



15 Seymour Lane  
Westmoreland, NY 13490  
(315) 853-2408  
Fax: 315 853-2409

## FELINE VACCINATIONS

One of the best things you can do to give your cat a long and healthy life is to ensure that he/she is vaccinated against common feline diseases. Your cat's mother gave her kitten immunity from disease for the first few weeks of existence by providing disease-fighting antibodies in her milk. After that period, it's up to you, with the help and advice of your veterinarian, to provide that protection through vaccination. In general, there are two groups of vaccinations – core vaccines, and non-core vaccines. The core vaccines are recommended for ALL cats. The non-core vaccines are recommended based on exposure risk.

### Core Vaccines:

#### Viral Rhinotracheitis

This virus causes an upper respiratory tract infection, and is easily transmitted from cat to cat. Symptoms may take form of moderate fever, loss of appetite, sneezing, eye and/or nasal discharge. 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.

#### Calicivirus

This virus is another major cause of upper respiratory infections in cats. Widespread and highly contagious, its symptoms of fever, ulcers, and blisters on the tongue can range from mild to severe. Depending on the strain, these viruses can lead to pneumonia. Treatment of this disease can be difficult, and even if a cat recovers, they can continue to infect other animals for years.

#### Panleukopenia

Also known as "distemper", this disease is caused by a virus so resistant; it can survive up to one year outside of a cat's body. Therefore, as most cats will be exposed to it during their lifetimes and infection rates in unprotected cats can run as high as 90%-100%, vaccination against this potentially fatal disease is absolutely essential. Symptoms can include listlessness, diarrhea, vomiting, severe dehydration, fever and death.

#### Rabies

This is a fatal viral disease of all mammals including dogs, cats, and humans. Because rabies is a significant health risk to humans, this vaccine is **REQUIRED BY LAW**.

### Non-Core Vaccines:

#### Leukemia

Infection with the feline leukemia virus can result in a multitude of serious health problems for your cat; everything from cancerous conditions such as leukemia to a wide range of secondary infections caused by the destruction of the immune system. At one point, it was considered the leading cause of death in North American cats. If a cat will be going outdoors, and exposed to other cats, vaccines against this potentially fatal disease is highly recommended.



15 Seymour Lane  
Westmoreland, NY 13490  
(315) 853-2408  
Fax: 315 853-2409

## HOW TO PUPPY & KITTEN PROOF YOUR HOUSE

Kittens and puppies are naturally inquisitive, which can often lead to serious injury. Here are some tips on how you can make your house safer for the new arrival.

**That's shocking** - Young animals love to chew when they're teething. Keep electrical wires out of reach, or use a pet-repellent spray.

**They'd die for some chocolate** - Chocolate can be dangerous. It contains theobromine, a powerful stimulant that is toxic to pets. Sweets, cakes and cookies can also upset a young animal's G.I. tract and lead to diarrhea and vomiting, which can be serious.

**Treats can be threats** - Never give turkey, chicken or rib bones as a treat. They can splinter and cause serious injury.

**Common household killers** - Cleaning agents, bleach, ammonia, disinfectants, drain cleaner, oven cleaner, paint, gasoline, rat poison. Keep them locked up.

**Check the antifreeze** - Pets are attracted to the odor and sweet taste of antifreeze. Store it high and tightly sealed, wiping up any spills on the garage floor. Window-washing solution also contains antifreeze. Remember, engine warmth promotes catnaps, so honk your horn to wake pets under the hood.

**Killer house plants** - Poisonous plants include lilies, philodendron, dieffenbachia, elephant ear, eucalyptus, spider plants, azalea, ivy, amaryllis, pyracantha, oleander, boxwood, Jerusalem Cherry and plant bulbs.

**Keep off the grass** - If you treat your lawn with chemicals, keep pets away. Read and follow label directions carefully.

**It fit yesterday** - Puppies and kittens grow rapidly. Collars and harnesses can be rapidly outgrown, leading to serious wounds.

**Take care of personal care items and medications** - Cosmetics, shampoos, skin creams, hair "perm" solutions, depilatories, suntan lotions, sleeping pills, antihistamines, aspirin and acetaminophen can all be lethal to pets.

**It's not a toy** - Don't leave plastic bags out. Inquisitive young animals, especially kittens, can suffocate.

**The heat is on** - Watch out for hot irons, coffee pots and space heaters. Kittens and puppies will suddenly be able to jump to new heights.

**A dip tip** - Keep covers on hot tubs and swimming pools. Kittens and even young puppies can fall in and not be able to get out.

