



# KITTEN CARE

**VET**SERVICES  
HAWKE'S BAY



## CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW KITTEN!

We are so happy you have a new “furry” addition to your family. Your kitten’s first year is the most important, not just to develop a bond with you, but also to have the healthiest start we can provide for his or her life. Owning a kitten is a lifelong relationship, and we want to help and support you along the journey that is cat ownership.

The four most important things to help keep your kitten healthy and active are:

- VACCINATIONS: - first vaccination at 8 weeks of age.
- WORMING - from two weeks of age.
- DESEXING: - from six months of age.
- FEEDING: - a planned and balanced diet.



### VACCINATIONS

Our core cat vaccine, Felocell 3, helps prevent feline viral rhinotracheitis (FVR) caused by feline herpes virus-1, feline respiratory disease (snuffles) caused by feline calicivirus (FCV), and feline panleukopenia (FPL) also called feline parvovirus. It is very important to give your kitten its first vaccination at 8 weeks of age, followed by 2 booster vaccinations, one at 12 weeks and one at 16 weeks of age (*we recommend further vaccinations be given to adult cats*).

### VACCINATE YOUR KITTEN AS SOON AS YOU GET IT!!

#### AFTER VACCINATION CARE

After vaccination, your pet may be lethargic and off its food for a day or two. Your pet may have some slight swelling or tenderness at the injection site. Access to food and water and a comfortable area to rest are usually all that is required for your pet to recover. However, if the response seems more severe or you are concerned for any reason, please contact your veterinarian for advice.

### WORMING

Worms can cause poor health and even death in young kittens. No matter how well-bred and hygienically they are reared, all kittens get worms. To control worms, you must start worm treatment early (at two weeks of age) and repeat it regularly.

## **NORMAL WORMING GUIDELINE**

- Worm at: two, four, six, eight and ten weeks of age.
- Then at: three, four, five, six, nine and twelve months of age.
- Adult cats require worming with an all wormer twice a year. This may need to be more regular if they are hunters. Your vet will discuss with you the best options for you and your cat.

Make sure you use a good quality worm treatment and weigh your kitten to ensure the correct dose.

There are a few options available for worming:

- 1) An oral all wormer tablet (Drontal/Milpro)
- 2) A topical treatment (Advocate or Broadline applied to the back of the neck directly onto the skin) which allows you to treat worms and fleas at the same time. (This is only used from 8 weeks of age)

## **FLEA TREATMENT**

There are a few different flea treatments available.

- 1) Frontline or Advantage. These are topical treatments (applied directly to the skin on the back of the neck) these treatments continue working for between 4-8 weeks.
- 2) Advocate. A topical treatment (applied directly to the skin on the back of the neck) will treat fleas and worms and will last for 4 weeks. (This is not an all wormer)
- 3) Broadline. A topical treatment (applied directly to the skin on the back of the neck) will treat fleas and worms and will last for 8 weeks. This is an all wormer.
- 4) Seresto Collar. This is a flea collar which provides up to 8 months of flea protection.

It is very important to always keep up to date with flea treatment to break the life cycle and to have good environmental control.

## **DESEXING**

### **FEMALES**

Your kitten will have her first heat between six and eight months of age. They can (and will) get pregnant at this stage. The best way to avoid unwanted pregnancies is to have your kitten spayed. Spaying removes the ovaries and uterus so she will not come into season and breed again. We recommend that she is spayed before coming into season (at around four-six months of age).

There is no proven advantage in allowing a cat to complete her first heat cycle, or to breed.

### **MALES**

Your kitten will start to wander in search of female cats in season from about six months of age. (This is a major cause of road accidents.) To prevent this, he should be neutered at approximately 4 months of age. Older cats can still be neutered but there may be less effect on wandering and spraying than in those neutered at an earlier age.

## **THE SURGERY**

Both speying and neutering operations are performed under general anaesthesia so we require your kitten to stay with us for the day. Kittens are admitted to the clinic between 8am and 8.30am in the morning and can go home that afternoon. Do not feed your kitten after 7.00pm the night before surgery or give any fluids on the day of surgery. Females will have stitches which need to be removed in ten days.

## **FEEDING**

Your kitten will grow quickly between weaning and six months of age. It is important to provide high quality food at this stage. Canned and dry foods specifically for kittens are available eg. Hills, Black Hawk and Royal Canin. With these specially formulated diets extra calcium is not required. Avoid chicken and fish bones or any small bones which could be swallowed or splintered. Avoid cow's milk. Young kittens need 3 or 4 meals per day as their livers aren't always able to store enough glucose for the periods in between. Over the following months the amount you feed your kitten will increase but you won't need to feed as often. At six to eight months of age your kitten will require only two feeds per day and adult foods can be started at one year.

## **MICROCHIPPING**

Microchips are the size of a grain of rice which holds a unique number that is implanted under the skin between the shoulder blades of your kitten. The chip will last for your animals' entire life. If your kitten is ever lost or is picked up by the SPCA or taken to a different veterinary clinic, your animal will be scanned. A number will then register onto the screen of the scanner and they can start to track you down.

There are two options when it comes to registering this number:

- 1) You can register with your vet clinic only. This option is usually used for indoor only cats. Just remember only you and your vet have access to this number.
- 2) New Zealand Companion Animal Registry - This is a New Zealand wide data base. Your information and your animal's information is uploaded onto the data base, meaning that if your animal became lost in another district or a member from the public picked your kitten up and either took it to the SPCA or another vet clinic, they can access that information and get in touch with you. This is accessible New Zealand wide, so the chances of reuniting with your pet are much higher.

## TRAINING

When you first bring home your kitten, always keep it inside for at least 7 days. This is so he or she can get used to their surroundings and your house feels safe and like home to them. It is a good idea to start them out in just one room which is quiet with a litter box, then over the next few days let them out to the whole house.

We look forward to watching your kitten grow throughout the years, and to do whatever we can to help and support you and your new kitten to have a happy and healthy time together.

**If you have any questions or concerns about your kitten please give us a call.**

