen includes a CBC, biochemistry profile, thyroid level and urinalysis. This profile is recommended at each annual examination starting at 5 years, but may be performed at any age to establish a baseline of information.

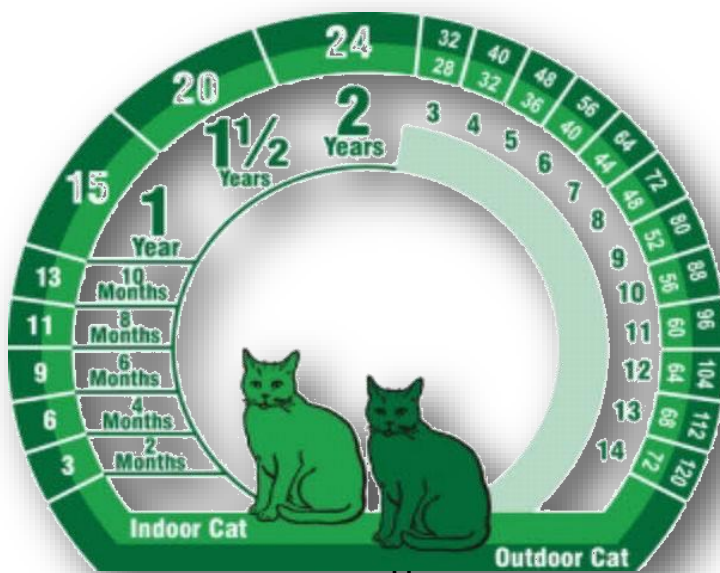


The Annual Physical Examination

The physical examination involves a head-to-tail evaluation performed by a veterinarian. Your cat's eyes, ears and mouth will be examined for any abnormalities. A stethoscope is used to listen for any heart murmurs, arrhythmias (irregular beats) or abnormal lung sounds. The doctor will examine your cat's entire body, feeling for appropriate organ size and looking for any skin growths or other abnormalities. During the examination you may be asked additional questions in order to obtain an overall assessment of your cat's current health status. Depending on the doctor's findings, we may recommend more specific laboratory or diagnostic tests to further evaluate your cat's condition.

Because cats age at a much faster rate than we do, it is important to have your cat examined annually before the age of eight and then twice a year. This way health problems may be detected at an earlier time, allowing us to start therapy earlier and possibly improves the prognosis or outcome.

Your cat's annual physical examination is the perfect time to talk to us about any concerns you have about your cat's health or behavior.



Vaccinations

There are many infectious diseases that are fatal to cats. Fortunately, we have the ability to prevent many of these diseases through the use of vaccines. In order to be effective, these vaccines must be given in a series when your pet is a kitten and then continued at one-year or three-year intervals (depending on the vaccine and risk factors) throughout your cat's lifetime.

The timing of the initial series of vaccines is very important. Ideally, vaccines are started between 4 and 8 weeks of age, and then given at monthly intervals until 16 weeks of age. Kittens require a series of vaccines due to an immature immune system. At the time of nursing, a kitten acquires a temporary form of immunity through antibodies contained in the milk of the mother. These antibodies provide protection for the kitten for the first few weeks of life, after which the kitten needs to develop production of its own antibodies. Vaccines provide a stimulus for the kitten's immune system to produce antibodies against infection. Since the young kitten's immune system is not yet fully developed, the response to a single vaccine is not strong enough to protect the kitten for a full year. Therefore, a series of repeated vaccines are required to provide optimal protection against the common infectious diseases that affect kittens and adult cats. Vaccinations will protect your kitten or cat from the following diseases:

Rabies is a deadly disease that can infect all mammals, including humans. Usually dogs and cats are infected by a bite from an infected raccoon, skunk, bat or another dog or cat. Once the virus enters the animal, it moves to the brain. The animal either becomes unusually aggressive or lethargic and withdrawn. Death occurs from paralysis and respiratory failure. Once infected, there is no treatment and the disease is fatal. Infected cats may also transmit Rabies to humans so protecting your cat will also help protect your family. The Rabies vaccine is initially administered at 16 weeks of age.

