



NEW KITTEN GUIDE

Congratulations!

Welcome to you and your new kitten. We are pleased that you have chosen our team to care for this newest member of your family.

We know how much fun having a kitten can be. You want to make sure your house is kitten-proofed, you have a bed for him to sleep in, lots of toys to keep him busy and a carrier to take him to the vet safely. You will provide him with good nutrition and lots of loving attention.

In the coming weeks and months, as you watch your kitten grow, you will most likely have questions. In this kitten pack, we have compiled some information that we hope will help answer those questions. If you cannot find the information you are looking for, please do not hesitate to call us – we are an enormous resource for you.

We enjoy watching kittens grow and mature from little balls of fur into all their adult glory, so please bring your kitten in anytime for a weight check, treats or just for some love from us. We look forward to seeing you.

Sincerely,

Dr. Breanne Galloway, Dr. Teresa Millar, Dr. Margaret Fisher, Dr. Emese Bonniere, Dr. Alyssia Armbrorst and the team at Steveston Veterinary Hospital

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VACCINES

Protecting your best friend

One of the most important 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 mom gave her kittens immunity from disease for the first few weeks of life by providing disease-fighting antibodies in her milk. After that period, it's up to you, with our help and advice, to provide that protection.

When should my cat be vaccinated?

The immunity that a kitten has at birth begins to diminish sometime between 6 and 12 weeks of age. The first set is usually given by the breeder between 6 and 8 weeks. The general rule of thumb is a set of vaccines is required every 4 weeks until the kitten is 16 weeks of age or older. Thereafter, your cat will require vaccines at a regular interval, typically once yearly. Some of the vaccines we give only need a booster every 3 years once the cat has reached full maturity. You will need to follow our kitten vaccine schedule quite closely; if you wait too long between vaccine boosters, you may have to start all over again.

Which vaccines should my cat receive?

We believe that cats should be protected against those diseases which are most common, highly contagious and can cause serious illness or death. We recommend vaccination against Feline Calicivirus, Feline Panleukopenia, Feline Herpesvirus and Rabies. Other vaccines may be recommended based on risk factors such as heredity, environment and lifestyle.

How do vaccines work?

Vaccines contain small quantities of altered or 'killed' viruses or pieces of the virus. When administered, they stimulate your cat's immune system to produce disease-fighting cells and proteins (antibodies) to protect against disease.

How effective is vaccination?

Like any drug, treatment or surgical procedure, vaccinations cannot be 100% guaranteed. However, used in conjunction with proper nutrition and clean housing, vaccination is your cat's best defense against disease. The efficacy of most vaccinations is very good for most patients.

Are vaccines safe?

All vaccines undergo safety trials to receive licensing in Canada. While they are considered very safe, vaccines can still cause reactions in a very small number of pets. Most commonly, cats may be a bit lethargic and may have a fever for a day following the vaccination. Some cats may develop a small, non-painful lump at the site of the vaccine injection. Very rarely, a cat will develop facial swelling or a generalized allergic reaction (anaphylaxis), with vomiting, diarrhea, breathing difficulties and collapse. Any of these symptoms need to be treated immediately.

What is the Kitten Vaccination Schedule?

All kittens need vaccinations to help keep them healthy. Vaccinations, by definition, protect your kitten from contracting specific diseases. Vaccinations are divided into two groups:

Core cat vaccinations are those that protect against especially common and/or particularly dangerous disease and are recommended for all kittens and adult cats. Non-core vaccinations are not necessarily recommended for all cats. Instead, these vaccines are recommended only for those cats that are at high risk of infection. In the case of non-core vaccinations your cat's lifestyle must be evaluated to determine the risk of disease and whether the risk associated with vaccination is greater than the risk of your cat getting the disease.

Kitten Vaccine Schedule

We recommend that all kittens get vaccinated for Feline Calicivirus, Feline Panleukopenia Virus and Feline Rhinotracheitis Virus. These are all diseases that are frequently found in the general cat population. Protection against all three of these viruses is provided in a single combination vaccine. This vaccine should be given at 8, 12 and 16 weeks.

Rabies virus infection is generally transmitted by a bite wound. Only mammals are susceptible to infection and wildlife is the primary animal group where infection occurs. The most common wildlife species to spread rabies to humans and domestic animals in Canada are the skunk, bat, raccoon, fox and coyote. In BC, the primary source of rabies are bats and they are able to gain access to indoor areas. In 2004, the virus was found in skunks in Stanley Park and in 2007 an unvaccinated cat died from rabies after it was exposed to a rabid bat that flew into its house. Once an animal shows symptoms of rabies, the disease is nearly untreatable. Once symptoms begin, death occurs within 10 days. Initially the symptoms are a change in personality. The virus affects nervous tissue and the brain so animals can suffer hallucinations. Weakness and paralysis sets in. The larynx is paralyzed resulting in an inability to swallow. Once the muscles of the chest wall are paralyzed, the animal cannot breathe and they die. Rabies prevention is accomplished with vaccination and limiting exposure to wildlife. Rabies vaccination is often required in animals travelling to other countries. Kittens can be vaccinated for Rabies at 16 weeks of age.

Cats that go outside should also get vaccinated for Feline Leukemia Virus. Feline leukemia Virus (FeLV) is passed from one cat to another through saliva, blood, and to some extent, urine and feces. Grooming and fighting seem to be the most common ways for infection to spread. Kittens can contract the disease from their mothers either through the uterus or through the milk. The disease is often spread by apparently healthy cats. Exposure to infected cats increase the risk of contracting the infection and kittens and young adult cats are the most susceptible. If you think there is even a small possibility that your kitten will go outside at some point, we would recommend you have the Feline Leukemia Virus vaccination done, at least for their first year. New cats or kittens over eight weeks of age should be tested for the virus before being introduced to a multi-cat household. We recommend that kittens are tested for the virus also before vaccination. Vaccination can begin at 8 to 12 weeks of age and requires a booster vaccine repeated three to four weeks later.

LITTER BOXES

Kittens need to learn to use a litter box for their bathroom habits and there are a few things to know about how to set this up for a successful outcome.

