



Kitten Welcome Pack

A big House and Jackson welcome to your new kitten!

The following pages are designed to offer you some help and support with this new member of your family. We want your bundle of fun to have the best chance of a long and happy life with you.

Vaccinations

At about 6-9 weeks of age, the immunity from infectious diseases, that your kitten acquired from its mother, will start to decline. This is why we recommend starting a vaccination programme from 8 weeks of age.

Initially two vaccinations are required, three to four weeks apart, and then they will need an annual booster injection.

At House and Jackson we routinely vaccinate against the two most important causes of cat flu (feline herpes virus and feline calicivirus), against feline panleucopenia, (a virus causing severe gut infections) and feline leukaemia, which is an untreatable and fatal disease. Although some owners do choose not to take up the leukaemia option.



Fleas and Worms

Routine flea treatment is a very good habit to get into! No-one wants to give fleas house room, they cause irritation to your kitten and are partial to biting humans too. Fleas are often the starting point for skin problems and form a key link in the life-cycle of the tapeworm, another pest your kitten can do without!

Central heating and fitted carpets keep fleas happy and warm all year round, so there's no relaxing even when it's snowing outside. Modern treatments, available from House and Jackson, are really easy to use and will protect your kitten, your other pets and your home.

It is an unpleasant fact that cats commonly have worms. There are two main types, roundworms and tapeworms. Fortunately, both are easy to control with regular medication using quality products available from your vet.

Pet shop or supermarket remedies may, however, not be fully effective! Ask your vet or our nurses who will be happy to advise you. Not all wormers need to be given as tablets: ask us about spot-on worming treatments.

Hygiene

Cats deservedly have a reputation for being clean animals. With a bit of common sense and good habits, like washing hands after handling and wearing gloves when changing cat litter, (especially important for pregnant women because of the connection with toxoplasma infection), cats will pose little or no health risk.

Talking of getting into good habits early on, long haired kittens grow up to be long haired cats and need daily grooming to avoid mats in their coats. Tooth cleaning is another good habit to get into, ask our nurses for a demonstration.

Diet

You only have to walk down any supermarket aisle to see that pet food is big business these days. The choice is bewildering. Some of the flavours on offer make our mouths water let alone your pet's! Your kitten's needs are simple and we recommend a "complete" diet, which means that all the nutrients he needs are contained within it. The diet should also be "nutrient dense". This means that his needs will be met even though his small stomach can only take a little food at a time. By choosing a food labelled "KITTEN" and "COMPLETE" and feeding little and often, you will be doing your very best for your growing cat.

If you are thinking of changing the diet at any time, it is important to do so gradually over 5-7 days, as abrupt changes in diet often result in upset stomachs.

Your kitten should be given a constant supply of fresh water to drink.

Beware that some cats are lactose intolerant so we advise against giving milk.

Identification

Collars and tags are a matter of choice for cats. You can get models that glow in the dark and those which have a quick release fastening are a sensible option as a safety feature in case your kitten gets caught in a tree.

However, collars and tags can get lost and we recommend micro-chipping as a quick and easy way of identifying your pet for life.

Chipping involves the placement of a microchip, the size of a grain of rice, under your kitten's skin in the scruff of his neck. This microchip gives your pet a permanent identification number which is registered on an international database, available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There is one payment at the time of implanting, **no** yearly subscription fee and, in the event that you move house, the address can be changed easily.

Most police stations, veterinary practices and animal rescue societies have access to scanners. These will detect the microchip and read your pet's unique number so that you can be contacted immediately.

Insurance

It is almost inevitable that your pet will, at some time in his life, require non-routine veterinary treatment.

Surgical treatments can prove expensive and never come at the right time! It is for this reason that we, at House and Jackson, recommend that you insure your pet.- Insuring your pet will provide financial backup when the need arises, ensuring that important decisions can be based on clinical needs without worry about money.

There are many companies offering pet insurance and we suggest that you shop around, obtaining and comparing information and quotations, just as you would be doing if you were insuring your car. Look particularly at the levels of cover provided, there are real differences between companies. What seems to be the cheapest quote may be far from the best policy to have.

Veterinary medicine is becoming increasingly advanced and the provision of modern diagnostic techniques can lead to high rates of success in treatment. Insurance cover makes it easier to take advantage of these benefits.

Insuring your kitten will mean peace of mind knowing that, whatever happens, you will be able to do your very best for him.

Neutering

Spaying of females at 5-6 months is essential unless you want a house full of kittens in no time at all.

Toms can also be castrated at this age, this will help to keep him from roaming miles in search of romance. If he does roam he runs a much greater risk of being run over by a car and from getting into fights, increasing his risk of catching feline AIDS. Castration also reduces the tendency to mark out territory by spraying urine around the house. Urine definitely has limited appeal as a household scent!

Care into the Future

We offer free-of-charge nurse clinics to provide quality advice throughout your pet's life.

We make this commitment because we believe that pro-active, positive guidance can help ensure that you maintain your pet in the very best of health.

We stock a full range of prescription foods and treats, from a selected range of manufacturers that we trust and which are not available in pet shops. We believe these provide the best of nutrition in a controlled and economic way. Foods are available to suit all life stages and to provide the correct diet for many clinical conditions.

We also provide a good range of feline supplies including toys and cleaners for your carpets.