



*The care and well-being of your pets, our patients, is our utmost concern.*

Congratulations on your new kitten! We are so excited that you brought your new feline family member to visit Town and Country Animal Hospital. We are grateful that you trust us with your new kitten's care. We understand that your kitten's first visit is very important and full of questions. We have provided this kitten information packet to help answer your questions and offer you some suggestions and tips on raising a happy and healthy kitten. If you have any questions about this or any other information about your new family member please feel free to contact us.

## **VACCINATIONS**

Between six and thirteen weeks of age your kitten will lose the disease protection it received from its mother, while beginning to build its own immune system. During this time it is vital to have your kitten vaccinated to ensure that your kitten be protected from many contagious diseases. We recommend that your kitten be vaccinated with the following vaccinations: Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Feline Calici Virus, Feline Panleukopenia, Rabies, Feline Leukemia Virus (if your kitten is at risk), and Bordetella (when your kitten is boarding). Below is a brief description of each vaccination.

**FVRCP/HCP:** (Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Feline Calici Virus, Feline Panleukopenia)

This vaccine is given in a series starting at 6-9 weeks and repeated every 3-4 weeks until your kitten is approximately 13 weeks of age

- **Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis & Feline Calici Virus-** two viral diseases that cause respiratory symptoms that can be serious or even fatal
- **Feline Panleukopenia-** a virus that attacks the intestinal tract and bone marrow

**Rabies:** an always fatal virus that attacks the nervous system; virus is transmitted by animal bites or through the saliva of an infected animal; vaccinations are started at 12 weeks of age, boosted at one year, and then every three years after that;

**REQUIRED BY THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI**

**Feline Leukemia Virus:** a virus that attacks the immune system leading to death; transmitted by licking, biting, or may be passed from the mother to her kittens during pregnancy; only given to kittens who go outdoors or are in contact with cats who spend time outdoors; vaccination usually given at 9 and 13 weeks of age

**Bordetella:** highly infectious cause of severe respiratory disease; vaccination usually given when kitten/cat is boarding at clinic

## **INTESTINAL PARASITES**

Kittens are frequently born with or become infected with intestinal parasites (worms). Intestinal parasites can cause vomiting, diarrhea, and/or blood in the stool. There are several types of intestinal parasites, some of which may be seen in your kitten's stool. At your kitten's first visit we will prescribe a general dewormer to eliminate the most common intestinal parasites. Always practice good hand washing techniques after handling your kitten and your kitten's stool to prevent transmission of any intestinal parasites.

Tapeworms are not treated with a general dewormer and can be seen as little short worms in the stool. These worms can dry on the fur and look like little grains of rice. Tapeworms are

contracted from ingesting a flea that was carrying a tapeworm larva. If you see these worms in your kitten's stool please let us know so that we may prescribe your kitten some medication.

## **HEARTWORMS**

Heartworms are actual worms that are transmitted by mosquitoes and take residence in a kitten's heart. Heartworm disease causes serious and permanent damage to the heart that leads to heart failure and/or death. To prevent heartworm disease it is necessary that your kitten take heartworm prevention once a month. Even if your kitten is going to be kept indoors at all times, it is important that you give your kitten its heartworm prevention every month without fail to prevent infection.

## **FLEAS**

Fleas are a year round problem in this area. It is much easier to prevent these parasites than to treat them. We carry several different prescription products that are used to prevent fleas. It is imperative that you treat your kitten once a month to control these parasites. Please ask us to speak to you about the best product for your kitten.

## **SPAY/NEUTER**

We strongly recommend any kitten that is not intended for breeding be spayed (female)/neutered (male) at approximately six months of age. Female cats should be spayed to decrease the chance of mammary (breast) cancer and prevent unwanted litters. Male cats should be neutered to help prevent urine spraying, roaming, fighting, and spread of diseases such as FIV (feline AIDS).