**'Tis the season** - Keep holly, mistletoe and especially Christmas tree tinsel out of reach.

**Cozy up** - Always use a fireplace screen.

**Do you eat with that mouth?** - Rule of thumb: If any or all of something will fit in a mouth, it's dangerous. Watch out for cigarette butts, rubber bands, balloons, sewing needles, thread, string, ribbons and, yes, even pantyhose. Because what goes in must come out, often via surgery.



15 Seymour Lane  
Westmoreland, NY 13490  
(315) 853-2408  
Fax: 315 853-2409

## **Inappropriate Elimination in Cats**

One of the most common behavioral and health problems cats have is eliminating outside the box. In some cats, this is a sign of a urinary tract problem, such as urinary tract infection, increased urine production (diseases like diabetes, and many others, cause this), urinary pain from crystals/stones, and other primary urinary problems. For defecating outside the box, it may be a sign of bowel discomfort due to constipation or diarrhea. For cats with urine marking, the problem may be a sign of anxiety or stress in the cat, and respond to medication for anxiety. For cats with inappropriate elimination which is neither marking nor medical, improving the nature of the litter box and retraining their habits is key. For some of these cats, anxiety is also a component. In older cats, especially over the age of 12, arthritis may make travelling to or entering the box uncomfortable, motivating the cat to go in other places.

The first step in evaluating this disorder is to take a detailed history about what the cat is doing, where, and how often, and including any changes in the household (such as changes in family members or pets living at home, changes in where the cat lives, home construction projects, etc.).

Next, a full physical exam and urinalysis is performed to help determine whether there is a medical cause for the signs. If there is a medical cause, it is critical to treat it. This may require medication for a short time, or for life if the cat has a chronic disease. In most cases, the cats do best on a canned food which helps them have good nutrition, more water intake, and a healthy weight. Your vet may prescribe a specific canned food if your cat has a urinary tract problem.

If your cat has no urinary infections, crystals or other abnormalities, the most common cause (behavior sometimes in conjunction with anxiety/stress) is likely the culprit. For these cats, behavioral modification using confinement so that they only have one place to eliminate (the litter box) is highly effective in getting the cat to resume consistent litter box use. This may also require making changes to reduce the availability of other places your cat is currently using (picking up throw rugs, putting laundry in closed bins, etc) to help change the cat's habits. For some cats, especially those in which we can identify that anxiety is definitely the cause, we may also use a medication to reduce their anxiety, since treating the underlying cause is the best way to solve the problem. However, even if your cat is on anti-anxiety medication, it will work best in conjunction with the behavior modification plan.

We do not know why some cats become stressed by what may seem like small changes in their household, especially since other people and cats in the house may not show similar signs of stress. However, we do know that cats which show this pattern of inappropriate elimination as a response to anxiety may do so repeatedly.

Further, once a cat starts using an inappropriate place to urinate or defecate, it may become habit, or attract other cats to use that place inappropriately also. Therefore, if any of your cats start to have inappropriate elimination, contact your vet promptly so we can start treatment and minimize the risk of ongoing property damage or bad habits developing.

### **Help Your Cat Like To Use the Box**

Cats can be finicky about their litter boxes. Here are some things you can do to help ensure your litter boxes are attractive and not off-putting to your cats. We want to make the boxes some place the cat **wants** to go, rather than a place the cat avoids.

1. **Plenty of boxes.** Have one more box than you have cats: if you have 3 cats, have 4 boxes. Cats often want to go all at the same time, first thing in the morning. If all the boxes are occupied, someone may end up going outside the box.
2. **Clean boxes.** Make sure all boxes are cleaned every day. No one wants to use a dirty box.
3. **Consistent litter substrate.** Some cats don't like change. If you're not sure what litter your cat likes, you can line up a row of boxes with different types of litter and see which one the cat uses. If your cats have been consistently using a specific litter type, don't change it. Change in litter type (particle size, substance, smell, etc.) can make the box unattractive and make a cat stop using the box.
4. **Boxes nearby.** If you have multiple levels, have a box on every floor/story of your house. If your house is large, make sure there are boxes at each end of the house so that cats don't have to travel really far to use one.
5. **Easy to access.** Make sure at least some boxes are easy to access. If a box is behind a closed bathroom or bedroom door, the cat can't get to it. Upstairs, downstairs, over/under baby gates, and otherwise hard to access boxes may deter a cat which is tired, sore, or needs to go urgently. If you have an older cat or a cat recovering from injury, low-sided boxes that are easy to step into, or ramps leading into higher-sided boxes, can make it easier to use the box even with sore legs. Boxes should be 1.5 times the length of the cat. You can use plastic storage bins or other items that are adequate in size and shape if commercial boxes are too small.
6. **No scary things nearby.** If the box is next to the laundry machines, and they are noisily running, it may scare off a cat. High traffic areas, places near dogs, or ones requiring the cat to go past an aggressive cat housemate may all keep the cat from feeling comfortable going to, and sitting in, the box. Try to place the boxes where they are peaceful to enter and use.
7. **Privacy.** Try using covered, top-entry, or other box styles (without removing the old style boxes) to see if your cat is more comfortable using a box that gives the cat more privacy.
8. **Humor preferences.** If you aren't sure what your cat likes, offer a litter box buffet – a row of different boxes (covered, open, automatic; clumping, clay, other litter types, etc.) so you can find out what your cat prefers to use. Sometimes finding the right combination does the trick.

