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### **Veterinary Technicians**

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Beth Perrault, LVT  
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Bailey Zacher, LVT  
Paige Slater, LVT  
Cindy Stramer, LVT

Heather Erickson, LVT  
Amanda Schlepp, LVT  
Michelle Myers, LVT  
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Jennifer Sicheneder  
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### **Veterinary Assistants**

Brandi Anderson	Candice Mogard	Gabby Nordick	Sarah Murray	Miranda Eckholm
Kelly Friemoth	Miranda Albert	Casey Thomas	Ashley Segal	Jenessa Noeske

### **Client Relations**

Molly Fletschock	Bev Mitchell	Alyssa Sauvageau	Savanna Dufault
Judy Langer	Kari Thorson	Dena Flom	Amelia Nichols
Beth Melander	Darcee Rehovsky		

**Practice Manager**  
Shyla Strandlien

**Human Resources**  
Tim Johnson

**Maintenance**  
Bill Artis

### **Office Hours**

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 7am-5pm  
Tuesday, Thursday: 7am-9pm

Weekends and Holidays: CLOSED  
24 hour Emergency Services Available

### **Small Animal Services Available**

Wellness Exams (*For all ages*)  
Vaccinations  
Orthopedic Consults/Services  
PennHip and OFA Certification  
Ophthalmic Consults/Services  
Reproduction  
Nutrition / Behavior Consults

### ***(Large animal services are also available)***

Diagnostic Laboratory Services  
Ultrasound  
Digital Radiography  
Microchip Implantation  
Acupuncture and Chiropractic Services  
Dentistry Services with Digital X-ray and Extractions  
Surgery Services including Spays, Neuters, Declaws

# Preventable Feline Diseases



## **Disease:**

**Panleukopenia, Calici Virus,  
Rhinitis**

## **Vaccination Schedule:**

(Combination Vaccination)

Vaccination begins between 6 and 8 weeks of age.  
Booster twice at 3 week intervals, again at 1 year of  
and then every 3 years.

**Rabies**

Must be at least 12 weeks of age. Booster at 1 year  
and then every 2 years.

**Feline Leukemia**

Starts after nine weeks of age, booster in 3 weeks,  
then annually.

## **Panleukopenia**

Feline distemper is a highly contagious viral disease that attacks the immune system, depressing the cat's resistance to other diseases. It is a very debilitating disease and treatments are usually ineffective.

## **Calici Virus**

Feline Calici Virus causes a mild to serious respiratory infection. Although many cats recover in 1-4 weeks, fatalities do occur. Also, cats that do recover may continue to spread the virus.

## **Rhinotracheitis**

Rhinotracheitis is an upper respiratory infection that is an infection that affects the sinuses and nasal passages. The symptoms are treatable, but it can lead to a chronic sinus infection.

## **Rabies**

Rabies is a fatal disease that can affect all warm blooded animals, including humans. Rabies is spread through wounds, via the saliva of a rabid animal, usually by a bite. Rabies is most often found in wildlife such as raccoons, skunks, and bats, but can also be found in horses, cows, dogs, and cats. Rabies affects the central nervous system and brain causing a behavioral change and leads to death. Once symptoms appear the disease is always fatal. While there is an effective post exposure treatment for humans, there is none for animals. Dogs are required by city laws to be vaccinated for Rabies.

# Danger of Ticks and Fleas for Dogs and Cats



Ticks can transmit a number of diseases, including Lyme, Ehrlichia, Babesiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever, and Anaplasmosis. Some of these are potentially lethal.

Flea infestation can lead to skin infections, tapeworms, hair loss from scratching, and anemia. This anemia can be life-threatening, especially in young and geriatric animals. Flea Allergic Dermatitis (FAD) is quite common, in which even a single bite can cause a severe rash.

## Signs of Infection

Ticks bury their head under the skin and stay in one spot. When they first attach they may be as small as a pinhead, but they enlarge when they become engorged with blood. They often attach in warm areas, such as the neck or head.

Flea infection usually leads to itching, although some animals are not allergic to the bites and do not develop a severe rash. While you may see actual fleas on your animal, the most common sign is flea dirt, pepper-like granules in the coat, especially on the rump and groin. These are found by either parting the coat or using a special “flea comb” with narrow-spaced teeth. To determine if what you find is flea dirt, which is actually digested blood, place the granules on a moistened white paper towel. Rub them gently; if the paper towel turns orange or red, your animal has flea dirt. It is not necessary to find actual fleas to confirm an infection.