FeRCP is a combination vaccine against three viruses: Feline Rhinotracheitis, Feline Calicivirus and Feline Panleukopenia. Following is information about each of the three diseases:

Feline Panleukopenia is a highly contagious viral disease of cats caused by the feline parvovirus. Feline panleukopenia is more commonly known as feline distemper. Feline distemper should not be confused with canine distemper. Though sharing the same name, they are different diseases caused by different viruses; neither of the viruses is transmissible to humans. Feline panleukopenia virus kills rapidly dividing body cells in the bone marrow, and this cell loss makes the cat more susceptible to other complications and bacterial infections. The virus is highly contagious to other kittens; infection occurs when cats come in contact with the blood, urine, fecal material, nasal secretions and even fleas of infected cats. The first signs of infection include high fever, generalized depression, loss of appetite, lethargy, vomiting, severe diarrhea, dehydration or hanging over the water dish. The disease is progressively disabling and frequently leads to death

Without treatment this disease can become fatal to affected kittens and cats.

Vaccinations

Feline Rhinotracheitis, also known as feline herpesvirus type 1, is another virus that causes acute respiratory illness. Rhinotracheitis is characterized by respiratory symptoms such as sneezing, nasal discharge, rhinitis (inflammation of the nose) and conjunctivitis (inflammation of the membrane lining the eyelid). It also affects the reproductive tract and can cause complications during pregnancy. The rhinotracheitis virus is shed through the discharge from an infected cat's eyes, nose and mouth. Contact with these secretions is a potential mode of transmission. The most common mode of transmission appears to be contact with contaminated objects that an infected cat has touched or sneezed on including cages, food and water bowls, litter trays, pet owner's clothing and the pet owner's hands. Sneezing and coughing can spread the virus as far as four feet. Many cats infected with this virus never completely get rid of the virus. These cats are known as latent carriers. Even though they may not show symptoms, they harbor the virus and are a major source of new infections to other cats. This disease is rarely fatal on its own, but can make the affected kitten or cat more susceptible to other infections.

Feline Leukemia Virus is a devastating retrovirus that affects cats and kittens. Cats that spend any time outdoors are most susceptible to this disease. Kittens and adult cats acquire this virus from other infected cats. The virus is shed in very high quantities in saliva and nasal secretions, but also in urine, feces and milk from infected cats. Cat-to-cat transfer of virus may occur from a bite wound, during mutual grooming and sometimes through the shared use of litter boxes and feeding dishes. Transmission can also take place from an infected mother cat to her kittens, either before they are born or while they are nursing. Feline leukemia virus adversely affects the cat's body in many ways. It is the most common cause of cancer in cats (lymphoma), it may cause various blood disorders, and it may lead to a state of immune deficiency that hinders the cat's ability to protect itself against other infections. Cats with this infection generally have much shorter lifespans. Kittens and cats that will be spending any time outside should be tested for the virus at 12 weeks old and then vaccinated annually (series of 2 boosters as a kitten, then one vaccine annually from 1 year on).



Common Diagnostic Tests

Fecal Analysis

This test examines a cat's feces for the eggs of common intestinal parasites such as roundworms, hookworms, coccidia, giardia, and whipworms. Intestinal parasites can cause diarrhea, among other problems, and are transmissible to other cats. Immature roundworms and hookworms spread from cats can potentially cause disease in humans.

CBC

This blood test examines the red blood cells, white blood cells and platelets. This test is useful for detecting infection, inflammation, anemia and clotting problems.

Biochemistry Profile

This screening blood test examines many metabolic organs of your cat, including the kidneys, liver and pancreas. In addition it measures blood glucose, protein levels, calcium and electrolyte levels.

Thyroid Level (T4)

The T4 blood test screens a cat's blood for hyperthyroidism, a common endocrine disease of cats seven years and older, which can cause vomiting, profound weight loss, hyperexcitable behavior and heart problems.

Fructosamine Level

This blood test helps with the diagnosis of and analyzing the effectiveness of treatment of diabetes mellitus in cats. It is an estimate of a cat's blood sugar level over the past three weeks, so it is not affected by stress during the cat's visit to the veterinarian on that particular day (unlike blood glucose, which can be altered greatly by stress).