#### Litter Box Boot Camp: Behavioral Modification for Inappropriate Elimination

All cats that start using non-litter-box places to eliminate need to be encouraged to use the box as the one, and only, suitable place to go. The best way to do this is to give the cat a very simple, routine life where the only attractive place to eliminate is the litter box.

Create a "studio apartment" for your cat. Start with a large dog crate. These are typically made of thick wire and have a removable plastic tray in the bottom. Place in the crate a litter box with litter, a food and water bowl, and an empty plastic cat carrier (the cat's bed). This gives the cat a place to eat, drink, sleep and eliminate. It's no-frills but it provides all the cat's needs.

The cat should stay in this "studio apartment" until he/she has used the litter box consistently with **no mistakes** for 2 weeks.

Each level or phase will last two or more weeks, until the cat has been successful using the box for 2 weeks. If the cat fails, then go back to level one.

Level One: Confined to “studio apartment” unless **on a leash or in your arms**.

Level Two: Confined to “studio apartment” unless **within eyesight in same room with you** and only out while you are awake/paying attention.

Level Three: Confined to “studio apartment” unless **within the same room, or one room away (but still within eyesight)** and only out while you are awake/paying attention.

Level Four: Confined to “studio apartment” **unless you are at home** and only out while you are awake/paying attention.

Level Five: Confined to “studio apartment” while you are at work or asleep. Loose in house when you are home, even if you are not paying direct attention, and while you run short errands (less than a few hours).

Level Six/regular life: Loose in house at all times even when you are not home for more than a few hours/overnight.

This Boot Camp may seem like it’s a lot to do. However, it really takes less effort than you think, especially when you realize you won’t have to spend a significant time every day cleaning the messes your cat was leaving in your house. Also, Level One is a great time to thoroughly clean places where your cat previously eliminated, and brainstorm ways to keep them from being used again once you reach the next level.

**Eliminate attractive places to go.** Pick up bathmats and throw rugs. Place clean and dirty laundry in closed closets, baskets with lids, or other inaccessible areas. Use of scatmats and other deterrents can also help keep cats off of places they used to go.

#### Husbandry and Management for Inappropriate Elimination

In addition to the already discussed changes in the litterboxes themselves, there are household or environmental management changes that can help reduce the cat’s anxiety and significantly improve behavior.

Visit the Indoor Cat Initiative for helpful tips on making your indoor cat’s life as enriched as possible.

<http://indoorpet.osu.edu/cats/>

Some helpful things you can do include:

- Place Feliway diffusers in all rooms (see package for details). If unable to put them in all spaces, put them in places where the cat eliminates to help reduce the cat’s stress in these areas.
- Offer high perches such as cat trees, empty shelves, etc. for your cat to enjoy
- Ensure each of your cats have one-on-one play and quality time with you; even 10 minutes twice a day can really help relax your cat and help your cat feel less stress.
- Give your cat a room of his/her own – an entire room, a closet, bathroom, or large crate – where your pet can retreat when desiring alone time.
- Have night lights where cats sleep in multi-cat households so no one gets startled by other cats moving around in the dark.

- Try to keep to a similar daily routine in which events, such as meals, happen at consistent times.
- Try to avoid having heavily scented items near the cat's favorite hangouts, litter box, and food. Heavy scents in these areas may deter the cat from using them or make the cat uncomfortable when she/he does use them.

## Medication for Urine Marking and Anxiety in Cats

There are many medications available to help treat anxiety in cats. Depending on the severity of the case, we use pheromones ("Feliway"), clomipramine, fluoxetine, alprazolam, and/or other medications.

### Clomipramine

Studies have shown that Clomipramine can be effective for urine marking in cats. This medication is FDA approved for use in dogs as the brand name "Clomicalm." This medication is available as a tablet or capsule.

