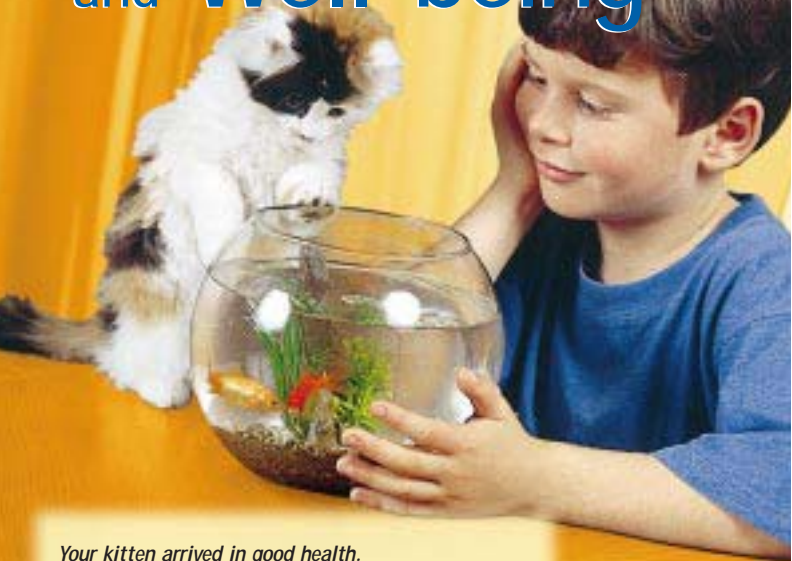


Maintaining Health and Well-being



Your kitten arrived in good health.

You feed it properly, have it vaccinated, wormed and treated for parasites according to plan: fine.....but you will probably want to lavish extra care and attention over and above these basic necessities.

As you are now responsible for the day to day health and well-being of your new charge, you can show all your love, in various little ways of daily care and comfort.

A Little Bit Extra Special Care!

Purring with pleasure

- A purr is a very pleasing little piece of music!

Speak to your cat as you stroke it, to encourage it to purr.

A kitten whose mother had been stroked when pregnant, or itself handled in the first few weeks of life will often purr spontaneously when stroked. Otherwise, you will need to be patient and persevere.

Grooming

- From the very first weeks helps your cat to shine, use a brush with soft metal bristles and a rubber base, or a soft brush. Groom your kitten every day if it is long haired, and two or three times a week otherwise. It will love it, and feel much better for it!



Having a very good leep

- A good lie-in in the morning prepares the way for a whole afternoon's siesta.

The cat-basket, raised up on a chair or other piece of furniture, out of the way of the hustle and bustle of the household, is a cosy shelter and personal territory. Let sleeping kittens lie. Like all members of the cat family, your kitten is most alert and active at dawn and sunset when it will explore its territory, have a bite to eat, and play.

Keeping naturally clean

- Give your kitten a litter tray with 5 to 7 cm of dust-free cat-litter in it, at least 1 metre away from its eating place. It will go there of its own accord. Change the litter regularly: cats are very sensitive to that.



Being Well Brought-Up

To prepare the way for the future get your kitten used to a basic care routine as soon as possible:

- EYES: A compress soaked in warm water to wipe away discharge.
- EARS: Check regularly, if they have black wax in them consult your vet, there may be ear mites lurking.
- TEETH: A small toothbrush or finger-brush with special tooth paste will help to reduce the build up of tartar on the teeth.
- NAILS: there are special nail-cutters for claws which get too long, your vet will be able to let you know which clippers are suitable and just how far to go.



Playing At Hunting

A kitten playing is a heart-warming sight.

- Virtually anything will fit the bill: a ball of paper, a marble, a cork or a Ping-Pong ball. Watch: it is playing at hunting a mouse, or then a bird, or pretending to catch a fish...



Suspicious of Illness?

Diarrhoea

- With a correct feeding, worming and vaccination program in place the cause may not be too serious. The stresses of a new home and a simple change of diet are common causes of diarrhoea in young kittens. Try to introduce any new foods over a few days.
- If your cat is otherwise behaving normally a period without food but access to plenty of fresh tap water may solve the problem. If your kitten is unwell in any other way, showing signs of lethargy or there is blood with the diarrhoea it is important to consult

your vet as there are many different possible causes of diarrhoea.

Vomiting: what?

- **Grass** – Can be normal, up to a point.
- **A little bile** – No need to worry unless your kitten seems unwell or it goes on more than once or twice.
- **The previous day's meal - Careful!** Otherwise still fit and well? If the next meal is eaten at the usual time and nothing else happens, it's probably not serious, otherwise consult your vet.
- **Vomiting and "off colour"** - Consult your vet straight away: it could be the beginnings of gastro-enteritis or of some other problem. Best treat immediately.

Scratching

- Has your kitten been treated properly against parasites? A flea or two, which you may not be able to see, could be the reason. There are many others. Each has its own treatment, a persistent irritation needs investigating by your vet.



Not eating: need to worry?

- **Your cat is uninterested in food but playful, lively and alert?** Yes? Then remove the food. Do not try tempting the appetite with something different and **especially not milk**.
- Serve your cat's usual food at the next meal time. If it is eaten, that's fine. If the hunger strike persists, maybe phone the vet for advice, especially if your cat is usually a good eater.

Drinking a lot

- Ensure fresh water is always available in a spotlessly clean bowl (not a plastic one, because of the smell!). Cats on tinned food will drink very little as it already has a high water content, but cats eating biscuits will require a higher water intake. If your cat starts to drink more than usually consult the vet.

When should you consult your veterinarian?



- Always bear in mind that, like a big cat, your little kitten will keep any ailment well hidden, often until it is very serious. Do not hesitate to consult your vet at the slightest change in behaviour or habits. Young kittens weigh very little, so it does not take long for a kitten to lose 50% of its body weight.

