

POINT BREEZE VETERINARY CLINIC
6742 REYNOLDS STREET
PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA 15206
(412) 665-1810

Congratulations on your new cat! 😊

The doctors and staff of the Point Breeze Veterinary Clinic want you to have the best possible relationship with your pet. Here are some things you may know, and may not know about your new feline friend!

The following is a list of helpful information to make your new kittens (or older cats) transition into your home happy and healthy!

VACCINATIONS

Kitten vaccinations are given every three to four weeks until 14 to 16 weeks of age. These vaccines may include FVRCP (feline upper respiratory and herpes virus), Rabies , and Feline Leukemia.

Some kittens and cats may carry the FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus) or Feline Leukemia viruses. This may be given to kittens by their mother in utero, or spread by the saliva of an infected cat. All kittens or older cats that have an unknown status should be tested for these viruses. Cats with access to the outdoors should be vaccinated against the Feline Leukemia virus.

Rabies is required for all cats that are at least 12 weeks of age. After your cat is 1 year old, we will booster all of its vaccines given at kittenhood. After that, vaccines may be tailored to your specific cats lifestyle and needs, boosting them every one to three years.

SPAYING AND NEUTERING

We recommend that all cats not used for show or breeding purposes should be spayed or neutered. Typically, females are spayed and males are neutered at 6 months of age. These types of surgeries on young animals may prevent many problems later in life. Please remember that pet overpopulation continues to be a problem and we have responsibilities to prevent unwanted litters.

BLOOD TESTING

We have the ability to do in hospital blood screening on all of our patients. A CBC can be performed to check both the red and white blood cell counts. A blood chemistry will tell us the status of the internal organs. Blood tests are required for all pets prior to surgery and are especially important for older patients before anesthesia.

AVID MICROCHIP

We have available permanent identification chips for your pet. (This is not a GPS tracking chip).

A small microchip can be implanted under your pet's skin. The chip can then be scanned at veterinary clinics and animal shelters to reunite you with your lost pet and save their life!

If your cats goes outside we recommend that it wears a breakaway collar with an ID tag with the owner's information on it.

MONTHLY PREVENTATIVES

There are many different monthly preventative medications available to control fleas, ticks, and intestinal parasites and feline heartworm. Our doctors and staff will consult with you and come up with a prevention regime tailored to your pet's specific needs.

We may also recommend a fecal sample be checked to screen for intestinal parasites.

SPECIALISTS

If your pet would ever need specialty or emergency care, we can refer you to surgical or medical specialists in the area. We are fortunate enough to have outstanding teams of local specialists at our disposal. Occasionally we will refer to a veterinary university for advanced specialty care if needed.

VETERINARY EMERGENCY CLINICS

Pittsburgh Veterinary Specialists and Veterinary Emergency Clinic is open 24/7, 365 days a year.

807 Camp Horne Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
(412)-366-3400

AVETS is another veterinary emergency clinic open 24/7, 365 days a year.
4224 Northern Pike
Monroeville, PA 15146
(412)-373-4200

PET INSURANCE

Pet insurance is available for your pet! There are many different companies available to choose from. Most companies have different types of service plans, and can give you a quote for coverage for your specific pet. Payment of services rendered will be reimbursed to you directly by your pet's insurance company.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend that cats be indoor only for their health and safety. Cats can thrive indoors with proper enrichment. Cats also enjoy choice of resources, therefore for each cat in the household there should be one of each of the following resources plus one, (a 2 cat household should have 3 litterboxes, feeding stations, water bowls, etc.)

RESOURCES

Food: Kittens should eat a high quality kitten food for the first year of life, and then can be transitioned to adult maintenance food. Food changes should be gradual, mixing in small amounts of the new food, and slowly increasing the amount of new food over about a week. They enjoy eating small meals frequently. The total amount of food given for the day should be measured to prevent obesity. Cats need a safe place to eat, away from other pets that may be present in the household. Feeding stations should be spread throughout the house. Food Dispensing Toys are great for indoor cats, they satisfy their need to hunt for their meals. Many different types exist, but buying a few different ones and rotating them keeps things interesting for your cat. Most come with instructions on how to teach your cat to use them.

Water: Cats need free access to fresh clean water. Some cats enjoy drinking from fountains that keep the water filtered and encourage more water intake. Cats instinctually don't like to drink where they eat or eliminate. Water should be kept in a separate location from food or litter boxes and be available in different areas of the house.

Litterboxes: Cats do not usually need to be trained to use their litterbox as this comes naturally to them. For cats that aren't using their box consistently, we recommend Dr. Elsey's cat attract litter. This could also indicate there is an issue with the provided litter box. Different cats have different preferences when it comes to toileting, some prefer covered boxes and some do not.

General guidelines for litterboxes:

- Choose Large Open boxes, wide shallow storage bins without the lids and unscented clumping litter are a good choice.
- Litter boxes should be spread out into different quiet locations throughout the house. A single cat needs at least two litter boxes of ample size, in two different areas of the house. A multi cat household needs to have many litter boxes spread out in different areas in the house. The total number of boxes should be equal to the number of cats in the household plus one.
- Keep in mind cats can have different preferences for litter and box types. In multi cat households you may need to have different options available.
- The boxes should be cleaned at least daily.
- When making any changes to the boxes, such as type or brand of litter, or trying a covered box, it is advisable to add an extra box that has the desired change. This way you are not taking anything away from the cat but adding another option. Monitor how your cat likes the change. If the new box is shunned, then you know that change is not going to be tolerated.