As with any medication which has desired effects (reducing urine marking), there is a chance it has effects which may be less desired. In cats, the most common undesired effects are sedation and dry mouth. Obviously we are giving this medication to change behavior and elimination in a good way. There is a low risk this medication can make your cat uninhibited and it may become more or less friendly, more or less aggressive, more or less active, or more or less well-behaved.

Most cats starting Clomipramine are otherwise healthy and not on medications. If your cat is on any other medication when starting Clomipramine, or starts a new medication while on Clomipramine, make sure your vet is aware of **all** of your pet's medications. The use of this medication may need to be altered if used in conjunction with other behavior-altering medication (such as tricyclic antidepressants, SSRIs and MAOIs) and you need to discuss with your veterinarian before giving this medication with cimetidine, cisapride, certain sedatives, dextrometorphan, rifampin, and certain other medications.

### Fluoxetine

In cats that have serious anxiety issues, we may use a medication called Fluoxetine to reduce anxiety and other behavior problems, such as urine marking. This medication is FDA approved for use in dogs as the brand name "Reconcile." Since most cats are smaller than most dogs, and often do not take pills well, we usually use a liquid form of the medication.

As with any medication which has desired effects, there is a chance it has effects which may be less desired. In cats, the most common undesired effects are reduced appetite, behavior change, and change in elimination patterns. Obviously we are giving this medication to change behavior and elimination in a good way. There is a low risk this medication can make your cat uninhibited and it may become more or less friendly, more or less aggressive, more or less active, or more or less well-behaved.

Most cats starting Fluoxetine are otherwise healthy and not on medications. If your cat is on any other medication when starting Fluoxetine, or starts a new medication while on Fluoxetine, make sure your vet is aware of **all** of your pet's medications. This medication should not be given in conjunction with other behavior-altering medication (such as tricyclic antidepressants, SSRIs and MAOIs, diazepam, alprazolam) and you need to discuss with your veterinarian before giving this medication with diuretics, insulin, certain anesthetics, cyproheptadine, phenytoin, warfarin, propranolol or other beta-blockers, and certain other medications.

**Fluoxetine should not be stopped abruptly.** When your cat is ready to stop taking Fluoxetine, please slowly taper your cat off the medication over the course of about 2 weeks by decreasing the dose by a small amount every day.

## Alprazolam

In cats that have serious anxiety issues, we may use a medication called Alprazolam to reduce anxiety and other behavior problems, such as urine marking. This medication is FDA approved for use in humans as the brand name "Xanax." This medication is available in a liquid and a pill form (the pill form is available as a generic).

As with any medication which has desired effects, there is a chance it has effects which may be less desired. In cats, the most common undesired effects are sedation, behavior change, and change in elimination patterns. Obviously we are giving this medication to change behavior and elimination in a good way. There is a low risk this medication can make your cat uninhibited and it may become more or less friendly, more or less aggressive, more or less active, or more or less well-behaved.

Most cats starting Alprazolam are otherwise healthy and not on medications. If your cat is on any other medication when starting Alprazolam, or starts a new medication while on Alprazolam, make sure your vet is aware of **all** of your pet's medications. Dose of this or other medications may need to be altered if used in conjunction with other behavior-altering medication (such as tricyclic antidepressants, fluoxetine, etc) and you need to discuss with your veterinarian before giving this medication with antacids, sedatives or anesthetics, digoxin, certain antibiotics and antifungals, rifampin, and certain other medications to ensure that all medications can be given safely.



15 Seymour Lane  
Westmoreland, NY 13490  
(315) 853-2408  
Fax: 315 853-2409

## **Cats, Carriers and Vets: Tips on making it easier to get your cat to the vet (or wherever you need to take them)**

Many cats are fearful of car rides and veterinary visits, which makes it harder for us to give them good medical care. It also makes it difficult for cat owners to decide to take their nervous cats to the veterinarian for routine care and may delay an examination for an illness.

Cats can be trained to be much more comfortable with their carriers, cars, and the veterinary clinic. It takes a little preparation and patience, but will greatly improve your cat's comfort level and our ability to care for your pet. Here are some tips and links that will help you to help your cat!

Of course, if you have additional questions, just call us anytime!