The location, and also the number, of litter pans are important. Provide more than one location in the household for litter boxes. Consider having one on each floor if space allows. Avoid moving boxes around. The general rule for the number of litter boxes you need is one litter box per cat plus one additional box. The type of litter can be important. Most cats like an unscented clumping litter. Scented litters can be unpleasant and even painful to cats, since their sense of smell is much more sensitive than a humans'. Some cats are very picky with the type of litter they will use so you may need to try a few different types. Experiment with different depths of litter. Most cats prefer 1 to 1.5 inch depth. Try not to alternate the litter depth or type within the existing litter boxes. Provide large size litter boxes that the cats are comfortable moving around in. Some cats will not feel comfortable in a covered box.

Keep litter boxes away from rooms that contain noisy equipment such as furnaces or washing machines. The noises may frighten your cat and make him reluctant to use the litter pan. Keep food and water dishes in a separate room or more than 5 feet away from the litter boxes. Scoop the litter once to twice daily. Empty out the litter tray once every one to two weeks. Cats are fastidious by nature and do not like soiled litter boxes. Keep enough litter in a clean litter box so that your cat will be able to hide the urine scent after covering it.

FEEDING YOUR KITTEN

A kitten's weight may double or even triple during the first few weeks of life. To support this growth and also the high activity levels, your kitten may have triple the energy needs of an adult cat. These high energy needs make it harder for kittens to get enough calories in one meal. Most kittens will want to eat at least three or four meals a day. Kittens also have a higher requirement for protein, amino acids, and minerals, as well as some vitamins. It is recommended that you feed your kitten specially formulated kitten food until one year of age. It is important that young kittens have at least some canned food in their diet. Cats are often considered to be picky eaters. If a cat has been fed the same food over and over, they often will get a fixed preference for a particular flavor and texture. This can make it difficult to change the diet later in life if there is a medical issue that requires a special diet. A kitten that has been exposed early on to different textures and flavours will be less likely to be finicky.

Like all cats, the domestic cat is a carnivore (primarily a meat eater). They need animal protein to survive. Canned cat foods tend to be higher in protein than dry foods as the dry foods need some carbohydrates to hold it together. That doesn't mean that you can't feed dry food to your kitten. Most people will give a combination of the two. Some canned food at breakfast and dinner and then dry food several times during the day. Dry food can be useful if you want to use a treat ball or treat maze to encourage some of the hunting behaviours that kittens aren't using when they are kept indoors.

FEEDING GUIDELINES

Cats are primarily solitary hunters and eaters. Most cats prefer to eat alone. As hunters, cats prefer food that is close to their own body temperature. If you are taking canned cat food from the refrigerator, it should be warmed in the microwave or by the addition of some hot water. Cats are obligate carnivores, which means that they must have animal source protein in their diet. Cats can also use many nutrients from plants.

Cats can be choosy about where they eat. The presence of lots of activity, noise, other animals or dirty food containers can deter a cat from eating. Although many cats are content to eat a single food, some cats may develop finicky eating habits and become very selective about what foods they'll accept. Feeding your cat two or three different cat foods provides flavor variety, and may prevent your cat from developing an exclusive preference for a single food.

A cat's nutritional requirements change through different stages of life. In choosing a cat food, it is important to use a food that is appropriate for the age of the cat. It is also important to read the ingredients list. Look for foods in which meat, meat byproducts, or seafood are listed among the first few ingredients, as this indicates the food probably contains enough animal-source ingredients to supply essential amino acids and fatty acids.

A kitten's weight may double or even triple during the first few weeks of life. To support this growth and the high activity levels of kittens, they may have triple the energy needs of an adult cat. Kittens also have a higher requirement for protein, amino acids and minerals. For these reasons, most experts recommend you feed your kitten specially formulated kitten food until age 1 year. Kittens should have at least some canned food to eat as part of their diet. Very small kittens have very small teeth and can't chew dry food well. Young cats need more frequent feeding. It is ok to "free feed" kittens, making food available to them all day long and then transition to meals around four to six months of age.

It is ok to feed you kitten treats, as long as you follow the "10% calorie rule". This means that treats should make up less than 10% of your kitten's total calorie intake.

Commercial cat foods are formulated as dry, semimoist, and canned. These products differ in water content, protein level, caloric density, palatability, and digestibility.

Choosing the type of food may be a matter of what your cat prefers. Some cats like canned food, some like dry food, and some like a combination of the two.

Maintaining a healthy weight is another important consideration. Cats vary greatly in the amount of food they need to consume to ensure they don't become over- or underweight. Obesity is a common nutrition-related problem in cats, and makes cats susceptible to a number of health problems, including arthritis and diabetes.

Simple guidelines for feeding your cat:

Feeding, sleeping/resting, and litter box areas should be separate from each other. Ideally each cat should have its own food and water station, preferably in a quiet, low traffic place where your cat likes to spend time.

Water bowls should be wide and shallow; water should be fresh daily; some cats prefer to drink from a dripping faucet or a water fountain.

Water bowls should be separate from the food dishes; cats do not like to smell their food when they are drinking water and they do not like food particles in their water.

Many cats eat more readily from shallow bowls or plates so their whiskers don't touch the sides.

Water and food dishes should be kept clean.

The key nutrients your kitten needs are:

Proteins: Proteins help build your kitten's tissues.

Fats: Fats help keep his skin and hair healthy. They also help your kitten develop a healthy brain and vision.

Carbohydrates: Help give your kitten energy.

Vitamins and Minerals: "Complete" and "balanced" kitten foods have the right amounts of vitamins and minerals.

Water: Although canned/wet kitten food contains up to 78% water and can provide some of your kitten's water needs, it's not enough. Cats of all ages should always have a source of fresh, clean water available to them.

INDOORS OR OUTDOORS?

Many people allow their cats freedom to go outside to enjoy natural behaviours such as hunting and territory patrolling. For some, it is important that their cats have this freedom. For others the dangers of the environment are too great and they keep their cats indoors. There is also the concern that cats outdoors can threaten songbirds and other wildlife.

