

Pitts Veterinary Hospital, P.C.

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Feline Wellness and Geriatric Examination Information

We feel it is very important for your cat to receive a physical examination annually. A doctor will examine several body systems including ears, eyes, nose and throat, dental health (mouth, teeth, and gums), heart, lungs, abdomen, legs and paws, and body condition (coat, skin, and weight). Performing a thorough examination allows us to detect any potential health risks at an early stage.

We recommend that your cat receive a distemper/respiratory and rabies vaccine annually. We vaccinate cats with the Purevax Rabies vaccine (available in 1 and 3 year versions) because it does not cause cancer at the site of injection. A traditional 3 year rabies vaccine is also available, but may cause cancer at the injection site in 1 of 10,000 vaccinates. Our doctors may also recommend that your cat be vaccinated against Feline Leukemia. The veterinarian will suggest that your cat be tested for Feline Leukemia and FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus) before administering the vaccination. These life threatening diseases can be passed to the kitten from the mother, or spread through contact with bodily fluids (blood, saliva) from Leukemia/FIV positive cats. There is no cure for either of these diseases, so prevention is important. The Leukemia vaccine is recommended for cats who venture outdoors, that live with a cat that goes outdoors (even if that cat is vaccinated), or may come into contact with leukemia positive cats. Your cat will need to receive a leukemia booster shot two to three weeks after the first injection. This vaccine will then be given annually as long as conditions for exposure are anticipated to continue.

We recommend that all cats with mosquito exposure be on monthly heartworm preventive from March-November. No testing is required prior to starting preventive. Heartworm preventive is available in chewable or topical form. Depending on the product used, the topical may also be effective against fleas and/or ticks.

We also recommend that a fecal sample be tested from your cat annually or more frequently if exposed to ground contaminated by dog or cat feces. Intestinal parasites are very common and can be transmitted to people and other animals. Please bring a fresh sample to your annual examination or as recommended to help diagnose gastrointestinal problems.

A urinalysis is suggested to help us determine bladder and kidney health. The first urine of the morning is the best for urinalysis. We have non-absorbent litter that you can use in place of your regular litter to obtain the sample. Please bring the urine in a clean container as soon as possible, but no later than 4 hours after catching it. A urine sample is recommended every 2-3 years until age 7 or 8, then annually or as needed if bladder or kidney problems are suspected.

If you are transferring to us from a previous veterinary clinic, please bring a copy of your cat's medical history to your first visit, including vaccinations, blood work or other lab work, and digital radiographs if applicable. This information can also be faxed to us by your previous veterinarian.

If your cat is 10 years or older:

Our doctors encourage a more thorough work-up be done annually to monitor the health of your senior animal. Blood work is highly recommended and will help us detect early signs of disease. Blood work helps us determine the status of important bodily organs such as kidneys, liver, and pancreas. We also look at the health of the blood cells to make sure there are no signs of infection or anemia. Checking urine along with bloodwork gives us a good idea of how well the kidneys are functioning. We also look for signs of infection, blood, protein loss, and diabetes. It is important to detect the disease process early and start treatment before major damage occurs.

Ours doctors may also suggest radiographs and ultrasound based on your cat's physical exam, breed, and genetics.

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