### The Steps to Improved Carrier Behavior

- 1. Start carrier training as young as possible.** Starting as kittens teaches your pet that the carrier is just another fun hiding place, or play area, rather than a confined punishment space. Carriers that load from the top or especially those that come apart in the middle are helpful, as veterinarians can then take the top off and start their examination with the cat comfortably sitting in the bottom. Put the carrier in a room that the cat likes to be in, perhaps in a sunny location, with a soft piece of bedding to encourage exploration and voluntary use.
- 2. Encourage daily entry.** Every day, put a piece of kibble or a treat in the carrier. When the cat eats it, calmly praise/pet it and give it a few more treats. If the cat doesn't take the treat right away, just walk away; if you try to persuade the cat, they will become suspicious! It may take a few days, but the cat should start to eat the treats, although maybe when you are not watching.
- 3. Gradually close the door.** Once the cat happily goes into the carrier when you are around, gently close the door, give a treat, and open the door so that the cat does not feel trapped.
- 4. Extend the door-closure period.** After several days of this, leave the door closed and walk out of the room for a few seconds before returning and giving another treat. Gradually work up to carrying the carrier to a different place in the house.
- 5. Begin car rides.** Over days to weeks, move on to placing the carrier in the car, then short car rides, then a ride to our veterinary clinic for a treat (and petting from our staff if your cat is comfortable with it). If at any point your cat becomes nervous (crouching, ears back, etc.), go back a step and give treats until your cat is more comfortable with that level.
- 6. Cover the carrier when traveling.** When you start taking the carrier in the car, place a towel over it; cats usually feel safer this way.



7. **Add toys, treats or bedding into the carrier.** If your cat has favorite toys, treats, bedding, or brushes, please bring them to the clinic when you visit (for training visits and the actual exam). This will give your cat more familiar things that he/she associates with good feelings.

8. **Consider using Feliway® (pheromonal anti-anxiety spray) just before traveling.** When the time for the examination arrives, the routine will be familiar and your cat will be much more comfortable. With especially nervous or suspicious cats, Feliway® can help with the initial training period as well.

Some cats, despite your best efforts, still become scared of confinement or travel. In such instances, we can help you by prescribing additional anti-anxiety medications to help alleviate the stress.

Some videos to help you prepare:

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=egwBo0o2FN8>
- <http://www.catalystcouncil.org/resources/video/?Id=102>
- <http://www.catalystcouncil.org/resources/video/?Id=89>
- <http://www.catalystcouncil.org/resources/video/?Id=103>

### **When to Bottle Feed Kittens**

- Kittens must be bottle fed if removed from queen before they are weaned.
- Examples:
  - Queen is deceased, or abandoned the litter. Do not assume every litter is abandoned if the queen is not present. She may be out hunting. Check back later in the day if you're not sure. The kittens are usually safer with her than with you.
  - Queen hurting the kittens
  - Queen not producing enough milk (kittens not gaining weight)
  - Kittens in danger or otherwise need to be removed from location
- Please make sure kittens are too young to eat. Kittens begin eating at 3 to 4 weeks sometimes. If they are able to eat it is safer for them to go straight to food instead of the bottle.

#### Newborns

- Kittens are usually born at 3 to 4 oz.
- In the first 24 to 48 hours, they receive colostrum from the queen, containing potentially life-saving antibodies to diseases. If possible, they should be left with the queen for this period.
- A kitten is able to live even if he doesn't receive colostrum.

#### Husbandry

- Kittens should be provided with a heat source covered with a towel or blanket to dissipate the heat. The heat source could be a Snuggle-Safe, a hot water bottle, or a bag of fluids heated in the microwave. Any of these should be covered with a towel or blanket.
- Kittens should be kept in a small area, so they cannot move too far from each other or from their heat source. A cat carrier works well.
- Kittens should be provided a heat source until they are at least two weeks of age, if healthy. I usually provide one until 4 to 6 weeks.
- If you get an abandoned kitten that is already cold, it is important to warm him up prior to feeding. The formula will not be absorbed while the kitten is cold.
- If the kitten does not warm up and start moving quickly, it would be best to see a veterinarian. He may need fluids, dextrose or other supportive care.

#### Bottle Feeding

- Kittens should be bottle fed using a balanced kitten formula, i.e. KMR or JustBorn.
- These are available through veterinarians or pet stores.
- Bottles designed for kittens are available where you buy the formula.

#### Preparing the Bottle

- Kitten bottles need to have the nipple punctured. The hole should be very small initially, so as to prevent the formula flowing too quickly.
- You can use a small scissors to cut a very small hole in the tip of the nipple. (embroidery scissors or cuticle scissors work well for this).

## Formula

- The formula should be warmed to body temperature, and shaken so that the temperature is even throughout the bottle.
- The amount your kitten should be taking in depends on her age and weight. During the first week of life he should take in 60 ml/lb/day, during the second week about 70 ml/lb/day, during the third week about 90 ml/lb/day and at four weeks about 100 ml/lb/day.

## Positioning

- When bottle feeding, the kitten should be positioned on his stomach, simulating the position he would take when nursing from his queen. If kittens are held on their back, the risk of aspiration increases.