Here are some of the most important reasons to keep your cat indoors:

1. To monitor your cat's urinary tract/bowel health
Male cats can get a potentially fatal urethral obstruction and having trouble urinating or blood in the urine is the first sign of a problem. Without a litter pan, you could miss the warning signs which cat put his life at risk.
2. An indoor cat is relatively safe from many diseases
Cats allowed free access to the outdoors will come into contact with other cats. This can allow the transmission of parasites and more serious diseases such as Feline leukemia, Feline distemper or Feline immunodeficiency virus. Hunting mice and birds can expose cats to parasitic and bacterial diseases.
3. Indoor cats do not get hit by car
Even the most careful driver cannot avoid hitting a cat that runs across the street in front of a car. Cars continue to be a leading cause of mortality in cats, even in the country.
4. Indoor cats are safe from wildlife dangers and dogs.
Outdoor cats are often prey to coyotes, even in the city and can be seriously injured or killed by raccoons, even in their own backyards. They can also be attacked by other cats and by dogs.
5. Indoor cats don't create neighbor problems
Even "well-bred" cats will venture into neighbors' yards when allowed to roam free, and most people will object to cats using their gardens as litter boxes.
6. Indoor cats rarely get abscesses from fighting
Cats are very territorial and will defend their territory if challenged by another cat. At the very least, these territorial battles often result in abscessed wounds which can cause significant damage. Bite wounds can also allow cats to contract Feline Leukemia Virus or Feline Immunodeficiency Virus.

7. Indoor cats can get plenty of exercise
If cats are provided with interactive toys, climbing towers, scratching posts and other indoor toys, they can get all the exercise they need.
8. Indoor cats are not a danger to wildlife
Cats are natural predators, and left to their own devices outdoors, will eventually hunt and kill birds, rats and other small wildlife. Loss of songbirds due to cats is a particular concern.
9. Indoor cats don't get lost
As outdoor cats widen their outdoor territory, there is a greater chance that they can get lost.

If your cat is to be kept indoors, there needs to be a commitment to enriching the environment so that they can continue to exhibit their natural behaviours like climbing, hunting, exploring and roaming their territory. There are many things you can do to keep your indoor cat happy.

YOU, YOUR CAT AND PARASITES

Like any member of your family, it is important to keep your cat healthy and free of parasites. It is fairly common for a cat to become infected with an internal or external parasite at some point in its life, especially if they go outdoors. Parasites can affect your cat in a variety of ways, ranging from simple irritation to causing life-threatening conditions if left untreated. Some parasites can infect and transmit disease to people. Control and prevention of internal and external parasites is recommended for all cats, regardless of lifestyle. There are also seasonal and lifestyle factors that affect the risk of infection with parasites. All kittens should be treated with broad-spectrum parasiticide when they are first brought home and then monthly until they are 4 to 6 months of age. At 6 months of age, they can then start on a seasonal protocol to treat against intestinal parasites and fleas based on their risk of infection. Cats can come in contact with parasites during hunting or accessing areas where wildlife live. Here are some of the common parasites found in this area.

Roundworms

Roundworms are the most common of the parasitic worms found inside a cat. Almost all cats become infected with them at some time in their lives, usually as kittens. Your cat may ingest infective roundworm eggs from the environment or by eating mice or other small animals carrying the worm larvae. Infection in kittens usually occurs through the mother's milk.

Adult roundworms live in the cat's intestines. Most cats will not have signs of infection but if the worm burden is high, they may show vomiting, weight loss, dull hair, and a potbellied appearance. Roundworms may move into the lungs causing a cough. Roundworms can pose a risk to humans. Roundworm eggs may accumulate in significant numbers in the soil where pets deposit feces. They can cause eye, lung, heart and neurologic signs in people.

Giardia

Giardia is a single-celled parasite that lives in your cat's intestine. It infects older cats but more frequently infects kittens. Cats become infected when they drink contaminated water sources or eat substances that have been soiled with feces. Many cats infected

with Giardia do not get any disease but some cats will develop diarrhea that can be difficult to treat. People can also get Giardia, causing diarrhea or other problems but rarely is the disease spread from cats.

Tapeworms

Tapeworms are long, flat worms that attach themselves to your cat's intestine. A tapeworm body consists of multiple parts or segments, and tapeworm infections are usually diagnosed by finding segments, which appear as small white worms that may look like grains of rice or sesame seeds, on the rear end of your cat or in their feces. There are several different kinds of tapeworms and several sources of infection. *Dipylidium caninum* is the most common tapeworm and it uses fleas as its intermediate host. *Taenia* and *Echinococcus* species use small rodents, rabbits or deer as their hosts. To prevent tapeworm infection, try to keep your cat from coming in contact with intermediate hosts. Because fleas are the most common intermediate hosts, consistent safe and effective flea control is an essential preventive measure. If you think your cat is infected with tapeworms, we can do a stool test to accurately diagnose the problem and then provide safe and effective treatment options.

Fleas

Fleas are the most common external parasite found on cats. Although fleas are more likely to be a problem during warm-weather months, they can also cause problems during cooler seasons due to their ability to continue their life cycle indoors. Cats are very skilled groomers so you may not see any obvious fleas on your cat. But your cat's constant nibbling and licking may lead to hair loss and crusting of the skin. Fleas can also cause skin allergies and can transmit other parasites, such as tapeworms, to your cat. To check to see if your cat has fleas, you can look for the small brown insects but they may be difficult to find. You can also look for flea dirt (flea feces) by briskly combing or rubbing the hair and watch for black flecks that fall off. If you transfer these black flecks to a damp piece of paper towel, they will appear red or rust-coloured. Most flea problems can be managed by treating and preventing fleas on your cat. There are many safe and effective treatments available. Talk to us about how to best break the flea life cycle on your pet.

Ear Mites

Ear mites are tiny mites that live on the surface of ear canal skin of cats. They are barely visible to the human eye. Ear mites are contagious and can travel from the ears of an infected cat to any other cats in close contact. Cats who are infected with ear mites have very itchy and irritated ears and frequently scratch at their ears or shake their heads. The ears can become red and there usually is a brownish ear wax, similar in appearance to coffee grounds. Ear mites can be treated with a number of medications. Because ear mites are contagious, all pets in the household should be treated. Ear mites are not generally considered a risk to humans.

Feline Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis is a parasitic disease that can affect most animals. Cats, however, are the only animal which the parasite can complete its life cycle. Cats become infected by *Toxoplasma gondii* by eating the immature forms of the parasite in other infected animals, such as mice. The parasites then mature in the cat's intestines and are excreted in the cat's feces. If another animal inadvertently consumes those feces, they will become infected. Toxoplasmosis is a disease that can be transmitted to people. If

cats are infected, they can be contagious to people during a three-week period of time. Cats who are infected with toxoplasmosis will frequently have no symptoms. A small number of cats might develop diarrhea, or respiratory problems. Toxoplasmosis can be a serious disease in humans. In pregnant women, there is potential for significant damage to the developing fetus. People become infected by inadvertently ingesting the organism in the contaminated feces of infected cats, and also through eating raw or undercooked meats. To reduce the risk of contracting toxoplasmosis, meats should be thoroughly cooked and contact with infectious cat feces should be avoided. Preventing your cats from hunting and consuming other animals will minimize their risk of contracting this parasite. Any raw meat is potentially contaminated with *Toxoplasma gondii*, so all meat fed to your cat must be thoroughly cooked. Cleaning the litter box on a daily basis will decrease the likelihood of cats becoming infected by contact with the feces of cats who are excreting the organism.

