



A HELPFUL INFORMATIONAL PACKET FOR YOUR NEW PET

Things every cat owner should know

- 1) **ESTABLISH A SAFE ROOM (other uses):** A cat or kitten can become overwhelmed quickly in a new environment. Place your newly adopted kitty in a "Safe Room," which will allow him to adjust much more quickly and feel comfortable enough to find the cat box. A safe room can be any smaller room with a door that can be shut (bathrooms work well), equipped with all the necessary items such as a litter box, food, water, and a soft place to lay. **This room can be used anywhere from the first few days to a couple of weeks, depending on how shy or social your kitty is.** Before opening the door, make sure he is using the litter box well and is coming out on his own when you enter the room. Eventually, leave the door open so he is able to venture out as he chooses. There are many uses to a safe room. Have a kitten keeping you up at night? He can go back in this room so you can have a good night's rest. When we adopted our kitten, we had to use his safe room a hand full of times, as he was attacking my husband's feet at night! They do learn with time. ***We also use our "Safe Room"** when we know the door could be left open during a party or play date. This way we know our kitty won't accidentally venture outside.

- 2) *** CAT'S NEED WET FOOD NOW FOR FEWER PROBLEMS LATER :** Leave out dry food and fresh water as normal, but NEVER forget to give your cat AT LEAST a half of a 5.5 oz. can of wet food (with 1-2 tablespoons of water added if you can) every single night (**better yet, give wet food twice a day**). This is absolutely necessary for ALL CATS diets (ask your vet)! **Since DEHYDRATION related health issues is the leading cause of death in cats 5 years of age or older** it is absolutely necessary to avoid many issues later on in life and less vet bills (trust me please. After rescuing cats and kittens for 10 years now, I have seen it first-hand. I'm tired of seeing our adopted felines die early (as young as 2) or develop serious issues. I know a change is necessary! **TO EXPLAIN FURTHER:** Cats have a **low** thirst drive unlike humans and dogs and are used to getting their "water needs" from their food source. Dry food is only 10% moisture/water, while wet food is 75-80% moisture. Studies show that cats fed solely dry food have a lower water intake and lower urine volume than cats given wet food daily, even if they have constant access to fresh water or pet fountains. Veterinarians warn that insufficient moisture in the diet may increase the risk of crystals or stones in the urinary tract or other problems such as diabetes. **Most cats don't mind the extra water added, so please do it. I mean, why not! Just be consistent with it** Add one tablespoon at first, then in a few weeks increase it to 2, and so on. My cat Solo gets 2 tablespoons of water with his wet food EVERY TIME (be consistent) and it's reassuring to see the amount of water he gets. I am determined to get my cat to 20 years old and giving wet food is absolutely necessary. **PET FOUNTAIN:** Water fountains are the next best thing (next to giving your cat wet food twice a day) as it entices them to drink more!

- 3) *** KEEPING YOUR PETS MOUTH HEALTHY:** It's estimated that 80% of dogs and 70% of cats over 3 years old suffer from some form of dental disease! **Pets are silent sufferers, so help them!** Good oral hygiene can help prevent diseases or secondary infections, such as liver, heart, kidney, and joint disease from bacteria originating in the mouth and spreading through the body by the bloodstream. **A pet with good oral hygiene will also live longer!** There are brushing and NO-brushing techniques to keep your pets mouth healthy. **A) Toothpaste/toothbrush (BEST WAY):** Best way is by using **Enzymatic** pet toothpaste (many brands and flavors specifically made for your pet) with a soft bristle toothbrush. **I use Vetoquinol Care Enzadent Enzymatic Poultry Flavor toothpaste for my dog/cat. B) Oral care gel,** which are drops placed on either side of the mouth. You withhold food for 30 minutes before and after placing the drops in the mouth for best results. Can also place this gel directly on any areas of the teeth with tartar or plaque buildup **C) Water additives.** You add these dental water additives directly to your pet's water bowl every day to fight bacteria and keep your pets mouth healthy. **D) Chew toys/Dental treats:** They have specific "Chew toys" for dental health. Some have cat nip in them to entice the cat to use it. "Greenies" are a well-known dental treat that also helps.