## Control

Ticks are not affected by cold weather, and animals with exposure to woods, brush, or tall grassy areas should be treated year-round. All animals that go outdoors should be checked for ticks regularly, but because the ticks are so small before they attach they are easy to miss.

To remove a tick, grasp it tightly with tweezers at the point where the head is imbedded into the skin and pull gently. If mouthparts remain, do not dig after them! If they do not work their way out, contact your veterinarian for removal. Never use fire to remove a tick; it is dangerous and will not work.

While the adult fleas live on their animal host, the eggs, pupae, and larvae do not. For this reason, once there is an infestation, it is often necessary to treat the animal, all other pets, and the house itself. Many of the newer preventatives address multiple stages of the flea life cycle; for example, even if a flea is not killed by a given preventative, the eggs it lays will have actually been affected by the preventative and will not hatch. Washing bedding, thorough vacuuming, and, if necessary, environmental sprays can all help remove non-adult stages of fleas from the indoor environment.

Fleas cannot survive outside in freezing temperatures. However, they can easily be carried on clothing between houses, and hop between apartments. Year-round control may still be necessary, especially in animals with FAD. Flea eggs can also stay dormant for several years in the environment, hatching when they sense a warm body in the house.

There are many options for flea and tick control. For this reason, we suggest that you contact your local veterinarian for their recommendation on what solutions would be best for your pet. A very important consideration is that some products are safe in dogs but not in cats. It is critical to use cat-specific products in cats and dog-specific products in dogs.



## What Is Socialization?

**Socialization means learning to be part of society. When we talk about socializing kittens, it means helping them learn to be comfortable as a pet within human society**—a society that includes many different types of people, environments, buildings, sights, noises, smells, and animals.

**Socialization is essential for helping your kitten develop into a happy, fun and safe companion. Most people find it easier and more enjoyable to live with a cat who's relaxed with strangers, gets along well with other housemates and adapts easily to new experiences. Most cats are very impressionable when young and can learn to take everything in stride. Socializing your kitten gives him/her the greatest chance possible to develop into a cat who's comfortable in their environment and a joy to be with.**

Most young animals, including cats, are naturally made to be able to get used to the everyday things they encounter in their environment—until they reach a certain age. When they reach that age, they are naturally made to become much more suspicious of things they haven't yet experienced. Mother Nature is smart! This age-specific natural development lets a young kitten get comfortable with the everyday sights, sounds, people and animals that will be a part of his life. It ensures that he/she doesn't spend their life jumping in fright at every blowing leaf or bird song. The later suspicion they develop in later kittenhood also ensures that he/she does react with a healthy dose of caution to new things that could truly be dangerous.

## What Age Is Best for Kitten Socialization?

Socialize diligently from the minute you get your puppy home. **Puppies are most accepting of new experiences between 3 and 10 weeks old.** After that age, they become much more cautious of anything they haven't yet encountered. From about 6-10 weeks old the opportunity to easily socialize the kitten ends—and with each passing week it becomes harder to get the cat to accept and enjoy something that they are initially wary of. After 10 weeks old, it's extremely difficult, and sometimes impossible, to teach a cat to like something new, or help him/her become comfortable with something they find frightening.



## Why Is Kitten Socialization Important?

**Well-socialized kittens usually develop into safer, more relaxed and enjoyable pets.** This is because they're more comfortable in a wider variety of situations than poorly socialized cats, so they're less likely to behave fearfully or aggressively when faced with something new. Poorly socialized cats are much more likely to react with fear or aggression to unfamiliar people, animals and experiences.

**Socialization isn't an "all or nothing" project. You can socialize a puppy a bit, a lot, or a whole lot. The wider the range of experiences you expose him to, the better his chances are of being comfortable in a wide variety of situations as an adult.**

## How Does a Kitten Need to Be Socialized?

Socialization is a big project. **It requires exposure to the types of people, animals, places, sounds and experiences that you expect your animal to be comfortable in later in life.** While it's impossible to expose a young kitten to absolutely everything they will ever encounter in life, the more bases that you cover during the peak socialization period, the more likely the kitten will be able to

generalize from his/her prior experiences and find something reassuringly familiar in a new situation. **For any pet cat, it's essential to get them used to the common types of people, animals, sights, sounds and physical handling and grooming that will be a sure part of their daily life.**