Ticks

Ticks are fairly common ectoparasites of cats. Tick exposure will depend on where you live, the time of year and the habits of your cat. Ticks attach to your cat by inserting their mouth parts into your cat's skin. Many ticks also produce a sticky, glue-like substance that helps them remain attached. After attaching, ticks begin feeding on your cat's blood. The places where ticks attach can become red and irritated. Many cats are able to groom them off, but often they show up in locations which your cat can't reach. You need to be careful if you are trying to take a tick off your cat. You don't want to leave the mouth parts in the cat's skin. We have some tick removers available or we can remove the tick for you so that this doesn't happen. The best way to prevent ticks from attaching to your cat is by the use of a tick control product. We can advise you on the best product for your cat.

Heartworms

Heartworms are common in many places in the United States and in Canada. While they are not a big problem in the Lower Mainland, if you are travelling for holidays with your pet you should be using a preventive treatment to avoid this damaging parasite. Heartworm larvae are transmitted to cats by mosquito bites. The larvae migrate to the heart or lungs and mature into worms that can grow to 16 inches in length. Heartworm infection can affect many different organs of the cat including heart, lungs, kidneys and liver. Early in the disease, cats are often asymptomatic but if left untreated, heartworm infection can be fatal. Prevention is the key for this disease as treatment can be difficult. Any cat that is travelling to the US, eastern Canada or even to the Okanagan should be put on preventive medication. Let us know your summer travel plans so that we can help you keep your cat safe.

SPAYING OR NEUTERING

We recommend surgical sterilization of all cats at 6 months of age. The benefits of early sterilization include:

- Reduced risk of disease
- Shorter surgery times
- Lower complication rates
- Lowered risk for developing mammary neoplasia

We don't want kittens having kittens. Female cats can start going into heat as early as 4 months of age especially in the winter. They will continue to have heats every few weeks until they are bred. Cats in heat will often have a change in behaviour; they will vocalize more, rub against their owners or pace back and forth. They may lose their appetite and may try to mark their territory by spraying urine. They will want to escape the house to find a mate. Male cats may start spraying urine to mark their territory outside and inside the house when they become mature. Their urine will also start to have a much stronger odor. They may also become more aggressive and territorial.

MICROCHIPS AND TATTOOS

Animals with permanent identification are reunited with their owners more frequently than animals with no identification. Types of permanent identification include tattoos and microchips. At Steveston Veterinary Hospital, we recommend either type of identification. Each has its pros and cons. More and more we are using microchips as the most frequent form of identification.

Microchips

A microchip uses passive Radio Frequency Identification (RFID), where a unique code on the chip is read by a microchip scanner. Microchips are not tracking devices, but they are permanent identification for your pet. A microchip is implanted by using a needle to place the chip under the pet's skin, usually between the shoulder blades. It takes only seconds to place and can be done while the animal is awake. Often we place a microchip at the same time as the spay or neuter surgery while the pet is under anesthesia but it can also be done at a regular appointment. Microchips can be tracked world-wide. When the microchip is implanted, there is a registration form that the company receives that provides the information on the pet and the owners. It is important to keep this information up-to-date so that if a pet is lost, the owners can be contacted. You can also choose to have the microchip information registered with the BC Pet Registry Program which is a centralized pet identification database managed by the British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BC SPCA). For more information on this program, check out the BC SPCA website under Programs and Services.

Tattoos

Before microchips were used in pet identification, we always used tattoos. Breeders also often tattoo their litters of kittens. There is a province-wide Tattoo Identification Program in place which was started by the College of Veterinarians of British Columbia (CVBC) in 1987. This program is now within the BC Pet Registry Program of the BC SPCA. Tattoos are done only when the animal is under anesthesia. Tattoos are only registered in BC and they can become difficult to read as the pet gets older. Again, as with microchips, it is important to keep your contact information current so that you can be contacted if needed. The tattoo information is kept at your veterinary hospital and you can also choose to have the information registered with the BC Pet Registry.

KITTEN PROOFING YOUR HOME

Having a new kitten means you need to be looking at your house from a kitten's point of view to try to prevent them from getting into trouble. Kittens are very adventurous and can get into spaces that you might not anticipate so some planning may help you avoid future problems.

Cats of all ages are playful animals. They love to "hunt" things that they find on the ground. There are a few things that can cause problems if they are chewed or eaten. Here are some things you need to look out for and remove when you have a kitten moving into your house:

- Strings
- Twist ties
- Hair ties
- Ribbons
- Rubber bands
- Plastic bags

Besides these loose items, there are other things that your kitten may try to chew or play with, including electrical cords, which can cause severe burns if they are chewed, or an iron that may fall if your kitten plays with the dangling cord. We have had a kitten that got into someone's fishing gear and ended up with a fish hook in its cheek. We have also had to remove a foam toe separator from a young cat's stomach after it chewed one up and swallowed it. Needles and thread can cause trouble if the cat swallows them. We have seen needles either stuck at the back of the throat or passing through the intestinal tract.

Plants can be toxic to cats. Be careful what your kitten has access to. Lilies have a special toxicity for cats and all parts of the plant are toxic. Even minor exposure, for example just a few bites of a leaf, can cause toxicosis and cats can die from this exposure. It's important to check that any cut flowers that are brought into your house are safe for kittens to be around.

Check online for a complete list of toxic plants.

Cats and kittens can find many unusual places to explore and hide. Make sure that there are no unsafe sites in your house. Keep the lids and doors closed on garbage cans, laundry bins, washers and dryers.

Monitor hot areas in the house and make sure your cat doesn't have access to places like the fireplace, wood stoves or stovetop surfaces. Keep electric heaters unplugged and stored when not in use and supervise the heater when in use.