- 4) *** CUTTING NAILS:** Cutting your cat's nails is easier than you think! And important enough to do it, especially in the kitten's first year (when they are exploring and learning where they can and can't scratch). I choose to use regular human nail clippers. Why? Because I am used to using them and I am quick, but feel free to use any of those specialty ones. I set my phone to remind me every 2 weeks (although every week is even better), and I cut the white part of the nail (not the red part called the quick). This way when my cat jumps across my couch like a ninja, I know he can't damage it. Kittens can go through a pretty wild "kitten phase," so learning how to cut nails is easy and important.

- 5) **KEEPING MY CAT FROM SCRATCHING THINGS (Declawing)** - Cats enjoy scratching for many reasons! Such as removing old nail sheaths from claws, exercising and toning muscles, relieving stress, frustration, or boredom, to warm up for a

rigorous play session, or to mark territory. Since cats are instinctive scratches entice them to scratch on things they are supposed to! Start by getting them a couple scratching posts they will love! **(Don't forget to cut nails every 2 weeks in a kitten's first year of life which will help greatly)**. Get them a scratching post that is nice and tall so they can stretch out fully! Amazon sells a Sisal scratching post that is 32 inches tall. Can also try horizontal ones that lay on your floor. They make them with carpet, cardboard, sisal, and other fabrics. Place catnip on or around these areas to entice them! Still scratching in places he shouldn't? Try putting lemon scent or orange scent on the area. Cats hate these smells. Also try double sided sticky tape (Found at most pet supermarkets) or aluminum foil. **Declawing** is inhumane and can bring a lifetime of pain to a pet. After their toes are amputated they are forced to walk differently which can cause arthritis and other achy pains. Declawing has been linked to behavior issues, such as aggression (as they are in pain) and peeing outside the box (they want to pee on something soft not hard like litter as their feet hurt). Most European countries have banned it and even New York. No cat should have to live in pain by being declawed. Teach your cat where to scratch and where not to!

- 6) **HOW TO DISCIPLINE YOUR PET THE RIGHT WAY:** **Please refrain* from using your hand or other item to slap, hit, or hurt an animal. Animals will not understand physical abuse and will only begin to FEAR you. This is NOT what you want. Use other techniques, proven to work. Start with a stern "NO" followed by a secondary action such as "blowing in the cats face." This is my personal favorite as it is quick and easy to do. You can also try using a squirt bottle (keeping off counters or couch), making a loud noise (clapping, shaking a jar of pennies, loud sound). Eventually they will understand that the deep "NO" is enough and won't want a secondary action to follow. **Also know consistency is key. Discipline every time they do it (not just some of the time).**

- 7) **TRAINING DEVICES THAT WORK-** Here are a few different devices to consider. A) **PetSafe ScatMat:** A plastic electrical mat with a mild and harmless 3-second static pulse that responds to your pet's touch. We have used these on our couch before. B) **PetSafe SSSCAT Deterrent Cat Spray:** Motion activated device that emits a harmless, odorless, and stainless spray to deter your pet from that area. Great for keeping pets off counters, couches, or other areas. Works well! C) **Plastic Spike Mat:** Inexpensive with many different variations, but all give the same results. Wherever these mats are placed, your pet will stay away from this area. D) **NO chew/deterrent sprays:** Sprays you can buy and place on items you don't want your animal chewing on. Works very well as has a bitter taste! E) **Tall scratching post-** Give your cat a few scratching posts. Nice and tall (33" tall) and ones that lay on the floor also. Entice them with cat nip on and around the scratching post. This way they will want to scratch these and not your furniture.

