



## PREVENTATIVE HEALTHCARE IN CATS

### Why prevent disease?

- **Prevention is better than cure** : There are no specific treatments for many of the viral diseases so treatment is often only supportive and may be unsuccessful.
- **Diseases cause suffering** : Most of us can't remember the last time someone suffered from Tetanus, Small Pox, Measles or Tuberculosis. These diseases have been eradicated or prevented in humans by vaccination – one form of disease prevention. Unfortunately, although human medicine has progressed to preventing disease, awareness in Veterinary medicine is lagging behind. We would like to see Veterinary Medicine catch up.
- **It saves money**: In most cases the cure is generally more expensive than prevention.
- **It increases** levels of pet health in our local community.
- **It reduces** amounts of infectious diseases around.

**Our staff know that a healthy pet is a happy pet and we have devised the following nine point plan to try and keep your pet as healthy and happy as possible.**

### The 9 point plan.

1. **Vaccination (see vaccination leaflet)**
  - Feline Infectious Enteritis (FIE)
  - Cat Flu (Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis and Feline Calicivirus)
  - Feline Leukaemia Virus (FeLV)
2. **Deworming** – All cats have worms and there are more than a dozen different types. One of these, Toxocara (a roundworm) is a serious health issue to humans and can, in extreme cases, cause blindness, especially in children. Kittens are often infected with Toxocara from their mother before birth. These worms then develop throughout the first six months of life. Our recommended protocol for treatment is **Advocate** and **panacur** at first vaccine, then **Advocate** monthly. Once 6 months of age we recommend **Advocate** monthly and **Profender** or **Drontal cat** every 6 months (3 months for cats that hunt or are fed a raw meat diet – which we advise against).
3. **Flea Control** – In a typical infestation only 5% fleas (the adults) live on your cat and 95% (the eggs and larvae) live in the home. Fleas can cause skin problems and anaemia in young animals. Our recommended protocol is **Advocate** applied monthly. This kills the adult fleas and larvae and makes flea eggs infertile,

- helping to break the flea life cycle. **Advocate** also kills most other common parasites, including ear mites, as well as *Toxocara* roundworms.
4. **Feeding** – Throughout each stage of their lives cats have different nutritional requirements. We recommend a researched complete and balanced diet such as **Hills Science Diet**. This food and dry diets generally, are better for the teeth than wet food.
  5. **Dental and Oral care** – A cat's mouth is similar to ours and so, like us, brushing teeth is the best option to prevent dental disease. We recommend **CET Toothpaste Kits**. For those animals who will not tolerate brushing we recommend **Logic Oral Gel** and some suitable chews (**Cat Dental Chews or Whiskas Dentabits**). Feeding **Hills t/d** also helps to control tartar and can be fed as 1/3 diet.
  6. **Neutering** – This helps to prevent diseases. Un-neutered males are more likely to stray over a large area, will mark with a very pungent spray and are much more likely to fight. Fighting males are much more likely to spread diseases such as FIV and FeLV to other cats, and are likely to suffer from fight injuries such as abscesses. Because they wander over a large area they are also at greater risk of suffering road traffic accidents. Un-neutered females can have up to three litters in a year and will call regularly (about every two weeks from January through until the autumn) if they do not get pregnant. They are also more likely to suffer from serious diseases such as mammary cancer and uterine infections if not spayed. Furthermore, there are already too many unwanted kittens around! Neutering is generally performed at 5-6 months old.
  7. **Insurance** – Unexpected bills can be heartbreaking for both owners and vets if costs of treatment are prohibitive and the animal has to have less than optimal treatment or worse. Insurance represents a regular, worthwhile contribution to the health of your pet. Policies that provide lifelong cover are preferred over those which only offer 12 months of cover and then exclude the disease/condition in question, from any further cover. We can introduce you to Petplan who can provide you with Free Veterinary Cover for 4 weeks and information about their other policies. If you would like us to make the introduction please tell a member of staff.
  8. **Microchipping** – The best way of protecting your cat against theft and of re-uniting you with him/her in the event of loss.
  9. **Socialisation** – It is very important to get kittens used to being handled and for them to experience a variety of situations. Try to get your kitten used to having its mouth opened, its feet handled etc and to being groomed. It is also useful to get them used to their cat basket (leaving it out for them to sleep in works well), and to travelling in the car.

Finally, do think about signing up to our **VIP Health club**. This will save you money on most of the preventative health care discussed above. Please speak to any member of staff if you are interested.