SCRATCHING BEHAVIOUR

Cats and kittens love to scratch and you want them to scratch the things they are supposed to scratch and not your furniture or carpets. Scratching is largely a marking behaviour that deposits scent (pheromones) from special glands on the cat's paws into his or her territory and removes the translucent covering, or sheath, from the claws. Because scratching is an innate behaviour, it is not one we want to stop. However, cats can be taught to scratch on more appropriate objects like scratching posts. Ways to direct your cat's scratching behaviour include identifying the types of surfaces that she likes to scratch on and the way she likes to scratch. Some cats like to scratch on carpets, others on cardboard or wood. Some prefer to scratch on vertical surfaces

while others prefer horizontal surfaces. Once you figure out the preferred target materials and orientation, you can buy a scratching post that suits her needs. Scratching posts come in all shapes, sizes and textures and include carpet, sisal, wood and cardboard surfaces. Some are tall so the cat can stretch while scratching and some have horizontal surfaces for cats that prefer to scratch in that orientation. Redirect your cat's scratching behaviour by placing the post next to an area your cat likes to scratch. It can then be gradually moved to a location of your choice. If your cat scratches in several locations, provide a post near each one. You can entice your cat with treats or catnip placed on or around the posts. There is also a pheromone product that can be applied to the post to make the cat attracted to it. Another way to minimize scratching damage is by regularly trimming your cat's nails.

CAT COMMUNICATION

Cats are not the same as dogs, or people, in the ways that they communicate. They can be less social than many other species. Learning how to communicate with cats will help our relationship with them. Cats primarily rely on smell, not sight, to communicate with other cats, locate food, and detect predators.

Cats communicate by "marking" objects and other animals. These marks are scents (pheromones) released from special glands located in the forehead, cheeks, tail base, and paws when they scratch and rub their body on objects.

Allowing your cat to mark scratching posts and other appropriate objects in the home will reduce the temptation for them to mark using urine.

SLEEPING HABITS

Cats are natural predators. Cats in the wild need to hunt regularly throughout the day, which requires an immense amount of energy. They must be able to rest between each hunt so they are ready to pounce quickly when prey approaches. Though most house cats do not have the same requirements for hunting, they still have similar sleeping habits to their wild relatives. Cats naturally sleep throughout the day and are most active between dusk and dawn. They can adjust their sleeping schedules so that they're awake to play when you're home. Even then, cats will sleep a maximum of 16 hours a day.

Cats are able to be alert even when they are sleeping. If you touch a sleeping cat, you can see how it will instantly come into action with complete alertness. Cats are patterned in a way that they can get all the rest they want and still stay alert. Cats actually dream about 30 to 40% of the time when they are sleeping.

FIRST AID FOR YOUR PET

Always remember that any first aid administered to your pet should be followed by immediate veterinary care. First aid care is not a substitute for veterinary care, but it may save your pet's life until it receives veterinary treatment.

If your pet is injured, it could be in pain and is also most likely scared and confused. They may not even recognize you. You need to be careful to avoid getting hurt, bitten

or scratched. Never assume that even the gentlest pet will not bite or scratch if injured. Pain and fear can make animals unpredictable or dangerous.

Don't attempt to hug an injured pet; this might only scare your pet or cause them more pain. Always keep your face away from its mouth.

Perform any examination slowly and gently. Stop if your animal becomes more agitated.

Call your veterinarian or an emergency veterinary clinic before you move your pet so they can be ready for you when you arrive.

Poisoning and Exposure to Toxins

In general, any products that are harmful for people are also harmful for pets. Some examples of common poisons include cleaning products, rodent poisons and antifreeze. There are also some common food items that may be harmful to your pet. If your pet's skin or eyes are exposed to a toxic product, follow the product label instructions for people exposed to the product. If you know your pet has consumed something that may be harmful, or if the animal is having seizures, losing consciousness, is unconscious or is having difficulty breathing, telephone your veterinarian, emergency veterinary clinic or the Animal Poison Control Center hotline (1-888-426-4435) immediately. There is a fee for the consultation.

If possible, have the following information available:

- Species, breed, age, sex, weight and number of animals involved
- Symptoms
- Name/description of the substance in question; the amount the animal was exposed to and the length of time since the exposure
- Have the product container/packaging available for reference

If you can't reach anyone for help and the poisoning occurred within the last 3 hours, consider inducing vomiting. Do not induce vomiting if your pet is unconscious, seizing, unable to stand or is having trouble breathing. Also do not induce vomiting if the poison is a petroleum product, a cleaning solution, or a strong acid or alkali.

Seizures

- A seizure is any sudden and uncontrolled movement of the animal's body caused by abnormal brain activity. Seizures may be very severe and affect all of the body, or quite mild, affecting only a portion of the pet.
- Seizure activity that lasts longer than 3 to 5 minutes can cause severe side effects, such as fluid in the lungs or brain. A dramatic rise in body temperature can also result, causing internal organ damage.
- Seizures can be caused by epilepsy, toxins, low blood sugar, brain tumors and other medical conditions.
- Protect your pet from injury during or after the seizure. Keep them from falling from a height and keep away from water.
- Remove other pets from the area as some pets become aggressive after a seizure.
- Protect yourself from being bitten.
- Do not try to restrain the pet.
- Time the seizure (they may last from a few seconds to a couple of minutes).
- If the seizure lasts over 3 minutes, cool the pet with cool water on the ears, belly and feet, and seek veterinary attention at once.

- If your pet has two or more seizures in a 24-hour period, seek veterinary attention.
- Do not put your hands in the pet's mouth. (They do not swallow their tongues.) Do not slap, throw water on, or otherwise try to startle your pet out of a seizure. Stay calm and quiet and be ready to help them when the seizure ends.

Fractures

- You may need to muzzle your pet in order to stabilize or move them. Stop bleeding with direct pressure.
- Open fractures, where there is an open wound, should be covered with a sterile gauze dressing if possible.
- Gently lay your pet on a flat surface for support.
- Splinting the fracture at home without any pain medication increases the risk of being bitten, and actually may make the fracture worse. Some fractures cannot be splinted.
- Prevent further damage by having your pet secured with a towel or blanket.