- 8) **INSIDE CAT vs. INSIDE/OUTSIDE:** A cat who is allowed to roam freely outside will most likely not survive to old age. Aside from the most obvious dangers – getting lost or hit by a car – a cat may also fight with other animals and end up with serious wounds that require immediate veterinarian care. They are often killed by predators such as coyotes, owls, or raccoons, or get fleas and tapeworms (yuck). Rule #1: ***KEEP YOUR CAT FEARFUL OF THE OUTDOORS!*** With our cat Solo, we have a rule that he is not allowed to step ONE paw outside of the house. Meaning, he isn't allowed to be brought out to the backyard or any outdoor location. Not even the garage. As by doing so, it will build his confidence to the outdoor world and as a result could attempt to escape through an opened door. **We will use loud horns, squirting him with water, or having one of our children wear a scary bear mask to scare our cat away from the doors if we find him becoming too curious and hanging near them.** Not all cats will need these deterrents, but I'm determined to get my furry feline to the ripe old age of 20, so indoors only!

- 9) **KNOW WHEN TO CALL A VET:** Cat's instinctively hide their pain and when they aren't feeling well, they may hide or avoid interaction, become lethargic, or simply not act like their normal self. Unusual aggression can also be seen. My father's cat became increasingly agitated and withdrawn. He later found an awful infection he didn't initially notice. **Other things to look out for:** A change in your cat's appetite, gums are discolored or pale (cat's gums should be pink), walking abnormally, litter box habits have changed (frequent trips to the litter box, crying or straining once inside, or going outside of the litter box are signs of UTI), cat is vomiting frequently (blood in vomit, or vomit accompanied by lethargy), or a prolonged cough. Just trust your instincts! You know your cat better than anyone else, so if something seems off, take your cat to the vet.

- 10) **KEEP GOOD HABITS / CONSISTANCY / CAT GRASS / WATER DISHES-** Implement GOOD HABITS, "HANDS ARE FOR PETTING, TOYS ARE FOR PLAYING!" Never allow your pet to bite your hand, ever! If he is in a playful stage-grab a toy! Like humans, cats like consistency. Cats and kittens will become accustomed to certain habits if you stick with them, like being held, cutting their nails, or eating wet food twice a day **with** added tablespoons of water. Keep their water bowls fresh and filled daily. **Have at least two water sources** (cats don't like their water near their food dish). **CAT GRASSES:** are good for a cat's digestive systems. Pet stores sell cat grass in an easy kit. You can also plant your own by purchasing the seeds from stores who have a garden section. They sell cat grass as well as Cat nip too.

