

Going Forward with Your New Cat!

Here at Worcester Animal Rescue League we have provided your pet with a basic wellness foundation. Just as we humans need regular health care, so does your cat and additional health care beyond the basics that we can provide here at the Worcester Animal Rescue League is often needed.

You need to have your own veterinarian to help you with your cat's health needs in the years ahead. We recommend that you make an appointment with your veterinarian in 2 weeks to review your cat's basic care and to discuss preventative health measures such as additional vaccinations, parasite control and heartworm. This "wellness care" is not only good for your cat, but essential for the health and well being of your family too.

Your veterinarian is the best source for valuable advice and recommendations regarding your cat's care. A healthcare program can be made specifically for your pet that fits both the lifestyle needs of your cat and your budget. Here are some areas for you to discuss with your veterinarian:

- **Complete Physical Exam:** The key is early diagnosis and treatment, before serious damage occurs. This time also provides the opportunity to discuss various aspects of your cat's care in addition to health and nutrition. Getting an understanding of normal cat behavior is also important since changes in behavior may be an early sign of many serious diseases.
- **Vaccines:** the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) and the Academy of Feline Medicine (AFM) Advisory Panel on Feline Vaccines, have developed recommendations for the selection and administration of vaccines for cats. Whether your cat is an outdoor or indoor cat, it's important to complete the vaccinations as recommended by your veterinarian. Some vaccines require booster shots to maintain levels of protection. Be sure to ask your veterinarian about these.

Core

Rabies (*required by law*)
Feline panleukopenia
Feline viral rhinotracheitis
Feline calicivirus

Noncore (Lifestyle)

Chlamydia
Feline infectious peritonitis
Dermatophytosis
Bordetella bronchiseptica
Giardia
Feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV)
Feline Leukemia

- **Parasite Control and Treatment:** Year-round parasite prevention offers the best protection. Besides parasites we can see on the cat, such as ticks, fleas and mosquitoes that can transmit deadly diseases, there are other parasites living inside your cat, you also need to be aware of. Your veterinarian is the best source of information about animal diseases or conditions that can affect your cat or your family.
- **Diagnostic Health Screens:**
 - **Heartworm Disease:** All cats are at risk for contracting heartworms, even cats confined mostly indoors. Your veterinarian may recommend a blood test before monthly preventatives are given.
 - **Gastrointestinal Parasites:** Regular examination of your cat's stool is critical to identify the presence of gastrointestinal parasites. If needed, your veterinarian will recommend treatment, protecting your pet and your family.
 - **Age Appropriate Health Screens:** Cats age much faster than we do. With this in mind we now know even in younger cats there may be early signs of organ failure or disease that, if caught early, can be treated. Ask your veterinarian to advise you on what's appropriate for your cat.
- **Dental care:** Consult with your veterinarian regarding the appropriate measures to preserve and protect your cat's teeth and oral health. A healthy mouth can help your pet live longer, be more comfortable – and have better breath too.