Eye Injuries

- If you notice your pet squinting or protecting the eye, an abnormal redness to the white part of the eye, any abnormal appearance of the eyeball or you suspect a trauma to the eye, you should seek veterinary attention immediately.
- If an eye has been dislocated from the socket or the lids cannot close over the eyeball, keep the eyeball moist with contact lens wetting solution, K-Y jelly, water or moist compress.
- If an irritating chemical or other product accidentally gets into the eye, flush it with running water, contact lens saline or homemade saline solution squeezed from a compress or a sponge for a minimum of 15 minutes. (Saline: dissolve 2 teaspoons of table salt in 1 quart of water.)
- Do not attempt to remove a foreign object yourself.
- Do not try to push a dislocated eyeball back into the socket. This must be done under anesthesia so as not to cause damage to the eyeball's interior structures.

Bleeding (external)

- Always avoid injury to yourself so take appropriate precautions.
- Press a clean, thick gauze pad over the wound, and keep pressure over the wound until the blood starts clotting. This will often take several minutes. Do not disturb blood clots after they have formed. If blood soaks through, simply add additional layers of bandage and continue the direct pressure.
- If a severely bleeding wound is on the foot or leg, gently elevate the leg so that the wound is above the level of the heart.
- If external bleeding continues after you have used direct pressure and elevation, use your finger or thumb to place pressure over the main artery to the wound. Apply pressure to the femoral artery in the groin for severe bleeding of a rear leg; to the brachial artery in the inside part of the upper front leg for bleeding of a front leg; or to the caudal artery at the base of the tail if the wound is on the tail.

- If bleeding is severe, apply a bandage with pressure over the wound and get your animal to a veterinarian immediately.

Bleeding (internal)

- Symptoms may include pale gums, bleeding from the nose, mouth or rectum. Coughing up blood or blood in the urine, weakness, collapse and rapid pulse, or unusual lethargy may also be seen.
- Often the blood pools in the abdomen or the chest but does not result in any bleeding that is seen on the outside.
- Keep the animal as warm and quiet as possible and transport immediately to a veterinarian.

Bee stings and insect bites

- Any insect or spider can cause problems if they bite or sting your pet. A bite or sting can cause swelling, redness, and itching. Some animals can have an allergic reaction to a sting or bite that may result in mild hives, facial swelling, vomiting, difficulty breathing or even collapse.
- If the stinger can be found, scrape it out with a credit card or other stiff material. Or you can use tweezers by grasping the stinger.
- Apply cool compresses to the area.
- To help neutralize some of the acidic venom, apply a paste mixture of baking soda and water to the sting area.
- If there is any facial swelling, breathing difficulty or collapse, your pet needs to be seen immediately by a veterinarian.

Burns

- Extinguish all flames.
- Use appropriate measures to avoid being bitten.
- Avoid touching any pet that has been electrocuted until the power has been turned off.
- For thermal or electrical burns, immediately apply cool water compresses with a clean cloth to the site of the injury, changing them frequently as necessary to keep the site cool and wet. Continue this for at least 30 minutes.
- Do not apply ointments or butter. Do not attempt to remove burned hair or skin.
- For chemical burns, wash the contaminated area with large volumes of tepid flowing water for at least 15 minutes.
- In the case of dry chemicals, brush them away carefully, taking care to protect the eyes, nose and mouth of both you and your pet.
- If the chemical is in the eye, flush the eye with large volumes of water or contact lens saline for 15 minutes. Pure water can be quite irritating to the eyes and raw skin. It is much more comfortable for your pet if you use saline. Simply dissolve 2 teaspoons of table salt in one quart of water.
- Do not apply neutralizing agents to the skin or eyes.
- Any cases of burns will need immediate veterinary attention.

Choking

- Choking is interference with breathing caused by foreign material in, or compression on, the trachea. Coughing can be confused with choking but with choking, the pet has difficulty inhaling and with coughing the pet can

- inhale almost normally. Be careful to distinguish the two: attempting to give first aid to a pet who is merely coughing can cause injury.
- Symptoms include difficult or noisy breathing, pawing at the mouth, choking sounds, blue-tinged lips/tongue.
 - Use caution. A choking pet is more likely to bite in its panic.
 - If the pet can still breathe, keep it calm and get it to a veterinarian.
 - Look into the pet's mouth to see if a foreign object is visible. If you see an object, gently try to remove it with pliers or tweezers, but be careful not to push the object further down the throat. If the object is not easy to reach, don't delay, get your pet to a veterinarian immediately.
 - Warning! There is a structure deep in the throat called the larynx that feels like a smooth bone. Do not attempt to pull it out!
 - If you can't remove the object or your pet collapses, place both hands on the side of your pet's rib cage and apply firm quick pressure, or lay your pet on its side and strike the rib cage firmly with the palm of your hand 3 to 4 times. The idea is to sharply push air out of the lungs and push the object out from behind.

Diarrhea and Vomiting

- Diarrhea is the frequent evacuation of watery stools. Vomiting is the forceful expulsion of stomach contents through the mouth.
- Remove all food and water.
- Check for signs of dehydration.
- If the diarrhea and /or vomiting continues or the pet acts ill, seek veterinary attention. Diarrhea and vomiting can quickly lead to serious fluid loss and electrolyte imbalance, especially in very young and very old animals.
- If no vomiting occurs for 6 to 8 hours, begin to frequently give small amounts of clear liquids (water, Gatorade, Pedialyte, or other electrolyte solution. If your pet does not vomit the fluid, the following day offer small frequent meals of boiled hamburger and rice or boiled chicken and rice. If your pet does not want to eat, starts to vomit or continues to have diarrhea, go to your veterinarian for medical care.

Heatstroke

- A cat's normal body temperature is 38°C to 39°C.
- Never leave your pet in the car on warm days. The temperature inside a car can rise very quickly to dangerous levels, even on milder days. Pets can succumb to heatstroke very easily and must be treated very quickly to give them the best chance of survival.
- Heat stroke can also be seen when an animal is left outdoors in hot/humid conditions without adequate shade or when exercised in hot/humid weather.
- Other predisposing factors may be obesity and/or disease affecting a pet's airway.
- If you cannot immediately get your pet to a veterinarian, move it to a shaded area and out of direct sunlight. If possible, determine the rectal temperature and record it.
- Place a cool or cold, wet towel around its neck and head. Do not cover the eyes, nose, or mouth.

- Remove and wet the towel again and rewrap the pet every few minutes as you cool the animal.
- Pour cool water or use a hose to cool water running over the animal's body.
- Directing a fan on the wet areas will help speed evaporative cooling.
- Do not overcool the pet.
- Do not force water into the pet's mouth. You may have fresh cool water ready to offer should your pet be alert and show an interest in drinking.
- Transport the pet to a veterinarian as soon as possible.