- 11) **SAVE FOR VET CARE:** We all know vet care is expensive. Start saving now. As little as \$5 or \$10 dollars every week can add up quickly. Put any loose change in a jar as your emergency vet fund. I have seen many pet owners choose to euthanize their animal due to lack of funds, even though the issue could have been treated. Cats have no choice in this matter, please think ahead for them so you can help them when they need it most! Look into pet insurance as it can cost as little as \$8 a month. If you need to raise money for vet care, try asking your friends on any social media platforms or starting a Go Fund Me. Do whatever it takes to give them a chance - they rely on you.
- 12) **HELP! MY PET IS MISSING- 1 IN 3 CATS WILL GO MISSING IN THEIR LIFETIME!** Don't delay looking for your lost pet. The longer the cat is gone, the further away it may be. Humane societies can euthanize within 48-72 hours. Statistics show that owners don't start looking for their cat for several days. If your cat has been taken to a crowded shelter or municipal pound **they may only be able to hold cats for a few days before euthanizing him/her.** REMEMBER to call and visit your local humane societies right away and give a description of your animal and where it was lost so they can keep it on file in case they come in contact with him/her at the shelter. Also put out fliers around the neighborhood with a recent photo of your cat/kitten on it. Don't forget to put an ad in the lost section of the News Journal and on Craigslist. For cats that go INSIDE/OUTSIDE, a tag and collar is very important! This shows the cat is owned and another person won't mistake it for a "Stray.
- 13) **A CLEAN LITTER BOX MAKES YOUR KITTY HAPPY-** Keep your kitty's cat box clean by scooping it daily! You wouldn't want to use a toilet that was previously used multiple times without flushing so why would your cat? This would prevent him or her from using the bathroom elsewhere. Scoopable clumping litters work the best for odor control and a covered litter box is great too (keeps smell in). I love our **Igloo** cat box! You can also try putting a thin layer of baking soda at the bottom of the cat box as well. 3 inches or more of litter is best as cat's LOVE to cover their treasures!
- 14) **FEEDING INSTRUCTIONS FOR A GROWING KITTEN:** A bowl of dry food and fresh water should be available at all times. Wet food should be given morning, midday and evening (as much as a growing kitten wants). You can always try adding a little bit of water (2-3 tablespoons) to the wet food to get it mushier. **NEVER** give milk to any cat unless it is specifically made for cats. Eventually as your kitten grows up, the need for wet food 3 times a day is not necessary. We do, however, highly suggest that you give your cat at the minimum, a HALF of a 5.5 oz. can of wet food with 3 or more tablespoons of water added daily (wet food twice a day is even better). This will ensure your female or male cat won't develop kidney or urinary tract blockages later in life and is an **ABSOLUTE MUST** (Please trust me here or talk with your vet)
- 15) **FLEA CONTROL ON YOUR PET-** Use only vet recommended flea control. Over the counter ones could kill your cat. Revolution & Advantage MULTI (Has to be multi) kills fleas, ear mites, and most internal parasites when used regularly. There are a couple places you can look to find discounted flea controls. 1) **CCFAW (www.ccfaw.org)** - they offer these at a discount and can go to their website to see the list of dates they will be in areas within Volusia County. 2) **PetCareRx (www.petcarerx.com)** or **www.revivalanimal.com** which are always less expensive to buy flea control than a veterinarian's office. You will need a prescription (give the sites your vet's name and number so they can call). Also- Regular dawn dish soap will kill fleas on your cat/kitten and is safe to use at any age. Start at his head and then work your way down. Make sure to rinse it all off and dry off the kitten good. *Place the dish soap directly on the kitten. Avoid soap at the eyes. This is great for kittens under 8 weeks old! Make sure kitten stays warm after bath.
- 16) **TAPEWORMS (Common and Easy to treat)** - Looks like a piece of white rice found in their feces, bedding, or around the anus of the cat or kitten. Tapeworms are very common and generally aren't harmful to cats. Rarely, tapeworms may cause debilitation or weight loss if they are present in large numbers. Cats become infected with tapeworms from swallowing a flea infected with a tapeworm larvae or from eating infected mice or other exposed animals. *To rid your cat/kitten (over 7 weeks old) of these,* purchase Praziquantel Feline Tape Worm Tablets or liquid and treat the kitty for fleas (check out a shot clinic to purchase flea preventative as the ones over the counter just don't work well). **You can buy Praziquantel ONLINE!** Check with your vet if you have any concerns or questions. One pill costs anywhere from 4-8 dollars. Some vets like to charge you a visit fee for this issue, while others will let you walk in to grab the pill. DOSING CHART FOR PRAZIQUANTEL: *Here is the dosing chart for Praziquantel Feline Tape Worm Tablets 23mg each (usually not located on the bottle). 4 lbs and under = ½ tablet, 5-11 lbs = 1 tablet, Over 11 lbs = 1 ½ tablets.

17) **INGREDIENTS TO AVOID IN YOUR PET'S FOOD:** Brand isn't always the most important thing to consider unless your cat has health problems such as urinary issues, kidney, or diabetes. It is best to know ingredients to AVOID in your pet's food if you can. The more wet food (protein) in your cat's diet – the better. We recommend a half of a 5.5 oz. can in the morning and the other half in the evening if you can (with 1-2 tablespoons of water added). Let's get back to ingredients you should avoid (if you can) in your pet's food. Chemical preservatives such as butylated hydroxytoluene (BHT), butylated hydroxyanisole (BHA), and Ethoxyquin have been linked to cancer! Meat by-products, and meat meal- are both mystery meat products and many times are not fit for human consumption, so why feed it to your pet? Excess of fillers like corn meal and carbohydrates also are not good for cats as cats need MORE PROTEIN in their diet. Low phosphorus and low ash is also best. ***Please know that if you decide on a more expensive wet cat food with better ingredients-we hope it isn't at the cost of giving your feline LESS OF IT!** It is better to give wet food morning and night, always. If too expensive or if you find yourself wanting to give your cat less of it, stick to Friskies canned wet food or Fancy Feast wet food as the cost is inexpensive. As again- THE MORE WET FOOD in your cat's diet – THE BETTER!