## Do I Need to Do Anything Special When I Socialize My Kitten?

Yes! You need to make sure that the situation is not overwhelming for him/her, and that they becomes more comfortable—not more worried—each time you expose them to something. The rule of thumb with socialization is to keep a close eye on your pet's reaction to whatever you expose them to so that you can tone things down if they seem at all frightened. **Always follow up a socialization experience with praise, petting, a fun game or a special treat.**

## Vaccinations and Disease Risk During Early Socialization

No young kitten will be fully protected against the diseases we vaccinated them for until after the crucial learning period is over. **Even though kitten's immune systems are still developing during their early months, if we wait until they have had all of their shots before socializing, we miss our chance to do it.** They'll simply be too old.

### Exposure Checklist for Socialization

Men and women of different builds

Elevators

Babies, Toddlers, Children

Lawnmowers

Teenagers, Adults, Elderly People

Balconies/stairs

People with Wheelchairs/Crutches

Drive Thru, car washes, tunnels

People on rollerblades, skateboards, bicycles

Electrical appliances, washers and dryers

People in uniforms

Vacuum cleaners

Delivery People

Wind, rain, thunder, snow

People with masks, hats, or beards

Fireworks, fairs, sporting events

People of varied ethnicities

Veterinary hospitals

Crowds, clapping, cheering

Stores

Livestock, fowl

Strollers

Puppies, friendly adult dogs

Areas of crowds with small children

Buses, cars, trucks

Gravel, mud, cement, grass, water puddles

Shiny/slippery floors or surfaces

Walks after dark or in bad weather

# **Feline DO's and Don'ts**

## **Do's:**

- **Handle kitten from day 1 (if mother allows)**
- **Touch the paws, ears, and face daily**
- **Allow your friends and family to hold your kitten**
- **Allow children to hold the kitten (with supervision)**
- **Let your kitten meet other animals (with supervision)**
- **Hold the kitten like a baby, cradled in your arms**
- **Leave a carrier available with a blanket for the cat to hide and sleep in. Cats that only go in carriers to go to the vet, usually become quite scared of them.**
- **Have lots of toys for stimulation, including a scratching post.**

## **Don'ts:**

- **Never tease or allow children to tease the kitten**
- **Don't allow biting or scratching when playing**
- **Don't allow rough play with children**

## **Gentling:**

- 1. Hold the kitten for at least 5 minutes a day.**
- 2. Sit down with the kitten and speak quietly to him/her while gently petting.**
- 3. Don't encourage rough play. IF the kitten tries biting, firmly tell them "No" and gently put them down and walk away.**
- 4. Once the kitten is comfortable, hold them while walking around the room.**
- 5. Feel the ears, look inside the ears, touch and gently squeeze feet, rub their belly and back (including tail), and open their mouth and rub your finger along the outside of the gums and teeth.**





# FELINE INFECTIOUS DISEASES

**Simply put, all cats are at risk.** The following diseases are found in every region of the United States. All of these diseases are highly contagious and possibly fatal. Even “indoor” cats should be tested to rule out the possibility of infection. However, there are factors that can put some cats at higher risks.

- Fighting
- Time Outdoors
- Contact with other cats
- Newly adopted or young cats
- Sickness
- Cats continuously exposed to an infected cat

There are no “sure” signs of any of these diseases. In some cats, signs don’t appear for weeks, months, or even years after they are infected. That is why testing is so important. Some signs/symptoms can include vomiting, diarrhea, weight loss, weakness, bite wounds, infected wounds, fever, bleeding or pale gums, grooming or behavior changes, swollen lymph nodes, or mouth sores.

These diseases are spread through bodily fluids such as saliva, urine, lactation, blood, and placental fluids (most commonly through birth), grooming, shared litter boxes and food/water bowls, or bites from an infected animal.

Blood/bodily fluid testing is the easiest and most accurate way to test for these diseases. Remember a positive test indicates infection, NOT the outcome of the disease. Many cats will live normal lifespans with regular veterinary care and small lifestyle changes.

## Feline Leukemia (FeLV)

Although the prevalence of FeLV is declining, it is still among the most common infectious diseases of cats. This disease attacks and weakens the immune system, leaving it unable to fight other infections and is recognized as a contagious virus responsible for certain cancers. Noncancerous diseases associated with FeLV infection include anemia, reproductive problems, and secondary infectious diseases. Feline leukemia is spread in moist secretions, such as saliva, urine, and blood. It can also be transmitted from a mother to her kittens, through birth or nursing. Behaviors such as grooming/licking, biting, sharing litter boxes, and sharing feeding bowls can allow for transmission of the disease.