## **DECLAW**

Some owners may elect to have their kitten declawed to prevent their kitten from scratching. Declawing is a surgical procedure that removes the kitten's claws and a small portion of the bone on the front feet. A kitten that is declawed must be kept strictly indoors, because they cannot properly defend themselves outdoors. Please speak to one of our veterinarians to discuss if this procedure is right for your kitten.

## **DENTAL CARE**

It is important to take good care of your kitten's teeth. Dental health is a combination of home care (brushing) and periodic dental cleanings at the clinic. Begin gradually training your kitten to allow you to brush his/her teeth with kitten toothbrushes, finger-brushes, or wash cloths. Cat toothpaste should only be used (human toothpaste is toxic to cats). Your kitten's teeth should be brushed daily for optimum dental health. Make the experience enjoyable for your kitten with lots of praise and a few treats. Dental treats, such as Greenies® for cats, can also be used to encourage good oral health.

## **MICROCHIP**

We recommend that your kitten have some type of identification. We offer AVID® microchips that give your kitten a permanent identification that can be read at most veterinary clinics and shelters. They are placed under the skin with a simple injection and may be placed at any age.

## **DIET**

**What type**

We recommend feeding your kitten a high quality cat food specifically formulated for kittens (look for food manufactured by major companies with “AAFCO” printed on the label). We recommend that you feed your kitten Hill’s Science Diet®, which is available at the clinic and comes in many varieties. We also recommend feeding canned food as it is more beneficial to a cat’s oral and kidney health. Do not feed your kitten any people food, including milk, as this can cause vomiting and/or diarrhea. Some people food is even toxic to cats.

### **How often**

Most young kittens should be allowed free choice of food throughout the day. However, some cats will eventually become overweight when allowed to eat as much as they want. As your kitten reaches adulthood it is best to feed him/her one to two times a day.

### **Treats**

It’s very tempting to offer your new kitten lots of treats, however, be careful not to provide too many treats. They are usually very high in calories and can cause your kitten to gain excess weight.

### **Changing food**

It is important to change your kitten’s food gradually. Changing the food too quickly can cause your kitten to have vomiting and/or diarrhea. Slowly begin to add your kitten’s new food in with his/her old food over a course of five to seven days.

### **LITTER TRAINING**

Most kittens will naturally take to the litter box. Both scoop type litter and clay litters are acceptable. In the beginning you may want to offer two litter boxes with each type of litter to see if your kitten has a preference for a particular litter. The litter box should be cleaned daily, and avoid using litters that are scented as cats are extremely sensitive to the chemicals that they contain. There should always be one more litter box than the number of cats that are in the household (ie. if you have two cats you need three litter boxes).

### **HOURS OF OPERATION**

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday      7:30am-6:00pm  
Wednesday    7:30 am-12:00 pm  
Saturday      8:00 am-12:00 pm

Town and Country Animal Hospital  
601-261-3839

**[www.tomricksdvm.net](http://www.tomricksdvm.net)**

## **COMMON TOXINS/POISONS**

- ❑ Houseplants: Philodendron, Poinsettias, Mistletoe
- ❑ Medicines: **never** give any human medication without speaking to a veterinarian
- ❑ Automotive products: any liquid out of a car is poisonous
- ❑ Household products: read all packaging before using around house
- ❑ Insecticides: read all packaging before using around the house
- ❑ Rat Poison: keep all poisons out of reach of your kitten, if you suspect ingestion call the clinic or E-vets immediately
- ❑ Food: chocolate (all forms), onion, onion powder, raisins, grapes, salt , macadamia nuts, avocados, coffee, garlic, alcoholic beverages, xylitol (sugar free gum), raw yeast dough, moldy/spoiled foods, tea leaves

## **EMERGENCY INFORMATION**

Town and Country Animal Hospital is affiliated with **Emergency Vets.**

If you have an after hours emergency you can reach the emergency veterinarian and/or technician at **601-450-3838.**

Information provided is for informational purposes only and is not a substitute for veterinary care. Please contact Town and Country Animal Hospital at 601-261-3839 for more information. If your pet is sick, injured, or in need of medical attention, contact us or an emergency animal hospital immediately