## Latching

- When the kitten “latches on” correctly, the nipple will be coming directly from the front of her mouth, between the canine teeth, and her ears will move when she sucks properly.
- Do not force the kitten to drink. You could cause aspiration if you squeeze the bottle or push down on the syringe too hard. Allow the kitten to latch on and suck as hard as she wants. If milk comes through the nose, she is drinking too fast. Detach the bottle, wipe the milk from her nose and try again later. The hole in the nipple may be too large.
- If she coughs or has difficulty breathing after aspirating, see a veterinarian. She may need antibiotics to prevent aspiration pneumonia.
- You can check if your kitten is swallowing by placing a finger gently on her throat as she nurses. You should feel her swallow every few times she sucks.
- In a very young kitten, the nipple can be placed on a syringe in order to more accurately measure how much formula is being taken in.

## Frequency of Feedings

- Kittens should be bottle fed every two to four hours throughout the day.
- I usually feed once overnight at 2 am until they are two weeks old, or longer if they are not doing well.
- Your kitten should be gaining weight at approximately 4 oz per week. By a month of age, she should be about a pound.
- You may want to buy a small scale to monitor your kitten’s weight, especially if you foster a lot of bottle babies.

## Elimination

- The queen will stimulate the kitten to urinate and defecate by licking his urogenital area.
- We simulate this by gently patting the urogenital area with a cotton ball.
- The urine should be clear or very lightly colored yellow. A deep yellow urine in a kitten indicates dehydration.
- I hold the kitten in my hand in a normal standing position, and use the cotton ball. I usually do this over a sink.
- Stimulating the urogenital area too roughly can result in irritation. Gently clean the area with warm water and apply Vaseline if the area becomes inflamed.
- Kittens may need their rear ends bathed periodically if they are urinating or defecating on themselves to avoid urine scald.
- Your kitten should be defecating daily. Most kittens have soft stool to pudding-like stool when on formula.
- Constipation is not unusual and can be helped by adding a small amount of canned pumpkin to the formula. I add about ¼ to ½ tsp per bottle.

- Diarrhea is also common and can be addressed by diluting the formula with water to about half its normal strength. Deworming with pyrantal pamoate can be done as early as two weeks of age if roundworms or hookworms are suspected. Probiotics can be helpful for diarrhea.

### Weaning

- Kittens can eat solid food starting at 3 to 4 weeks of age.
- A good food to start them on is a canned kitten diet or Hill's a/d diet mixed with formula to a gruel consistency. KMR also makes "2nd Step" kitten food but I have no experience with it.
- Once they begin eating well, you can offer food more frequently and start to decrease the frequency of offering the bottle.
- Until I am sure they're eating well, I offer the bottle after they eat solid food.

### Litter Box

- Now is a good time to introduce them to a litter box. Make sure the sides are short enough that they can get in it!

### Common Kitten Problems

- Upper respiratory tract infection can cause sneezing, coughing, nasal or ocular discharge, tongue ulcers or fever. This is contagious to other cats or kittens.
  - These kittens need to see a veterinarian or one of our technicians to have antibiotics prescribed, and supportive care started if needed. Try smelly food to encourage eating if they're on solid food.
- Neonatal ophthalmia is a conjunctivitis that occurs before the kitten opens her eyes. You will notice the closed eyes bulging and the skin becoming inflamed. It is important to treat this as soon as possible because the kitten's eyes will not develop normally if this is untreated.
  - These eyes need to be soaked and forced open several times a day. Antibiotics should be given orally and into the eyes.
- Fleas can cause a life threatening anemia in a young kitten. Unfortunately, many flea products are toxic to young kittens. Dawn dish detergent as a shampoo has some action against fleas, and will slow them down so you can pick them out with a flea comb.
  - Capstar is a pill that can be given to young kittens. It is approved for four weeks and older, but some veterinarians will give ¼ or ½ pill to younger kittens.
- In the first week of life, we can see an infected umbilicus. The umbilicus, where the cord is attached, will become red, swollen and may ooze pus. These kittens can become septic and need to be placed on antibiotics.
- Hypoglycemia will present as a suddenly cold, collapsed, weak kitten. Syringe some karo or maple syrup into the mouth and feed more frequently for the next few days. Keep them warm!!
- Failure to thrive (fading kitten syndrome) is a catchall term describing a kitten born apparently healthy but stops nursing, loses weight, becomes weak and sometimes dies.
- Our technicians and veterinarians can help you if any of these problems occur. He or she may prescribe antibiotics orally, or in the eye, and may rehydrate your kitten with subcutaneous, intravenous or intraosseous fluids.