FeLV Blood Test

See Feline Leukemia Virus (page 10)

FIV Blood Test

See Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (page 13)

Urinalysis

This test examines a pet's urine for specific gravity (dilution or concentration) and the presence of many substances including: protein, blood, white blood cells, bacteria and crystals. This test is useful in screening for many types of metabolic diseases, including diabetes mellitus, kidney disease and liver disease, as well as diagnosing primary urinary tract problems such as urinary tract infections and stones.

Common Diagnostic Tests

Urine Culture & Sensitivity

This test uses a urine sample and to grow and analyze bacteria that may be present in your cat's urinary tract. In addition, any bacteria that grows is tested to determine how effective the different antibiotics are at eliminating the infection. This test is very useful to help your veterinarian to detect early infections and/or to decide which type of antibiotic to use to treat a urinary tract infection.

Feline Health Screen

This series of tests obtained from one blood sample consists of a biochemistry profile, CBC, heartworm test, thyroid level, and a urinalysis. It is an important screening tool used in otherwise healthy animals to detect early signs of disease when pets come in for their annual examination. Detecting problems earlier will ensure earlier treatment and improve prognosis of certain disorders.

Radiographs (X-Rays)

X-rays are very useful for examining numerous problems throughout the entire body, including the teeth and skull, chest, abdomen and musculoskeletal system.

Ultrasound (Abdominal, Cardiac)

Ultrasound uses sound waves to project a two-dimensional image that allows the veterinarian to see inside many organs to help diagnose and treat disease. There are two commonly used types of ultrasound studies, abdominal and cardiac. An abdominal ultrasound evaluates the organs in the abdomen, including the liver, stomach, spleen, kidneys, intestine, pancreas and urinary bladder. A cardiac ultrasound, or echocardiogram, is a study that focuses on the heart, evaluating each of the four chambers (atria and ventricles), the heart valves and their function.

Blood Pressure

There are many different diseases that can affect a cat's blood pressure. High blood pressure (hypertension) and low blood pressure (hypotension) and lead to significant illness that often needs medical treatment. In cats, blood pressure measurements are used to diagnose and monitor hypertension. Blood pressure is also monitored during surgery and during the treatment of critically ill animals to evaluate the pet's circulatory status.

Glaucoma Screening

Your pet's veterinarian quickly and painlessly can measure your pet's intraocular eye pressure. This test screens for glaucoma, a common cause of blindness in dogs and cats. This is done while you wait with our tonopen.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)

Feline immunodeficiency virus is an infectious disease that affects cats worldwide and is predominately spread through bite wounds; however it can also be transmitted to kittens through the milk of an infected mother. Although infected cats may appear normal for years, the infection eventually leads to a state of immune deficiency that hinders the cat's ability to protect itself against other infections. The same bacteria, viruses, protozoa, and fungi that may be found in the everyday environment-where they usually do not affect healthy animals-can cause severe illness in those with weakened immune systems. These secondary infections are responsible for many of the diseases associated with FIV.

The signs associated with FIV infection are highly variable. An infected cat's health may deteriorate progressively or be characterized by waxing and waning illness with periods of relative health. Sometimes not appearing for years after infection, signs of immunodeficiency can appear anywhere throughout the body. Some common signs seen include:

- Poor coat condition and persistent fever with a loss of appetite
- Inflammation of the gums (gingivitis) and mouth (stomatitis) and chronic or recurrent infections of the skin, urinary bladder, and upper respiratory tract
- Persistent diarrhea
- A variety of eye conditions
- Slow but progressive weight loss followed by severe wasting late in the disease process
- Various kinds of cancer and blood diseases are much more common in cats infected with FIV
- In unsprayed female cats, abortion of kittens or other reproductive failures have been noted
- Some infected cats experience seizures, behavior changes, and other neurological disorders

Testing for FIV is most commonly performed by an antibody test which can be performed on-site at OCVH, FVH, NPVH , BVH or can be performed at the laboratory. Because few, if any, cats ever eliminate infection, the presence of antibody indicates that a cat is infected with FIV. It is important to note that a negative test result indicates that antibodies directed against FIV have not been detected, but since it takes eight to 12 weeks after infection (and sometimes even longer) before detectable levels of antibody appear, your veterinarian may recommend that a kitten be re- tested at a later date to confirm FIV negative status.

