

Kitten Health Information

Vaccines:

- Rabies- Any kitten older than 12 weeks of age can receive its first rabies vaccination which is protective for one year. The second vaccination given is protective for three years.
- FVRCP- Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis/Calicivirus/Panleukopenia (feline distemper)
Combination vaccination recommended for all kittens. It is a two or three injection series depending on the age of the kitten. The injections for the series are given 3-4 weeks apart. This vaccine is boosted annually.
- FeLeuk- This is a vaccination against feline leukemia virus that is recommended for outdoor cats. This is a two injection series with 3 weeks between injections. This vaccine is boosted every 3 years. JVC recommends testing for feline leukemia prior to vaccination.

Disease Screening:

- FIV/FelV test- Feline Immunodeficiency Virus and Feline Leukemia Virus testing is recommended for every kitten. Both diseases cause a decrease in immune function and can be fatal. Please refer to the provided information sheets in your kitten packet to learn more about these diseases.

Heartworm Preventative and Testing:

- Prevention- Although outdoor cats are at a greater risk of being infected with heartworm disease, indoor cats can also become infected. There are four heartworm disease preventive products approved by the FDA for use in cats: Heartgard for Cats, Interceptor, Revolution and Advantage Multi for Cats.
JVC carries Revolution, which protects against heartworm disease and fleas. Revolution also treats and controls hookworms, roundworms, and ear mites.
- Testing- Heartworm testing is available in combination with the FIV/FelV test at JVC.

Flea & Ticks:

- Fleas- Fleas can cause allergies as well as spread disease and parasites. They live in the outdoor environment and can be brought indoors by your pet to start their life cycle in your home. Flea infections can be prevented by using products such as Frontline for cats which is a once a month preventative. The product is applied on your cat's skin and should be used April through October or until the first killing frost.
- Ticks- Ticks can carry many diseases that can cause serious health problems. The key to preventing transmission of these diseases is by using a preventative such as Frontline for cats.
*Frontline Plus for cats kills fleas, flea eggs, ticks, and chewing lice.

Parasite Control:

- Kittens- All kittens less than 8 weeks of age should be dewormed starting at 3 weeks of age and done bi-weekly. Once kittens are 8 weeks of age they should be placed on monthly preventative, such as Revolution. All kittens should have a fecal exam on their first visit to ensure they are free of intestinal parasites. These parasites can cause vomiting, diarrhea, or decreased growth. Some parasites can also be spread to humans. Having a fecal exam can help diagnose an infection to allow the proper treatment. Once a kitten has been diagnosed with parasites and treated they should be retested to ensure treatment is successful.
- Adults- Adults should be on a year round monthly preventative. If not on a monthly preventative, then a yearly fecal exam or deworming 2-4 times a year should be done.

Spay and Neuter:

- Spay- Female cats should be spayed at 6 months of age before the first heat cycle. This will help prevent breast cancer, ovarian and uterine cancer later in life. Most importantly it prevents unwanted pregnancies.

- Neuter- Male cats should be neutered at 6 months of age. Doing so will prevent testicular cancer and reduce the risk of other types of cancers. Neutering males also reduces unwanted behaviors such as aggression, marking or spraying and roaming. It also eliminates unwanted litters.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT WORMS

ROUNDWORM

1. Puppies and kittens may be born with them.
2. The larva can cause eye defects in children.
3. The larva travel through the lungs and can cause a cough and then grow to adults in the small intestine.
4. Dogs and cats get them from sniffing a stool from another dog or cat that had the worm.
5. The worm resembles a piece of cooked spaghetti, 1 to 4 inches long.

HOOKWORM

1. Puppies and kittens may be born with them.
2. The larva can cause a skin rash in people.
3. The worms are bloodsuckers that live in the small intestine.
4. The larva will live in the ground until it freezes.
5. The worms are like tiny threads and are not usually seen.
6. Like the roundworm, the hookworm can cause a cough.

TAPEWORM

1. These are flat, ribbon-like worms consisting of segments.
2. The segments will break off and come out with the stool or attach to the hairs under the tail resembling a rice kernel.
3. These worms are not directly contagious from one animal to another.
4. Dogs get them from eating fleas or rabbits.
5. Cats get them from eating mice.
6. The eggs are inside of the individual segments and unless a segment breaks open, they will not be detected by a stool examination by a veterinarian.

COCCIDIOSIS

1. This is really a protozoan. It lives in the intestine and is diagnosed by a worm test of the stool.
2. The disease usually affects puppies and kittens causing diarrhea - often with blood.

WHIPWORM

1. This small, threadlike worm lives in the cecum or appendix of dogs.
2. The adults do not produce a lot of eggs and often more than one stool sample has to be examined to make a diagnosis.
3. This is a difficult worm to eliminate.

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT WORMS

1. Milk or candy does not cause worms.
2. Many dogs and cats have been needlessly put to sleep because they were blamed for giving children pinworms. **DOGS AND CATS DO NOT GET PINWORMS.**
3. There is no one medication that will eliminate all types of worms; medication is used according to the type of worm.
4. It is best to not worm a pet unless one knows what type of worm the pet has.
5. A negative stool test does not always indicate your pet does not have worms:
 - ⇒ The worm may be too young to produce eggs
 - ⇒ The worms may be mostly males, which do not produce eggs
 - ⇒ Diarrhea interferes with the test
6. A routine stool examination is recommended. This is usually performed when the booster vaccinations are given.

Important reasons to spay and neuter your pet

Spaying your female pet (ovariohysterectomy):

Removal of the ovaries and uterus. Ideal age is 6 months.

- Eliminates the risk of ovarian and uterine cancer.
- Eliminates unwanted pregnancies.
- If spayed before the first heat cycle, your pet has a less than 1% chance of developing breast cancer. If spayed after one heat cycle, your pet has an 8% chance of developing breast cancer. If spayed after two heat cycles, the risk increases to 26%. After two years, no protective benefit exists.
- Pets with diabetes or epilepsy should be spayed to prevent hormonal changes that may interfere with medication.

Neutering your male pet (castration):

Removal of the testicles and spermatic cord. Ideal age is 6 months.

- Eliminates the risk of testicular cancer, the second most common tumor in male dogs.
- Greatly reduces the risk of prostate cancer and prostatitis.
- Reduces the risk of perianal tumors.
- Reduces roaming and fighting.
- Eliminates or reduces spraying or marking in males neutered at 6 months of age before the onset of these behaviors.
- Eliminates the risk and spread of sexually transmitted diseases.
- Eliminates unwanted litters.

Common myths:

Spaying or neutering your pet *does not*:

- Cause laziness or hyperactivity
- Reduce its instinct to protect your family and home
- Cause immature behaviors
- Reduce their instinct to hunt
- Postpone or delay normal behavioral maturity
- Alter their personality in any manner

The staff members of Jefferson Veterinary Clinic can answer your questions about spaying or neutering your pet or any other procedure your pet may undergo at our hospital. Please don't hesitate to ask.



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