Shock

- Shock is a condition resulting from a depressed state of many vital body functions caused by a lack of effective circulation. Shock is life-threatening and requires immediate attention and treatment.
- Symptoms include weak pulse, rapid heart rate, shallow breathing, nervousness, and dazed eyes. The gums may become pale and the pet will become cool to touch. Mental condition will deteriorate from depression to stupor to coma.
- Usually follows trauma, such as fights, being hit by a car, poisoning, insect sting, fluid loss or heart or airway failure.
- Keep the animal restrained, warm and quiet. Stop any bleeding and protect any obvious fractures from further injury. Cover with blankets to prevent further loss of body heat.
- If the animal is unconscious, keep the head level with the rest of the body.
- Transport pet immediately to a veterinarian.
- Do not pour water or anything else into the animal's mouth. Do not administer any medications unless instructed to do so by a veterinarian. Do not allow the patient to move into or out of the transport vehicle on their own. Internal bleeding may be increased with movement.

What to do if your pet is not breathing

- Stay calm.
- If possible, have another person call the veterinarian while you help your pet.
- Check to see if your pet is unconscious.
- Open your pet's airway by gently grasping its tongue and pulling it forward (out of the mouth) until it is flat. Check the throat to see if there are any foreign objects blocking the airway.
- Perform rescue breathing by holding your pet's mouth closed and breathing with your mouth directly into its nose until you see the animal's chest expand. Once the chest expands, continue the rescue breathing once every 4 or 5 seconds.

What to do if your pet has no heartbeat

- Do not begin chest compressions until you've secured an airway and started rescue breathing.
- Gently lay your pet on its right side on a firm surface. The heart is located in the lower half of the chest on the left side, just behind the elbow of the front left leg. Place one hand underneath the pet's chest for support and place the other hand over the heart.

- To massage the hearts of cats and other tiny pets, cradle your hand around the animal's chest so your thumb is on the left side of the chest and your fingers are on the right side of the chest, and compress the chest by squeezing it between your thumb and fingers.
- Press down 100-160 times per minute. Alternate the chest compressions with the rescued breaths, or work as a team with another person so one person performs chest compressions for 4-5 second and then stops long enough long enough to allow the other person to give one rescue breath.
- Continue until you can hear a heartbeat and your pet is breathing regularly or you have arrived at the veterinary clinic and they can take over the resuscitation attempts.

Please remember that your pet's likelihood of surviving with resuscitation is very low. However, in an emergency it may give your pet its only chance.

SOCIALIZATION

What is socialization? "Socializing" a cat means getting the cat used to a variety of experiences (eg. different people, animals, environments, sounds, etc.) in a positive way. It is particularly important for these experiences to be things the cat will encounter on a regular basis in your home or with your lifestyle. We want our cats to feel comfortable and know how to behave in a variety of situations, and minimize the amount of fear a cat feels when encountering something new.

Socialization helps to develop social skills. During socialization, social play and exploration with other cats are important. These experiences will allow kittens to develop appropriate adult behaviours. Kittens that interact with other cats will also learn how to behave with them by observing others.

Socialization helps to build confidence and reduces fears. The experiences your cat has during the socialization period will help shape general patterns of how your kitten will react to situations later on. This is why slowly getting your cat used to a variety of people, environments, sounds, and animals is important. Well-socialized kittens usually become more confident cats because they've been exposed to a wide variety of experiences. Cats that have not been exposed to many things outside of the home are more likely to be fearful or aggressive towards unfamiliar people, cats, and experiences.

To help kittens become comfortable, confident, and emotionally stable adult cats, they must be properly socialized before 16 weeks of age. Many future behaviour problems can be prevented through proper socialization. The socialization period occurs from 3 to 12 weeks of age. The socialization period is the most influential learning period of a cat's life. At this time, kittens can readily learn not to fear new things and to develop appropriate social behaviour.

Primary Socialization

Primary socialization occurs during 3 to 5 weeks of age. Kittens identify their own kind and how to communicate with other cats. Through social play, kittens learn how to inhibit their bite and practice social communication skills. Many social and emotional deficits are observed in adult cats who are removed too early from the mother and littermates. Kittens should not be taken home before 7 to 8 weeks to avoid these emotional problems.

Secondary Socialization

Secondary socialization refers to the time from 6 to 12 weeks of age. During this time, kittens become familiar and comfortable in the human domestic environment. Kittens are most willing to approach a stranger and investigate novel objects. Profound fear or marked aggression displayed during secondary socialization is abnormal and suggestive of future behaviour problems.

Making Exposure Positive

Socialization and exposure are an active and lifelong process. Kittens should be positively exposed to novelty daily during the socialization period. Repeated exposure is important because cats do not generalize well. Socialization is not simply about exposure, rather, it is about making exposure fun and positive. When exposing your cat to a new situation, it is important to watch your cat's response. You don't want your cat to become too overwhelmed or overly fearful. If your kitten looks scared, you will need to introduce the situation more gradually. Expose your kitten to a multitude of environments. Take a trip to the veterinary hospital or grooming facility just for fun. Strive for your kitten to meet at least one new person a day during his socialization period. Encounters should occur in your home as well as in different environments. Postal workers and people in uniform approaching your home are important. Kittens should meet people of different ages, sex and ethnic backgrounds. It is important to socialize your kitten with children of various ages. At the same time, allowing a child to grab or hug your kitten will not be a positive experience

There are commercially available compact discs designed to expose kittens to a variety of sounds, including thunderstorms, fireworks, gun shots, children playing, household items, traffic, etc. Using a CD can be helpful because you are able to control the volume and exposure. Play the CD during meal times or playtimes. Begin with the volume on low and watch for any signs of fear. The goal is that your kitten is never frightened by the sounds.

KITTEN DENTAL CARE

Kittens usually have all of their "baby" teeth by the time they come home with you. There are a total of 26 very small and sharp teeth in a kitten's mouth. These teeth will not last forever and the adult teeth will start to appear between 4 and 6 months of age. You will see these adult teeth starting at the upper central incisors (the two front teeth) and finishing with the canines (fangs). Eventually, your kitten will have 30 adult (or permanent) teeth.