The only sure way to protect cats from FIV infection is to prevent their exposure to the virus. Cat bites are the major way infection is transmitted, so keeping cats indoors and away from other FIV infected cats are the most effective methods of prevention. When bringing a new kitten or cat into your household (with existing cats) it is very important to have the new addition tested for FIV prior to introduction with current cats. If the new addition has been tested, discuss the matter with your veterinarian, as a second negative test may be required to assure the safety of all cats.

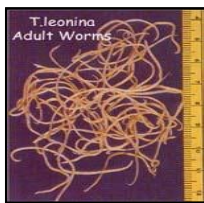
Recently a vaccine to help protect kittens and cats against FIV infection has become available. The effectiveness of this vaccine against all strains of FIV and in all situations is still undetermined, therefore the vaccine is only considered in rare situations for high risk cats.

Intestinal Parasites

outdoors. Kittens can become infected with parasites before they are born, through the mother's milk, or acquired from the environment. The microscopic examination of a stool sample will usually help us determine the presence of intestinal parasites. Kittens should have this examination performed at each visit. We also recommend that a fecal examination be a part of the annual physical examination each year for the lifetime of your pet.

Even if the fecal examination is negative in kittens, your veterinarian may recommend a course of treatment for the most common intestinal parasites. This is because cats do not pass worm eggs into the feces everyday, therefore an individual stool sample may not detect all the worms that are truly present. Since the medication does not have any adverse side effects in cats this precaution is usually advised. When given, the de-worming medication will need to be repeated in one to four weeks, since the drug only kills the adult worms, and does not harm the younger worms or eggs. By repeating the treatment in one to four weeks the younger worms / eggs will then be adults and can be eradicated by the medication. Cats remain susceptible to re-infection with intestinal parasites throughout their lifetime.

Adult hookworms and roundworms are not considered to be infectious to humans, however the larval form of these worms has been reported to invade the skin or internal organs of humans that come into contact with cat feces. These cases are very rare in human medicine, however when it has occurred it has usually been a child that was in contact with feces or contaminated grass. Although the incidence is extremely rare, it is important for people who have young children to keep their pet on monthly parasite prevention programs to prevent this devastating complication.



Roundworms are typically found in most kittens. Kittens are either born with or acquire roundworms through their mother's milk or placenta. Older cats can become infected through contact with soil containing roundworms. Cats contract roundworms from the environment and transmission to humans IS possible!



Tapeworms are the most common intestinal parasite of cats. Kittens become infected with them when they swallow fleas; the eggs of the tapeworm live inside the flea. When the cat licks or chews its skin as a flea bites, the flea may be swallowed. The flea is digested within the cat's intestine; the tapeworm hatches and then anchors itself to the intestinal lining. Therefore, exposure to fleas may result in a new

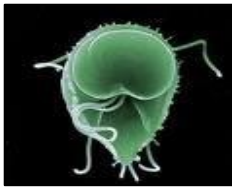
Intestinal Parasites

infection in as little of two weeks.

Cats infected with tapeworms will pass small segments of the worms in their stool. The segments are white in color and when dried, look like grains of rice. They are about 1/8 inch long and may be seen crawling on the surface of the stool. They may also stick to the hair under the tail. If that occurs, they will dry out, shrink to about half their size, and become yellow in color. Since these segments tend to be shed intermittently, we may examine a stool sample in our office and not see them, but you may find them at a later time at home. If you find them at any time, please notify us so that we can provide you with appropriate medication. The photo shows an adult tapeworm before releasing segments.



