

Morristown Animal Hospital
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Morristown, NJ 07960
(973)539-2808

KITTEN HEALTH PROGRAM AND VACCINATION SCHEDULE

Congratulations on the new addition to your family! There's nothing like the love of a warm, fuzzy kitten. We want to help you keep your kitten healthy and happy. Regularly scheduled vaccinations are important for building your kitten's immunity to several serious cat diseases. The examination we perform at each visit will also help us detect any common kittenhood problems or illnesses. Remember that we are always pleased to answer any questions about raising your kitten; please feel free to bring a list with you or call at any time. Here's a schedule of visits and vaccinations that we ask you to follow:

AGE OF KITTEN

6-8 WEEKS

Should be given
on or around

VACCINATION/PROCEDURE

First examination, first (of 3) **FVRCP** vaccinations. This is the distemper multiple vaccine. It protects against Feline Distemper (Panleukopenia), Rhino-tracheitis, Calicivirus. We recommend 2 **dewormings** on every young animal. We also recommend a **stool sample** to ensure all intestinal parasites have been eliminated.

9-12 WEEKS

Should be given
on or around

Second **FVRCP** booster and exam. This is done 3-4 weeks after the first vaccine. A second **stool sample/fecal exam** should be performed.

12+ WEEKS

Should be given
on or around

Rabies vaccination. This Rabies vaccine lasts for 1 year. We recommend the use of a recombinant DNA vaccination in cats and kittens. This vaccination has a 1 year duration of immunity. First (of 2) **Feline Leukemia Vaccination**, for outdoor cats.

12-16 WEEKS

Should be given
on or around

Third (and final) **FVRCP** booster and exam. This is done 3-4 weeks after the second booster. This vaccine will last for 1 year and will then need to be boosted annually. Second (of 2) **Feline Leukemia Vaccination**, for outdoor cats.

Presurgical blood testing may be obtained at this visit.
Fasting (no food) for 6 hrs prior to this visit preferred.

FELV/FIV TESTING

We recommend that all kittens have their blood tested for Feline Leukemia Virus (FELV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) (sometimes known as feline AIDS). These are two of the most serious illnesses that can infect cats. Kittens can be infected before or at birth and may be asymptomatic carriers. Screening your kitten's blood during one of the above visits will tell us whether we need to be concerned about either of these viruses and whether your kitten can be vaccinated against leukemia. We recommend retesting at least two months later as confirmation as cats can test negative very early in an infection. Also, adult cats that go outside should be tested periodically for FIV and FELV.

FELINE LEUKEMIA VACCINE

If your kitten has tested negative for Feline Leukemia, it may receive the vaccine to protect against it. This vaccine may be given to any kitten over 9 - 10 weeks of age. The initial vaccine is followed by a second booster in 3 weeks. Immunity lasts for 1 year and annual re-vaccination is required. We especially recommend this vaccine if you plan to let your cat outdoors since many stray cats are infected with the disease and may pass it to your cat.

FELINE BARTONELLA (Cat Scratch Fever)

We highly recommend that all healthy cats, especially those rescued from shelters and strays and those that have had fleas, be tested for the Bartonella infection. Kittens are more likely to transmit the bacteria to humans because of their playful nature. It is important that cats owned by people with young children, people whose cats have had flea infestations at any time, and people who are immunosuppressed by chemotherapy, organ transplants, or HIV infection, have their cats tested. This disease is transmitted to humans by scratches inflicted by an infected cat.

FELINE HEARTWORM

Heartworm disease isn't just a canine disease. Heartworms affect cats differently than dogs, but the disease they cause is equally serious. It only takes one mosquito to infect a cat, and because mosquitoes can get indoors, both indoor and outdoor cats are at risk and should receive heartworm preventive medication. Heartworm not only affects the heart, but also the lungs. Signs are very similar to those of feline asthma and upper respiratory infections (coughing, lethargy, difficulty breathing, weight loss, vomiting...). Any sign of these symptoms should be brought to the doctor's attention.

INTESTINAL PARASITE CONTROL

If your cat will be going outside, your pet will be at risk for re infestation of intestinal parasites. therefore, we recommend using a monthly tablet for worms. This product also protects against heartworm, but we will be using it for intestinal parasite deworming.

FLEAS AND TICKS

Many new safe nontoxic products are available to prevent and kill fleas and ticks. We will be happy to discuss a prevention program based on your individual household. If there are small children in your household, you may need to be careful with topicals.

SPAYING/NEUTERING

We recommend that if you don't plan to use your kitten for breeding purposes in the future that you have it surgically altered. This should be done once the kitten has reached **5 months** of age. Spaying or neutering your cat at this age will help prevent many health and behavioral problems later in life. Please see our handout on spaying and neutering for further information.

Microchip Identification - Protect Your Pet

A tiny computer chip about the size of a grain of rice may be injected under the skin. This may be done once your pet is 5 months of age or older. (Often it is convenient to do it at the time of spaying or neutering.) Each chip is encoded with a separate identification number for each individual animal. All humane societies and shelters have been given (free of charge) universal scanners capable of reading microchip ID numbers of all the different manufacturers. We see the microchip procedure as a valuable tool in returning lost or stolen pets to their owners and we strongly recommend it's use. We hope you find this information helpful. Keeping your pet healthy is important. We will help you keep track of your kitten's vaccination schedules; we'll send you a reminder when a vaccine is due. Please remember that we are available to help you in any way we can with your new kitten. We love to answer questions.

Best of luck with your new kitten!!!!!!

KITTEN TIPS

- **SCRATCHING** : The best way for a kitten to learn to use a scratching post is from its mother. Offer your kitten different types of posts, positioned horizontally, vertically. Use different textures such as sisal, cardboard and carpet. Try a pavlov cat scratch feeder- it dispenses food when the cat scratches. Place it near a favorite couch or where the cat is scratching and slowly move to another area.
- **LITTER BOX USE:** Use a large box, an under the bed sweater box minus the lid works well. You may want to try an open litter box versus a covered litter box to see which your cat will use. The plus one rule: for every cat have an extra litter box, food and water dish. With one cat there should be 2 litter boxes in different locations. With 2 cats there should be 3 litter boxes in different locations. Try different types of litter to see which your cat prefers. Most cats do not like scented litter- scented litter has been found to be a trigger for asthma in some cats.
- **CARRIERS:** Getting your kitten used to a cat carrier or crate early will make trips to the veterinarian much easier. Get one with a top lift or unzip top cover. Put toys in the carrier at home as well as some treats. You can start to feed in the carrier, after a few weeks, feed with the top closed. Never lift the carrier from a top handle- carry the carrier in your arms like you would carry a baby. Place a towel over it when in the waiting room at your veterinarian. Do not “dump” your cat out of a carrier, open top and lure out with treats. Can use wet food or baby food or nutritional. Feliway spray has also been shown to calm your cat, you can spray some in the carrier and on a towel. We prefer the solid plastic carriers with the removable lids. Sometimes with a frightened cat we can examine them while they rest in the base
- Kitten classes are available in the area, ask us if interested. The prime age for kitten training is 3 – 13 weeks of age. Best to start after its first vaccination.
- If there are any behavior problems, please feel free to call us. We are here to help. 973-539-2808