Vertical territory:

Cats environments are naturally three dimensional. They need safe places to hide, high places to perch, and comfortable places to rest. Provide multiple high vantage points for your cat to assess its surroundings.

SCRATCHING BEHAVIOR

Scratching is a natural behavior in cats. Cats scratch for a variety of reasons: to maintain the health of their nails (discarding the dead outer sheath and exposing the new growth underneath), to stretch out the muscles in their shoulders and back, to mark their territory around other cats, and to serve as an emotional outlet (scratching after being startled, frustrated, or relieved at the owner returning home). Cats need to scratch just as puppies need to chew, so the owner's goal is not to eliminate the behavior but to manage it in the safest and least destructive way possible.

Cats can have preferences with scratching material and also whether the scratcher is vertical or horizontally aligned. Choose a scratching post that is covered in sisal or rope, that is sturdy and will not topple over when used, and is tall enough for a full stretch. A horizontal cardboard scratcher can be offered as well. Encourage the use of the scratching post with treats, praise, and catnip. Some cats have unique preferences. Pay attention to what your cat enjoys scratching and try to mimic that when choosing scratching posts.

DECLAWING

Declawing of the front paws can be done on kittens older than 4 months of age. It is an elective procedure in which the first bone containing the nail bed of all 5 digits of both front paws are surgically removed. We keep our declaw patients in the hospital for a few days of cage rest before sending them home. We do not readily recommend declawing adult or overweight cats. We offer behavioral guidance before making this decision as it is permanent. Destructive scratching behaviors can often be managed with Environmental Enrichment. Feliway is a synthetic pheromone analog that is labeled for marking behaviors in cats and can be helpful in these instances.

KITTEN SOCIALIZATION

The window for kitten socialization is from 3 to 9 weeks of age, though socialization can and should be continued throughout their life. During kittenhood, try to introduce your cat to new people, new objects and different shapes of food. Allow your kitten to play with other kittens and calm animals. Handle your cat often and get them accustomed to having their feet touched. Don't use your hand as a toy. Instead, toss toys for them to chase or wave wand toys for them to stalk.

CAT CARRIERS

As a new kitten, now is the best time to get cats comfortable being around and riding in carriers. You can even do this with an adult cat! We don't want the carrier to feel like a scary place – and a precursor to things to come at the veterinary hospital. We will try to make your cats veterinary visits as positive and pain free as possible, but it all starts with the ride here! Below are some helpful sites to help cats love their carriers, and help your cat's association with the carrier be a positive one! We also recommend buying a carrier that is made of hard rigid plastic, and that can be taken apart and the top taken off if needed.

Useful Links

Point Breeze Veterinary Clinic

<http://pointbreezevet.com/PBVCMain/Home.html>

Cat Carriers

<http://www.thebehaviorclinic.com/pages/documents/CrateTrainingforCats.pdf>

<http://www.catalystcouncil.org/> (here you can click on the videos and watch how to get your cat to love its carrier!)

Fun cat info!

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

<https://www.purinaone.com/cats/enrich-feeding-time-for-your-cat-make-a-puzzle-feeder>

<http://www.feliway.com/us>

<http://drsophiayin.com/blog/entry/kitten-socialization>

http://drsophiayin.com/resources/cat_behavior

Cat / Kitten books

<http://www.clickertraining.com/cat-training>

Emergency Clinics

AVETS

<http://www.avets.us/>

PVSEC

<http://www.pvs-ec.com/>

Traveling With Your Pet

United States Department of Agriculture

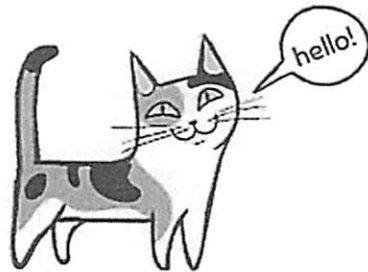
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_welfare/pet_travel/pet_travel.shtml

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/TravelWithPets/index.html>



INTERESTED



FRIENDLY



ATTENTIVE



RELAXED



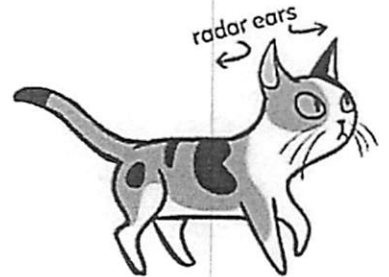
TRUSTING



FRIENDLY, RELAXED



CONTENT



CONFLICTED, CAUTIOUS



PLAYFUL



EXCITED



"THIS IS MINE"



ANXIOUS



PREDATORY



WORRIED



FRIGHTENED



THREATENED



TERRIFIED



SUPER TERRIFIED



IRRITATED



DISGUSTED