### Developmental Milestones

- Kittens are born with their eyes closed. The eyes will open about 7 to 14 days. They are all born with blue eyes. The true iris color will be complete by 8 weeks of age.
- Kittens will begin to erupt their deciduous (baby) teeth at 3 weeks of age. They will begin to lose their deciduous teeth at 14 weeks old, beginning with their central incisors. They will have all their adult teeth by about 6 months of age.

- Kittens are born with their ear canals closed, so they cannot hear. The ear canals open between 10 and 14 days old.
- Kittens are born at about  $\frac{1}{4}$  lb. They should weigh 1 lb at 4 weeks of age. Until the age of 6 months, they should gain about a pound a month.
- The umbilical cord will usually drop off by about day 3 or more.
- A kitten should be able to stand by 10 days of age, and walk by 21 days.



15 Seymour Lane  
 Westmoreland, NY 13490  
 (315) 853-2408  
 Fax: 315 853-2409

## PARASITE PREVENTATIVES

Cats are always at risk of a multitude of different parasites. These parasites range of gastro-intestinal parasites to heartworm to fleas and ticks. Although there are many more parasites out there, these are the main parasites that we see in cats. As of yet, there is no one product that will get them all. We have to use a combination of medications for optimal effect.

### Gastrointestinal parasites

There are multiple different types of worms. Some examples include hookworms, roundworms, whipworms, giardia, coccidia, and tapeworms, among others. Any of them can cause from mild to severe GI signs. Hookworms and roundworms are ZOO NOTIC, meaning you or your children can become infected. These parasites will actually penetrate directly through a human's skin and the worm can be seen moving under one's skin. In some instances, the worms can even migrate into one's eyes.

### Heartworms

The heartworm parasite is transmitted through mosquito bites. Once infected, the parasite lives in the pulmonary vessels of their new host and will eventually cause heart failure

### Fleas

Fleas can be a constant battle once one's home is infested. There is NO product on the market that will kill all 4 life stages of the flea – meaning there is NO product that will kill/control fleas with a single monthly dose. It will take a minimum of 3 months of preventatives in order to clear a home. As a reminder, for every 1 adult flea you find on your pet, there is a minimum of 98 flea eggs. In addition, fleas are the host for tapeworms, and the cause of tapeworm infestations.

### Ticks

Ticks are a growing problem in the Central New York Region. Ticks can transmit many different diseases including Lyme disease, and Anaplasmosis. Although there are several products that are designed to kill the tick after it is already attached (Frontline for example), we highly recommend products that repel the tick so that it can't attach in the first place.

Here are a list of different products that are available for parasite control

	Seresto (8-mo. Collar)	Cheristin (Topical)	Revolution (Topical)	Profender
Fleas	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Ticks	Yes	No	No, kills Ear Mites	No
Hookworms	No	No	Yes	Yes
Roundworms	No	No	Yes	Yes
Whipworms	No	No	No	No
Tapeworms	No	No	No	Yes
Heartworms	No	No	Yes	No



15 Seymour Lane  
Westmoreland, NY 13490  
(315) 853-2408  
Fax: 315 853-2409

## **HOME DELIVERY AND ONLINE ORDERING**

We know that in today's day and age, people love shopping for the internet. We also know that there are a lot of online pet pharmacies that offer "deals" on many of your pet's medications.

CNY Veterinary has partnered with VetSource. VetSource is an online ordering company that is connected to one of our veterinary distributors. By ordering online with VetSource you are ensuring that you are getting the product directly from the manufacturer, at a great competitive price.

Hundreds of your veterinary products are available for home delivery including:

- Flea ,tick, & Heartworm preventives
- Chronic medications
- Nutrition products
- Prescription drugs
- Specialty pharmaceuticals

VetSource also has a great way to simplify your life with a Remind Me Home Delivery Program. The automatic home delivery program for monthly preventative products delivers quality, convenience and unbeatable value. You only have to pay for one dose at a time, and it is mailed automatically mailed to you monthly. In addition, THERE IS NO ADDITIONAL SHIPPING CHARGES.

No other home delivery service offers you the convenience of the monthly single doses delivered to your home.

To set up your account you can go directly to our website – [www.cnyveterinary.com](http://www.cnyveterinary.com) or if you prefer, you can call VetSource directly at 1-877-738-4443



15 Seymour Lane  
Westmoreland, NY 13490  
(315) 853-2408  
Fax: 315 853-2409

## Understanding your pet's blood work

"CBC, chem seven, stat!" This may sound familiar If you watch such popular television dramas as *ER*, *Chicago Hope*, and *Emergency Vets*. But do you know what the terms mean? Blood tests help doctors determine causes of illness accurately, safely, and quickly and let us monitor the progress of medical treatments. To help you understand your pet's test results, this guide explains common tests. A checkmark in any box indicates a significant abnormal finding on your pet's blood work. If you have questions, ask any staff member. We want you to understand our recommendations and be a partner in your pet's care.