18) **SHOT CLINIC INFO & KITTEN'S CORE VACCINE SCHEDULE**

- The FVRCP (distemper) vaccine protects your kitty against the feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia. These three conditions are highly contagious airborne illnesses that can potentially be fatal in a kitten with a developing immune system. Panleukopenia (the P in FVRCP), also called feline distemper, can lead to death in 90 percent of cases in kittens under 6 months of age and reason these vaccines are so important. **Initial vaccination (FVRCP):** 6–8 weeks old, or when you get your new cat. **Booster shots:** Every 3–4 weeks. **End of booster shots:** 16–20 weeks *For a new kitten- they will receive 3 FVRCP vaccines)_Check this website for CCFAW'S calendar for upcoming shot clinics www.ccfaw.org. Also check this site (www.spcavolusia.org/calendar.html) for upcoming shot clinics as they travel in many areas of Florida and may be in your area. They also have great prices. Typically, a FVRCP will cost \$10. They also sell flea preventative too and can test your pet (veterinarian is always on duty).

19) **TOP 10 TOXINS FOUND IN THE KITCHEN**

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| 1. Chocolate | 4. Fatty table scraps | 8. Macadamia Nuts |
| 2. Grapes, raisins & currants | 5. Onions & Garlic | 9. Household cleaners |
| 3. Xylitol/sugar-free gum/candy | 6. Compost | 10. Unbaked bread dough |
| | 7. Human medications | 11. Alcohol (in items) |

20) **THE TRUTH ABOUT ANIMAL SHELTERS THAT EVERYONE NEEDS TO KNOW:**

Many people have this unrealistic idea that if they bring their pet to an animal shelter (kill or NO-kill) that they will be placed in a loving home. That is very far from the truth. No-kill shelters still euthanize 10% of the animals! They also can "Transfer" your pet out of the facility and then brought to a high rate kill facility, who then euthanizes at a higher rate. **Our local "NO KILL" shelter still euthanized 349 pets last year!!!** A kill shelter euthanizes on average of 50 pets A DAY. Both places are NOT safe for any pets, plus they become very stressed in this environment. Please contact Furry Nation Salvation to start their REHOMING assistance program, where they can help with advertising to place the unwanted pet in the safety of your OWN home until placement can be found.

It is not the shelters fault, it is the fault of pet owners who do not get their pets fixed and let them wander or decide they no longer want them and surrender them to a shelter. **Please don't ever give your animal the ultimate fate of being euthanized at a shelter. Give them a chance by finding them a suitable home. Animals do not get a choice of who becomes their caregiver, so don't give them the choice of death.**

21) **A few locations for DISCOUNT SPAY AND NEUTER: PLEASE SHARE with friends!!!!**

If this information is not helpful PLEASE contact your local humane society as they normally have lists to help individuals!

1) **REDINGER CLINIC**, which is located within the "Pet Resort."

BEST PRICE ANYWHERE

Address: 600 Mason Ave, Daytona Beach, FL

Phone: # 310-4935

Website: www.redingerclinic.org

They offer discount neuters (\$25) and discount spays (\$40).

They also offer LOW COST vaccinations (1 vaccination for \$10,

2 for \$15, and 3 for \$25) and microchips for your pet at \$16.

2) **"Volusia Society for Animal Aid" in Edgewater**

The number to the shelter is 386-957-3994.

Located at: 605 mango Tree Drive Edgewater, FL

3) **FLAGLER CATS located in BUNNELL**- Located at: 2550 N.

State St. Suite #11 Bunnell, FL 32110. Phone #386-503-4250

Male cats - \$45 includes neuter, rabies, distemper shot, full exam and pain meds. Female \$60