Retained baby teeth

Sometimes the incoming adult teeth aren't successful in totally dislodging the baby ones that are already in place. When this happens, there will be a double set of teeth in some places. Your kitten's mouth wasn't designed to hold two sets of teeth at the same time and it can get a bit crowded if the baby ones don't fall out. This can cause discomfort and food can get stuck between them more easily. There is also a risk of malocclusion if the baby teeth prevent the adult ones from fitting in the mouth in the proper location. That can cause a permanent problem and be quite painful. Any baby teeth that remain when the adult teeth are present should be extracted to prevent

further problems. Any baby teeth that remain when the adult teeth are present should be extracted to prevent further problems.

Teething

Kittens who are teething like to chew – a Lot! Making sure your kitten has safe, sturdy, and appropriate toys to chew on aids the correct development and growth of his teeth and gums.

Keeping your kitten's teeth clean and healthy

Good kitten dental care means helping your little one's shiny new adult teeth stay clean, white, and strong. Feeding a dry kitten kibble won't prevent tartar build-up. There are lots of products available to help you keep your kitten's mouth healthy. These include cat toothpastes and toothbrushes, mouthwashes or sprays, and food or treats designed to help keep tartar at bay.

Brushing your cat's teeth is one of the best ways to keep them healthy. Getting your cat comfortable with having his teeth brushed now is important. It only takes a few minutes to do but it can be a very important part of the health-care routine.

To start with, you need a soft toothbrush. We have some toothbrushes available that are especially made for cats. There are also 'finger toothbrushes' for cats that work well for young kittens and small- to medium-sized cats. You need to get special toothpaste designed for cats. Human toothpaste can upset your kitten's tummy and/or make him vomit. Remember, cats don't spit.

You need to be gentle and patient with your kitten. It's going to be a strange sensation and many kittens don't like having their mouths handles. Choose a quiet spot and a time when your kitten is feeling calm and isn't too tired or overly energetic. Sit down with your cat. Speak gently and quietly and don't get impatient. Spread a small amount of the toothpaste on the brush and gently pull back your kitten's upper lip at the front of his muzzle. Use the other hand to gently brush or rub his canines. At first you may only get 1 or 2 seconds on the teeth, and that's ok. Continue to brush the teeth toward the back of the mouth and then work down onto the teeth of the lower jaw. You can likely only brush the outer side of each tooth, which is where most of the problems occur. If you follow up the brushing with a tasty treat each time, your kitten will learn to accept the brushing more readily.

Besides brushing, having your veterinarian check your cat's mouth regularly for any problems is another way to make sure your pet's teeth and mouth are kept healthy and pain free.

PREVENT BOREDOM

Our cat's ancestors had to hunt to survive. They needed to catch 10 to 20 birds, mice or other small animals each day. This took up a big part of their attention and it also helped to keep them happy and healthy. For cats that are living in a house, we need to find ways to keep them interested and active. There are different kinds of toys you could buy your cat. Each cat is different but most cats like toys that do something. Toys that squeak, chirp, jitter, or move or vibrate entice cats to interact with them, simulating prey. Some toys have catnip which many cats find enticing. Cats also like toys such as a wand or stick with a toy dangling from the end of a string. They make them feel like they are using their natural quickness and agility to catch something. Balls are another

great item to use because they can chase and capture their prey. Things that move on their own will fascinate them. Cats also like toys they can catch, pick up and toss in the air. You can also fill balls with food or treats to encourage them to play. Cats enjoy hunting and stalking and catching their own meal. Cats also enjoy playing with simple things like crumpled up paper balls, or toilet paper rolls. Cats also like visual stimulation. If you have a window to look out of or a fish tank for them to observe, it will also keep them entertained. Ideally you will find toys that encourage your kitty to want to play. It may take some trial and error but you will find something that your cat will enjoy.

It's good to keep a variety of toys available. Cats need an assortment of toys in their environment. You can rotate them a few at a time to keep your cat interested. C

PERCHES

Providing your cat with a perch of some type can be beneficial in many ways. A perch is anything that allows them to lie, sit, sleep or look outside from above. Perches come in many forms. You can get a cat tree that has several different perches at different heights. A couch or chair placed in front of a window allows your cat to look outside or you can get perches that attach to the windowsill.

Cats like to know what is going on around them. They are curious creatures. Cats like things that allow them to elevate themselves from ground level. Cats like to climb and find a safe and private place to watch the action. This also allows cats to stay active and exhibit their natural behaviours.

For cats in the wild, threats may come from above, so if they are up high, they feel safer. Perches allow cats to have a private space where they feel safe. Some cats also like to have their meal up on a perch

Perches also allow cats to have a private space, especially if there is more than one pet in the house. Some cats also like to eat up high.

GROOMING

Most cats will spend up to 50 percent of their awake time indulging in some form of grooming. Grooming does more than keep your cat looking good. It also maintains healthy skin by stimulating the production of sebum, an oily secretion produced by sebaceous glands at the base of each hair. This helps to protect the fur and make it shine. Grooming also removes loose hair and dirt and it helps to prevent mats.

Grooming can also help to make cats feel better emotionally. Some cats may use grooming when they feel fearful, to relieve tension, or when they are uncertain how to react to a situation. While most cats can do a great job at grooming themselves, sometimes it can be helpful if their owners help them out a bit. It's a good idea to start grooming your kitten when it is young so that it becomes a normal part of your interactions. Start with a soft brush and keep the interactions short. Cats particularly enjoy being stroked around the face, so you can start with a few strokes of the brush on

the head and cheek area. Using a soft toothbrush is a good way to start as most cats will find that enjoyable. Always groom in the direction of your cat's fur. If your cat is comfortable with grooming around the head, move onto the shoulders and the back. You can try using different combs or brushes to find what your cat prefers. Some long-haired cats can have problems with mats in their coat so it would be helpful if you can condition them to accepting some grooming. A word of caution, please do not try to remove a mat from your cat using scissors. We get many cats in who have had their skin cut inadvertently by their owners trying to remove mats this way. Cats have very thin skin that can be easily cut.

RESOURCES

Indoor Pet Initiative

Information on how to keep cats happy indoors

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

Veterinary Partner

Articles on diseases and treatments

<https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/default.aspx?pid=19239&id=>

Cornell Feline Health Center

Cat health information

<https://www.vet.cornell.edu/.../cornell-feline-health-center>

BCSPCA

Information on animal welfare, building a catio, and other useful information

[BC SPCA | The B.C. Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](#)