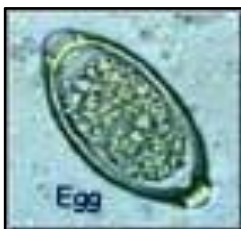
Coccidia are a single-celled organisms that infect the intestine. They are microscopic parasites that are not worms, therefore they cannot be seen with the naked eye. This common parasite can cause watery diarrhea and can be life-threatening to a young kitten. Cats acquire this parasite from contaminated ground and re-infection after treatment is a common and frustrating problem. The photo shows Coccidia oocysts seen in a fecal flotation test.



Giardia are also a single-celled organisms that infect the intestine. Giardia are protozoa that are not visible to the naked eye. This infection can cause severe diarrhea in kittens and adult cats. Infection occurs when an animal ingests giardia cysts from contaminated water or the environment. Diagnosis and treatment of this parasite can be challenging.



Hookworms attach to the cat's intestinal lining with hook-like teeth and feed on the cat's blood. Their eggs are released into the cat's intestine and passed through the feces. The eggs then hatch into larvae which can be swallowed by another cat or penetrate through the cat's skin. Cats contract hookworms from the environment and transmission to humans IS possible! On the right, is a greatly enlarged image of a Hookworm.



Whipworms are a rare parasite that can live in the large intestine and cecum of the cat. They can cause diarrhea, weight loss and dehydration. This parasite is very challenging to detect, and elimination from the environment is not always possible, resulting in re-infestation even after successful treatment.

Flea Control

One female flea can lay up to 2,000 eggs in her lifetime, which is why just a few fleas can cause a terrible infestation on your pet and in your house in a very short time. The flea life cycle occurs in

four stages: the egg stage, the larval stage, the pupae stage and

finally the adult stage. Typically all you see is the adult fleas, which account for only 5% of the total population.

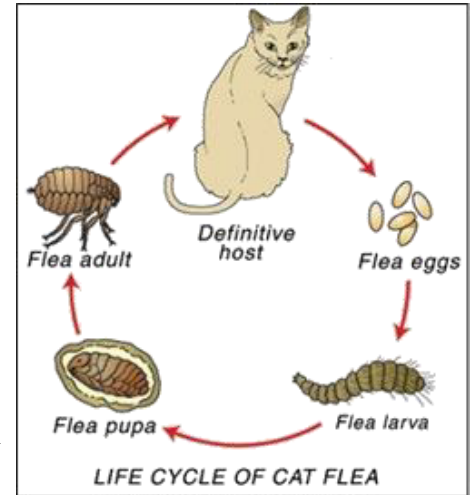
The presence of fleas can pose many health problems as well. Infections to the skin, tapeworms and anemia are a few of the health threats that fleas can introduce. For an allergic pet, one flea bite can cause such intense itching that your pet may chew out

their hair, traumatize their skin and develop skin infections.

In addition, fleas can be carriers of several zoonotic diseases that can be dangerous to you and your family. Zoonotic diseases are infectious diseases that can be transmissible between animals and humans.

The products now available for flea control are more effective and safer than they have ever been in the past.

- Revolution is a topical parasiticide that is applied to the skin of an animal to kill adult fleas, prevent flea eggs from hatching, prevent heartworm, and protect your pet against other parasites.
- Vectra is a monthly topical flea control that provides long-lasting protection against all stages of fleas. Applying it once a month all through the year provides relief from flea infestation and protection from disease transmission to your cat or kitten.
- Frontline Plus® is a topical product that kills adult fleas and ticks when applied monthly. It also contains an insect growth inhibitor, which prevents the development of mature fleas by destroying the egg and larval stage of development.
- Flea collars, sprays and shampoos / dips can also be helpful, but are usually not as effective as the above-mentioned medications.



