



**Arlington Heights
Animal Hospital**

NEW KITTEN

Congratulations on the new addition to your family! We have compiled some helpful information regarding your new kitten's health and wellness.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are an important part of your kitten's (and grown cat's) preventative health. As kittens, vaccinations are given at four week intervals in order to stimulate your kitten's immune system and to break through the declining antibodies received from the mother cat. After the initial kitten series, vaccinations are boosted yearly.

The “Distemper” vaccine is actually not distemper, but in fact a combination called the **FVRCP** vaccine (which stands for Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus and Panleukopenia Virus). This provides protection against viral respiratory, gastrointestinal, and nervous system diseases. This vaccine is given at 8 and 12 weeks of age.

Rabies Virus is always fatal. This virus is spread by bites or scratches from infected warm-blooded animals. It spreads along the nerves to the brain. Since this infection is deadly and is zoonotic (has the ability to infect humans), it is required by law. This vaccine is given at 16 weeks of age, then is boosted annually.

Feline Leukemia (FeLV) & Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) Testing

These viruses can affect cats that appear completely healthy. Cats can be infected and spread the virus to other cats for months or even years before showing signs of illness. Once sick, cats with FeLV or FIV develop suppressed immune systems which make them very vulnerable to secondary infections, anemia, chronic inflammatory diseases, ocular disorders, and cancer. Death is usually a result of the debilitation of the body's normal defenses. Both viruses can be spread cat to cat, and from mother to kitten. Once born, infected cats can spread FeLV through bodily fluids; while FIV is most commonly spread through bite wounds. We recommend testing kittens initially between 8 and 12 weeks of age, then retesting one month later in order to pick up any undetected early infections. A **FeLV** vaccine is available. It is recommended to administer this vaccine to all kittens but it is considered a non-core vaccine for cats after their 1 year booster unless they are at risk of exposure (has access to outdoors, living with known positive cats or multi-cat households when the viral status of all cats is not known).

Parasite Prevention

Intestinal Parasites live in the intestinal tract and lay microscopic eggs which are shed into the stool. Adult worms are rarely seen in the stool unless they are present in very large numbers or your pet has been given medication to remove them. It is possible to have adult parasites that are not shedding eggs at the time a stool sample is checked. As a result, we recommend checking two stool samples at two different times to try to prevent undetected parasite infections. Samples should be less than 12 hours old and only need to be about teaspoon sized. You may bring the sample in during an examination, or may drop one off at the front desk. Preventative deworming will be instituted based on previous medications administered. Different intestinal parasites require different medications, and not all medications treat all intestinal parasites.

Fleas and Ticks are common blood-sucking external parasites of pets. They are typically in higher numbers during the warm months of the year, but fleas can remain dormant indoors year-round. We recommend starting your kitten on a flea and tick preventative at 8 weeks of age, typically from March to the end of December, based on that year's weather patterns.

Heartworm disease is a blood parasite spread from animal to animal by mosquitoes. Although a rare disease in cats, when they do become infected with heartworms, they tend to only have a few worms which make it difficult for currently available testing to detect. Symptoms of feline heartworm disease may vary from vomiting to asthma-like attacks, but there are often no signs. Revolution is a topical monthly preventative which protects cats from heartworms, fleas, and even ear mites. Unlike dogs, testing is not required prior to starting Revolution for cats.

Spaying/Neutering

Spayed or neutered pets are typically healthier and happier pets. Neutering may help to reduce urine marking, roaming, decrease aggression, decrease chances of developing cancers and infections of the mammary glands and urogenital system. Unwanted litters are prevented with spaying/neutering as well. Males are typically neutered at 8 months of age, and females spayed at 6 months of age to allow development of internal organs (liver, lungs, kidneys). It is preferable to spay before the first heat cycle. Presurgical bloodwork will be done to detect hidden problems.

If you choose to declaw your kitten, it can be done as early as 3 months and 3 pounds or during the spaying/neutering surgery.

Grooming

Start grooming your pet at an early age so that your kitten gets used to the handling and is accepting of it. Also get your kitten conditioned to having paws, ears, and mouth touched to make it easier to trim the nails, clean the ears, and brush the teeth and coat.

Microchip Identification

A Microchip is a form of permanent identification which is injected with a sterile needle under the skin near your kitten's shoulders. When a microchip is detected by a hand-held scanner, a distinct identification number is revealed. This information is used to obtain the contact information you have provided to the microchip company in order to reunite you with your lost cat. We only use ISO compatible internationally accepted microchips. We can place this during an examination or during the spay/neuter surgery. Due to the dense population and heavy traffic in our area, we recommend keeping cats indoors for their own safety.

Emergencies

A medical emergency can be scary, especially if it happens in the middle of the night. Below is a list of local 24-hour emergency hospitals to use if we are closed. You may wish to remove this sheet and post it near other important numbers.

Elk Grove Veterinary Specialty & Emergency:
1050 Bonaventure Drive
Elk Grove Village
847-584-0200

Golf Rose Animal Hospital:
1375 N. Roselle Rd. (near Golf and Roselle Roads)
Schaumburg
847-885-3344

Veterinary Specialty Center:
1515 Busch Parkway
Buffalo Grove
847-459-7535

Chicago Veterinary Emergency and Specialty Center:
3125 N. Clybourn
Chicago
773-281-7110

Midwest Animal Emergency Hospital (exotic animals treated as well)
7510 W. North Ave.
Elmwood Park
708-453-4755