

— YOUR —
KITTEN
STARTER GUIDE



Welcome to the exciting world of kitten ownership!

Getting a new kitten is an exciting and rewarding experience and also a big responsibility. It is essential to get your new bundle of joy off to the right start in life to ensure they grow into a happy and healthy cat. This starts with providing them the proper nutrition, vaccinations, and parasite protection, as well as providing them with mental and physical stimulation, to help establish a strong bond between you and your pet. Following these steps will help your new kitten get the best start in their forever home.

Guide highlights:

Vaccinations

Intestinal worms

Fleas

Dental health

Microchipping

Weight & nutrition

Behaviour

Pet insurance

Desexing

And, if you need any more advice or information, we're here to help at every step of the way.



Vaccinations

Vaccinating a kitten is a necessary step to ensure the health and well-being of your new family member. Vaccines help protect kittens, and all cats, from a variety of serious and potentially fatal diseases, including feline herpes virus, feline calicivirus, feline panleukopaenia, feline immunodeficiency virus and feline leukaemia. Please ask your vet about the appropriate protection for your cat.

It is important to keep up with the recommended vaccination schedule for kittens, as this will help ensure your pet is properly protected from disease.



If you're not sure when your kitten is due for their next vaccination, talk to our team to make sure your kitten is up to date.

Typical kitten vaccination schedule*:



First vaccination
between
6-8 weeks old



Second vaccination
between
10-12 weeks old



Third booster
between
14-16 weeks old

* Check with your vet for the recommended vaccination schedule



Talk to our healthcare team about a worming treatment suitable for your kitten.

Intestinal worms

Intestinal worms are parasites that live in the intestines and feed off the nutrients that the kitten consumes. If left untreated, these parasites can cause a wide range of health problems, from malnutrition to anaemia and even death. The most common way for kittens to become infected is by ingesting the eggs of the parasites, which can be found in contaminated soil, faeces, and other sources.

To protect your kitten regular worming treatments should be provided.

Following the below worming protocol will keep your kitten free from intestinal worms:

- every 2 weeks until 12 weeks of age
- then once a month until 6 months of age,
- And every 3-6 months for life.

Fleas

Fleas commonly cause itching, skin disease and allergic reactions in kittens. What's more, they can be challenging to diagnose, as a kitten with flea allergy dermatitis may never actually be seen with fleas! That's why flea treatments should be given every month of the year to prevent and control flea infestations effectively.

Ask our team about recommended flea prevention products for your kitten!





Dental health



Good dental health is essential for pets, just like it is for humans! Kittens can be prone to dental health problems, so it is best practice to start caring for their teeth from a young age. Proper dental care can help prevent the build-up of plaque and tartar, which can lead to gum disease and tooth decay, not to mention smelly breath. Regular brushing and professional dental cleanings can help remove any built-up debris and help keep your kitten's teeth and gums healthy as they get older.



Ask our team for tips on dental care for kittens.

Microchipping

Microchipping your kitten helps ensure they are easily identified and is a requirement in certain regions across New Zealand. A microchip is a tiny chip placed under the skin of the neck, between your kitten's shoulder blades. If your kitten is found and taken to a vet or animal shelter, staff will use a scanner to retrieve the unique identifying code on your kitten's microchip, which is stored in a nationwide registry database. Therefore, it's important to keep these details up to date. If you're unsure of your kitten's microchip status, we can use our clinic scanner to check this. It only takes a few minutes.



Talk to our team if your pet needs a microchip or to confirm your details registered on the chip.



Weight & Nutrition



Weight



Maintaining a healthy weight for your kitten is extremely important for their overall health and well-being. Keeping your kitten at their ideal weight helps to keep their bones, joints, and muscles strong and healthy. In addition, keeping your pet at their ideal weight can help reduce the risk of serious health conditions such as urinary problems, diabetes, heart disease, and types of cancer.

Monitor your kitten's weight regularly and work with your veterinary healthcare team to make adjustments to ensure they stay at their ideal weight. By doing so, you can help your pet stay healthy and happy.

Nutrition



Proper nutrition is another part of helping your kitten get the best start in life. Kittens need a balanced diet that includes all the essential nutrients for growth and development. Proper nutrition is vital for kittens because it helps them to grow strong bones and muscles and provides the energy necessary for play and learning.

There are many premium-grade commercial foods that meet the exact nutritional requirements of growing kittens. Although brands vary in quality, premium brands generally provide higher-quality ingredients. Therefore, we recommend you feed your kitten premium-grade kitten food.



Talk to our team to see if your kitten is due for a weight check today!



Talk to our veterinary team for advice on the appropriate nutrition for your kitten.



Behaviour

The experiences your kitten has during their early months of life influence the sort of adult cat they grow into. It is important that your kitten has positive interactions with people and different things around the home during this period to help them grow into a confident and well-behaved member of the family.



Talk to our team for advice on kitten behaviour and how communication, socialisation and training can benefit your new kitten.



Pet insurance

While not essential, pet insurance is a serious consideration for new pet owners. It provides financial protection in the event of unexpected veterinary bills arising from accidents or illnesses. In addition, pet insurance lets pet owners enjoy peace of mind knowing that, should the worst happen, their pets will be taken care of.



Pet insurance doesn't often cover routine care, such as vaccinations, dental cleaning, and flea and worm treatments, which is where a pet wellness program can be a great complementary option!



Talk to our healthcare team about how pet insurance and wellness programs can save you money and give you peace of mind for the care of your precious new kitten.

Desexing

Desexing your kitten doesn't just prevent them from having unwanted litters; it also reduces the risk of certain diseases and cancers, such as mammary gland tumours. Additionally, desexing can help to reduce urine marking and aggressive behaviours.



Desexing is recommended between 6 and 12 months of age. **Talk to your veterinarian about when they recommend your cat should be desexed.**



Our veterinary team are here to help you get your kitten off to the best start.

By visiting our clinic, your kitten can get a thorough nose-to-tail health check, vaccinations, parasite protection and proper nutrition - all of which are essential for their health and well-being.

So give your new furry friend the best care possible by booking an appointment with us today!