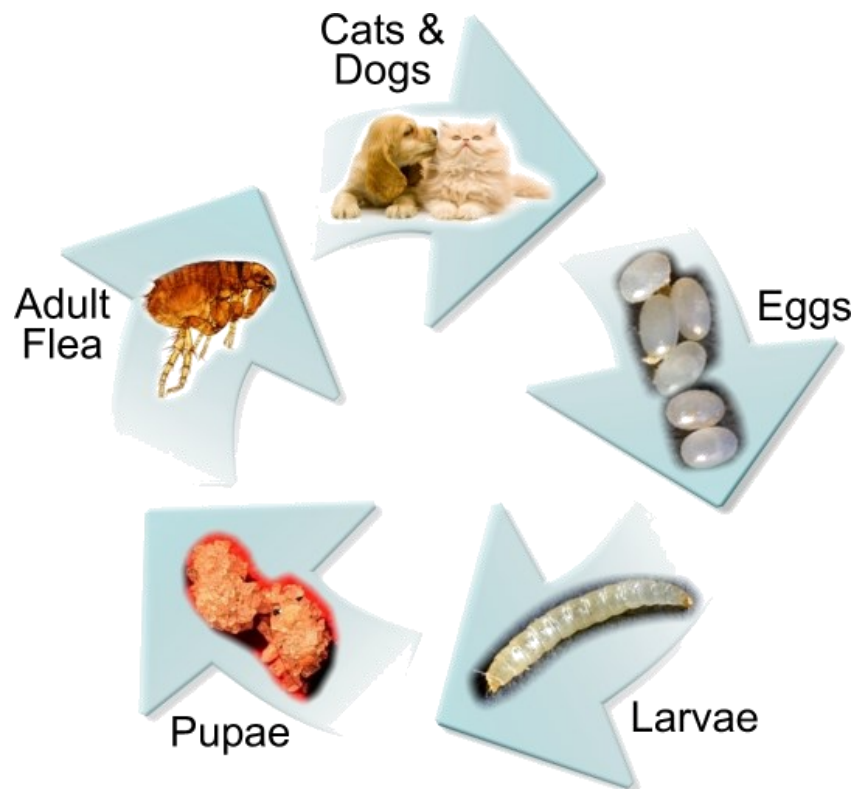
Flea Control

Flea Life Cycle (4 stages)

Determining the most effective pest management approach can be confusing, as there are so many products touting their own protocols and recommendations. Many pet stores carry products that are designed to look very similar to Frontline Plus® and Vectra®, but they are neither as effective nor as safe. We urge you to discuss flea control with your veterinarian at our hospitals, and together the optimal prevention program for your pet can be formulated.

Effective flea control is now easier than ever before!

We recommend Revolution every month as the product of choice because it also prevents against Heartworm Disease in cats.



Dental Disease

Dental disease is as common in cats as it is in humans. The most common form of dental disease in humans is caries (cavities). However, in dogs and cats, the most common form of dental disease is tartar buildup. This buildup causes irritation of the gums around the base of the teeth (gingivitis), resulting in exposure of the roots. Ultimately, this leads to infection and tooth loss.

One of the main factors determining the amount of tartar buildup is the individual chemistry in the mouth, as some dogs or cats will tend to be more susceptible to developing dental disease than others.



Before



After

If tartar is allowed to remain on teeth, several things may happen:

- The tartar will mechanically push the gums away from the roots of the teeth. This allows the teeth to loosen in their sockets and bacterial infection to enter the root socket. The teeth will loosen and fall out or eventually need to be extracted.
- A bacterial infection will accumulate in the mouth, resulting in gingivitis, tonsillitis, and pharyngitis (sore throat). Although antibiotics will temporarily suppress the infection, if the tartar is not removed from the teeth the infection will return quickly.
- Infection within the mouth will be picked up by the bloodstream and carried to other parts of the body. Kidney and liver infections, as well as infections involving the heart valves, frequently begin in the mouth.

Dental care for your kitten can be started at an early age. Developing good habits while the cats are young will help prevent / slow the progression of dental disease later in life. Brushing a cat's teeth several times a week can be started as early as 12-16 weeks of age. Performing this task routinely will help maintain dental health, and the delay or prevent the need for a dental cleaning performed under general anesthesia. Special toothpaste for animals has a chicken flavor, which most cats like. There are also specialized chews which can help prevent tartar accumulation. In addition, Hill's Prescription Diet formula t/d is designed to prevent / lessen tartar accumulation. This diet is an adult diet which can be obtained only from your veterinarian.

