

Congratulations on your new addition to the family! We are so glad you have chosen the Voorhees Veterinary Center as your veterinarian. We are so excited for you and we know getting a kitten can be overwhelming. Below is a brief summary of important kitten information as you begin your journey as a new pet parent.

**Vaccines:** These will be spaced out based on your kitten's age

- **Rabies:**
  - Rabies is a fatal viral disease that is contracted when a rabid animal bites another animal or human, but is preventable with vaccination. Rabies is required by NJ State Law and is given as a single vaccination between 15-18 weeks of age.
  
- **FVRCP or commonly referred to as the Feline Distemper combo vaccine**
  - This stands for "Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus and Panleukopenia" meaning that this vaccine protects against all of these diseases.
  - This is a vaccine series that starts when the kitten is around 8 weeks of age, and is administered every 3-4 weeks until the last of the series is administered around 15-18 weeks of age. This vaccination timeline is particularly important, as these diseases (especially panleukopenia) are found commonly in the environment, and the kitten's immune system is not yet mature, thus young kittens are considered very susceptible.
  
- **FELV Vaccine**
  - Feline leukemia virus (FeLV) is a virus that infects only cats. It depresses the immune system and cats tend to remain infected for life. FeLV is an important cause of anemia in cats and can cause several types of cancers.
  - This vaccine is a two part series given 3-4 weeks apart and is given to indoor/outdoor cats

#### **FELV/FIV test**

- This test is performed in our office and many times has already been performed prior to obtaining your kitten
- Our test is the snap test which is the most sensitive and specific to find the disease (not all tests are as good as others)
- Feline leukemia virus (FELV) is one of the most common and destructive of all cat viruses. It is highly contagious and is spread primarily by saliva during cat fights, grooming or mating. The virus may also spread by blood, urine and feces. Kittens may become infected while still in the womb, when the mother bites off the umbilical cord, or during nursing. The virus is not transmissible to humans.
- Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) is another common feline retrovirus. It is similar to the human immunodeficiency virus but is species specific and therefore not transferable to humans. The primary route of transmission is thought to be through aggressive biting behavior. The virus is most commonly seen in older male cats. FIV infection generally carries a much more favorable prognosis than does FELV infection. FIV positive cats may

live for years. They are usually presented for evaluation of non-specific illnesses which are a result of the viral effects or result from secondary infections subsequent to the immunodeficiency.

### **Flea/tick prevention**

Fleas and ticks are common skin parasites of cats. A female flea can lay as many as 50 eggs a day and an average of 27 eggs a day for up to 100 days. Fleas are species specific but can easily hitch a ride on your pet while they are outside or even attach to humans and then introduce it to your kitten. To prevent infection, your kitten should receive flea and tick prevention monthly year round. Flea and tick medication will not prevent attachment but will prevent the spread of disease.

### **Fecal**

Routine fecal examinations are used to detect intestinal parasites in your cat. These parasites may include worms (such as hookworms, roundworms, and whipworms) and microscopic parasites (such as Giardia or Coccidia). Parasites not only cause intestinal disease in cats, some of them can also be infectious to humans (hookworms, roundworms, and Giardia). We check two fecal exams spread out to ensure we detect these intestinal parasites at different parts of their life cycles. We then continue with annual fecal exams to ensure your pet stays healthy.

### **Socialization/Behavior**

It is very important to provide your kitten with opportunities for play and socialization. Not all cats are pack animals but it is important to stimulate their minds to prevent unwarranted behaviors

For more information please visit this comprehensive website made by Ohio State's Veterinary School <https://indoorpet.osu.edu/cats>

### **Spay/Neuter**

Removing a female cat ovaries eliminates heat cycles and generally reduces the unwanted behaviors that may lead to owner frustration. Early spaying of female cats can help protect them from some serious health problems later in life such as uterine infections such as a pyometra and breast cancer.

Removing the testes from male cats reduces the breeding instinct, making them less inclined to roam and more content to stay at home. Neutering your male pet can also lessen its risk of developing benign prostatic hyperplasia (enlarged prostate gland) and testicular cancer.

Spays and neuters are performed after six months of age. Prior to surgery your pet will have bloodwork performed and a full physical exam to ensure they are a safe candidate for anesthesia.

We look forward to seeing you at your next visit! Any questions or concerns please call us at 856-435-8090 or email at [info@voorheesvet.com](mailto:info@voorheesvet.com)