### **Complete blood count (CBC)**

This is the most common blood test performed on pets and people. A CBC gives information on hydration status, anemia, infection, the blood's clotting ability, and the ability of the immune system to respond. This test is essential for pets with fevers, vomiting, diarrhea, weakness, pale gums, or loss of appetite. If your pet needs surgery, a CBC can detect bleeding disorders or other unseen abnormalities.

- **HCT** (hematocrit) measures the percentage of red blood cells to detect anemia and dehydration.
- **Hb and MCHC** (hemoglobin and mean corpuscular hemoglobin concentration) are the oxygen-carrying pigments of red blood cells.
- **WBC** (white blood cell count) measures the body's immune cells. Increases or decreases indicate certain diseases or infections.
- **GRANS and L/M** (granulocytes and lymphocytes/monocytes) are specific types of white blood cells.
- **EOS** (eosinophils) are a specific type of white blood cells that may indicate allergic or parasitic conditions.
- **PLT** (platelet count) measures cells that form blood clots.
- **RETICS** (reticulocytes) are immature red blood cells. High levels indicate regenerative anemia.
- **FIBR** (fibrinogen) Is an important clotting factor. High levels may indicate a dog is 30 to 40 days pregnant

### **Blood chemistries**

These common blood serum tests evaluate organ function, electrolyte status, hormone levels, and more. They are important in evaluating older pets, pets with vomiting and diarrhea or toxin exposure, pets receiving long-term medications, and health before anesthesia.

- **ALB** (albumin) Is a serum protein that helps evaluate hydration, hemorrhage, and intestinal, liver, and kidney disease.
- **ALKP** (alkaline phosphatase) elevations may indicate liver damage, Cushing's disease, and active bone growth in young pets. This test is especially significant in cats.
- **ALT** (alanine aminotransferase) is a sensitive indicator of active liver damage but doesn't indicate the cause.
- **AMYL** (amylase) elevations show pancreatitis or kidney disease.
- **AST** (aspartate aminotransferase) increases may indicate liver, heart, or skeletal muscle damage.
- **BUN** (blood urea nitrogen) indicates kidney function. An increased blood level is called azotemia and can be caused by kidney, liver, and heart disease, urethral obstruction, shock, and dehydration.
- **Ca** (calcium) deviations can indicate a variety of diseases. Tumors, hyperparathyroidism, kidney disease, and low albumin are just a few of the conditions that alter serum calcium.
- **CHOL** (cholesterol) is used to supplement diagnosis of hypothyroidism, liver disease, Cushing's disease, and diabetes mellitus.



- **Cl** (chloride) is an electrolyte often lost with vomiting and Addison's disease. Elevations often indicate dehydration.
- **Cortisol** is a hormone that is measured in tests for Cushing's disease (the low-dose dexamethasone suppression test) and Addison's disease (ACTH stimulation test).
- **CREA** (creatinine) reveals kidney function. This test helps distinguish between kidney and non-kidney causes of elevated BUN.
- **GGT** (gamma glutamyl transferase) is an enzyme that indicates liver disease or corticosteroid excess.
- **GLOB** (globulin) is a blood protein that often increases with chronic inflammation and certain disease states.
- **GLU** (glucose) Is a blood sugar. Elevated levels may indicate diabetes mellitus. Low levels can cause collapse, seizures, or coma.
- **K** (potassium) is an electrolyte lost with vomiting, diarrhea, or excessive urination. Increased levels may indicate kidney failure, Addison's disease, dehydration, and urethral obstruction. High levels can lead to cardiac arrest.
- **LIP** (lipase) is an enzyme that may indicate pancreatitis.
- **Na** (sodium) is an electrolyte lost with vomiting, diarrhea, and kidney and Addison's disease. This test helps indicate hydration status.
- **PHOS** (phosphorus) elevations are often associated with kidney disease, hyperthyroidism, and bleeding disorders.
- **TBIL** (total bilirubin) elevations may indicate liver or hemolytic disease. This test helps identify bile duct problems and certain types of anemia.
- **TP** (total protein) indicates hydration status and provides additional information about the liver, kidneys, and infectious diseases.
- **T4** (thyroxine) is a thyroid hormone. Decreased levels often signal hypothyroidism in dogs, while high levels indicate hyperthyroidism in cats.