When sufficient tartar buildup has accumulated, your veterinarian will advise you that a dental cleaning performed under general anesthesia is in the best interests of your pet. This procedure involves thoroughly cleaning the teeth and removing tartar using both hand instruments and an ultrasonic scaler, flushing using a disinfectant and polishing. Extractions or dental x-rays may also be required depending on the degree of disease present in the teeth. Dental cleanings can significantly improve the health as well as the breath of your cat!



Spay or Neuter

Female Cats

A spay, or ovariectomy, is the surgical removal of the uterus and ovaries. Spayed females will no longer have heat cycles, attract male cats, and will no longer be able to become pregnant. Spaying prevents litters of unwanted kittens. Intact cats will often make great efforts to mate when they are in heat; despite your best intentions accidents often happen when a female cat that is not spayed escapes the home and encounters a male cat. Unspayed female cats will frequently “mark” areas in the house and yard with urine to let males know they are in heat.

There are also very important health reasons to spay your female cat. It has been proven that as a female cat ages, there is a significant increase in the incidence of breast cancer and uterine infections if she has not been spayed. Pyometra is a bacterial infection in the uterus which is very serious and in many instances life-threatening. Spaying eliminates the chance of developing this disease. In addition, spaying your female cat prevents ovarian and uterine cancer. If you do not plan to breed your cat, we strongly recommend that she be spayed, ideally around six months of age but can it be performed even on much older cats.

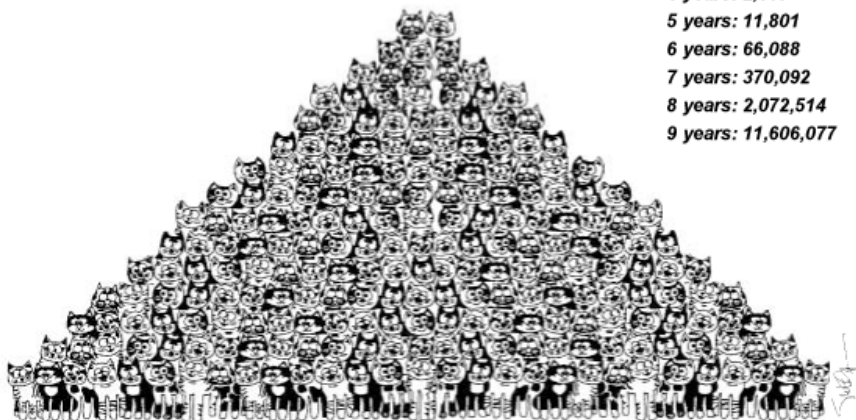
Male Cats

Neutering, or castration, offers several advantages for male cats. Un-neutered male cats are more likely to roam in search of females, and “spray” around the house as a form of territorial marking. They are also more likely to fight and be aggressive, especially with other male cats. For cats that spend time outdoors this type of behavior makes them more prone to contracting infectious diseases such as Feline Leukemia (FeLV) and Feline AIDS (FIV). This surgery is typically performed around five to six months of age but can be performed even on much older cats.



An unspayed female cat, her mate and all of their offspring, producing 2 litters per year, with 2.8 surviving kittens per litter can total:

**1 year: 12
2 years: 67
3 years: 376
4 years: 2,107
5 years: 11,801
6 years: 66,088
7 years: 370,092
8 years: 2,072,514
9 years: 11,606,077**



Litterbox Training

Kittens and cats generally take to litterbox training very quickly and easily. With multiple-cat households, the addition of a new kitten may require an extra litterbox. Due to the fastidious nature of most cats, a general rule of thumb is: One litterbox for each cat PLUS ONE extra. For example, a three-cat household may actually require 4 litterboxes to prevent inappropriate urination or defecation.

Any of the popular types of cat litter (clay, clumping, crystals, etc.) will usually work well for your kitten or cat, but be careful about switching cat litter, as some cats will not like the change and will then eliminate outside the box. Any type of litter change should be done gradually and many cats prefer UNSCENTED litter.

Litterboxes should be scooped daily, and the litter changed at least once per week to ensure a clean, sanitary place for your cat or kitten to urinate and defecate and to minimize the chance that your kitten or cat will eliminate outside the litterbox.