Transmission of the disease requires direct contact as the virus does not live long outside the cat’s body, making segregation important.

Most veterinarians will recommend vaccinating domestic cats that have access to the outdoors. Prior to vaccinating a cat or kitten, it should be tested and have a negative result for the virus. There is no benefit of vaccinating a FeLV positive cat for Feline Leukemia, as this vaccine does not cure the disease.

If you lose a cat to FeLV, it is recommended that you wait 1 - 3 months before admitting a new cat into the house. It is also recommended that you throw out any litter boxes, food bowls or toys that were used by the previous cat. All areas of the house should be cleaned with bleach, especially the areas where the previous cat spent the most time.

Treatment for FeLV is limited to supportive care as well as treatment of symptoms. The use of anti-cancer drugs, as a treatment, is being studied, but, as yet, there are no cures for feline leukemia.

## **Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)**

FIV is like HIV in humans in that it causes an acquired immunodeficiency syndrome. This virus is specific to felines and strains of the virus are found in the feline population all over the world (including wild cats).

Worldwide, adult male cats living outdoors, compose the majority of FIV infected cats. FIV is found in the saliva of FIV-positive cats, and fighting and biting is believed to be the main source of transmission. True FIV prevalence is not known because testing is voluntary and the results are not reported. Identification and segregation of infected cats is considered to be the single most effective method of preventing new infections of FIV.

Similar to HIV in humans, cats that contract FIV, can experience a long asymptomatic period. Cats can eventually enter the AIDS-like syndrome characterized by sores in the mouth, recurrent respiratory disease, diarrhea, and weight loss.

There is a vaccination available for FIV, but once inoculated, this makes the distinction between a truly infected cat from a vaccinated cat impossible using the veterinary in-clinic test. Therefore, the vaccination is not considered to be part of the core vaccination protocol in most veterinary clinics (to avoid condemning a healthy cat with the disease).

Spread of the disease does not commonly happen through sex or mother to offspring as in the case of HIV. Kittens are considered to be at low risk even though their mothers harbor the virus. Kittens may test positive due to the antibodies from an infected or vaccinated mother. It is recommended that a kitten testing positive for FIV be segregated and retested every 1-2 months. If the kitten is still positive after 6 months, the kitten is considered to be infected.

Feline Immunodeficiency Virus does not live in the environment and becomes inactivated within a few hours on dry surfaces. It is easily inactivated by detergents and hospital disinfectants. Indirect exposure between cats at shows or veterinary clinics is not a risk for transmission as long as there is no direct contact.

## **Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP)**

FIP is an immune-mediated disease that is triggered by infection of a feline coronavirus. The coronavirus is transmitted by a cat contacting infected feces and then grooming. The feline coronavirus is not infectious to other species, including humans.

The feline coronavirus is typically a virus of the intestines. However, in some cats, the virus mutates into the feline infectious peritonitis virus. FIP has been commonly associated with multi-cat households where cats are kept indoors and use community litter pans where the virus collects.

There is no easy diagnosis for FIP in an alive cat. There are several indicators that support the diagnosis of FIP but none of them unique to just this disease, making a diagnosis difficult. FIP can affect the eyes, central nervous system, and organs. Fluid leaks out of blood vessels and collects in the abdomen, thoracic cavity, or in the sack around the heart. In some cases there is no fluid accumulation and these are very difficult to diagnose. Virtually every cat with confirmed FIP dies from the disease.

If an owner has a cat that dies from this disease and there are no other cats in the household, it is recommended to wait 3 months before introducing a new cat to your house. The feline coronavirus can stay infectious for several weeks in the environment.

It is unknown if a cat that has FIP is able to transmit it to other cats in the household. Those cats have already been exposed to the same feline coronavirus; therefore it seems to be relatively safe to bring a cat with FIP back into the household after diagnosis. The best recommendation for controlling this disease is to minimize the number of cats within a household. Homes with 10 or more cats are almost impossible to keep feline coronavirus free. Reducing the number of cats in the home (especially kittens less than 12 months old) and keeping potentially contaminated surfaces clean can minimize the accumulation of the feline coronavirus.

