



## Information for Owners of New Kittens at the Chess Veterinary Clinic

### **Settling in:**

When your kitten first arrives at his/her new home it can be a very stressful experience. For the first week try to feed the same food at the same times as he/she is used to. Ensure that your kitten has a safe place where he/she can retreat.

### **Feeding:**

Young kittens should be fed *4 meals, evenly spaced through the day*. We recommend feeding a *kitten diet* since these are specially formulated for your kitten's nutritional requirements. It is important to make any changes to your kitten's diet gradually, slowly increase the proportion of new food and decrease the proportion of old food over 1-2 weeks to avoid diarrhoea.

How much food your kitten needs varies depending on the brand of food and the individual's metabolic rate. It is very important not to let your kitten get overweight because fat laid down as a kitten is very hard to work off later in life. Obesity can cause and compound many health problems such as diabetes and heart disease. If your kitten is the correct weight you should be able to feel but not see your kitten's ribs and spine. We run free nutrition and weight-monitoring clinics at our surgeries and are very happy to weigh your kitten regularly and give advice on feeding.

### **Vaccination:**

Initially your kitten will need a course of 2 vaccinations. The first vaccine can be given from 9 weeks of age, the second vaccine is then given 3 to 4 weeks later. You should keep your kitten indoors until 1 week after their 2<sup>nd</sup> vaccination.

2<sup>nd</sup> vacc due .....

After the initial vaccinations your kitten will only need boosters once a year, this is a good time for us to do a full health check.

Annual booster due .....

Vaccination will protect your kitten against cat flu, enteritis and Feline Leukaemia virus.

### **Worming and Flea Treatment:**

It is important to worm kittens regularly with highly effective products. We recommend using a dose of **Profender** to kill intestinal worms, followed by using **Advocate** once a month to kill most worms, fleas, and ear mites.

**Profender** (or **Drontal Cat**) is recommended every 3 months for broad spectrum worming to include tapeworm.

### **Identification:**

Identification is important in case your kitten should get lost or stolen. We can get tags engraved with your contact details to attach to your kitten's collar.

You may also want to get your kitten *microchipped*. This is a tiny chip that is inserted under the skin at the back of the neck. It contains a barcode that is registered to your kitten. Should your kitten get lost or stolen any vets, cat's home or police station can scan your kitten to find out whom he/she belongs to. If you decide to microchip your kitten at the same time as an operation we will be happy to do it at a discount rate.

**Pet insurance:**

We highly recommend insuring your kitten. Look into the different policies and see which is right for you (*life-time vs 12-month policies*). Alternatively set up a bank account for your kitten and put money into it every month

**Teeth:**

One of the main health problems affecting older cats is dental disease. In order to prevent this you should start brushing your kitten's teeth as early as possible. Feeding dry food will also help keep your cat's teeth healthy.

**Adolescent Health checks:**

We offer a *free check-up at 4 months of age* to answer any questions or concerns you may have. It is also important to have your cat checked by a vet regularly. This allows us to pick up any problems early and to stop them progressing.

If you are not planning to breed from your kitten when he/she is older we recommend that you neuter him/her.

Female cats can get pregnant very easily so it is best to get them spayed as early as possible (about 4 months old).

Entire toms will spray in the house and are also more likely to fight with other cats. Castration will avoid these problems and can be done from 4 months old.

**ENJOY YOUR NEW KITTEN!**