



Helping Local Animals



REMEMBER: A CAT IS FOR LIFE!

You need to be absolutely sure that you can take care of your cat or kitten for the entirety of their life. Aside from the routine healthcare such as flea and worming treatments, annual vaccinations and neutering, there may be other unexpected veterinary costs if your cat is ill or involved in an accident.

Over the years most people grow very close to their cats and regard them as members of the family or companions, rather than pets. So it's important to make sure that you'll be able to help your cat if they need emergency veterinary treatment; take out either pet insurance or set up your own 'pet fund'.

NEUTERING

As a responsible and caring pet owner, it is essential that you get your kitten neutered at the appropriate age, between 4 - 6 months of age.

The operation

Both procedures are performed under general anaesthetic. A female cat will have an area shaved on her flank and a vertical incision will be made. The ovaries and womb will then be removed. The wound is then stitched up internally with dissolvable stitches and sealed on the outside with surgical glue. Pain killers may be administered and she will normally be allowed home on the same day.

The male cat will have his testicles removed via two tiny incisions made in the scrotum. Stitches are not generally required, as the incisions will heal themselves.

The Cost

To spay a female approximately **£75** To castrate a male approximately **£50**

Please consider this expense before you take on a kitten.

VACCINATIONS

All cats and kittens are at risk of contracting several potentially fatal viral diseases during their lifetime. Fortunately, we are able to offer vaccinations against three of the most common below. Don't take the risk with your cats, get them vaccinated as soon as possible.

Feline Infectious Enteritis (F.I.E.)

Caused by a strain of virus called parvovirus which is spread through an infected cat's faeces, and other bodily fluids.

Fleas can also help to transmit the virus. In extreme cases, an infected cat can suddenly stop eating and die within a few hours. It is more usual for a cat to show symptoms of depression, high temperature, vomiting, inability to drink, followed by diarrhoea. Hospitalisation and re-hydration is required. Prevention of F.I.E. is vital as the mortality rate is high.

Cat 'flu'

A general term for feline upper respiratory disease, usually resulting from a viral infection. The viruses responsible are highly contagious; transmitted mainly by sneezing, direct facial contact and food bowls. The main viruses responsible are the herpesvirus and calicivirus. Symptoms range from lack of appetite, fever, sneezing, discharges from eyes and nostrils and severe inflammation of the eyes. The calicivirus causes severe ulceration of the mouth and tongue. Antibiotics are usually administered to combat any secondary infections but cannot really treat the symptoms. Cat 'flu' can be fatal in kittens and older cats.

WHY NEUTERING IS SO IMPORTANT?

Many thousands of kittens are born every year. Many of these will become unwanted and homeless within the first year. Some of these unwanted kittens and cats will find new homes but many of them will be destroyed because there are simply not enough homes.

Even if you manage to find homes for your kittens, you will have taken those valuable homes away from the many unwanted cats and kittens. Don't forget that an un-neutered tom will also be responsible for reproducing many litters.

Animal welfare organisations and other professional bodies are desperately trying to control the overpopulation tragedy, by ensuring that people do not allow their pets to breed and by educating owners about the benefits of neutering.

THE BENEFITS OF NEUTERING

- Your male cat will be calmer and less inclined to wander and get hurt, lost, or into fights with other cats. He is also less likely to spray his strong smelling urine to mark his territory
- Male and female cats are less susceptible to potentially lethal infectious diseases, such as F.I.V. and FeLV
- A first litter, despite the myth that a cat should have one, can put your cat at risk, and neutering means she is less likely to suffer lethal viruses through mating
- Neutering will calm both male and female cats and make them more affectionate both to you and other cats
- Your cat will not gain weight after neutering, unless overfed by the local neighbourhood of course!



Feline Leukaemia (FeLV)

Another nasty virus which can cause cancer of the white blood cells, other cancers and suppression of the immune system. An infected cat cannot fight off disease and may develop gum inflammation, skin / bladder infections, diarrhoea and anaemia. The virus is generally transmitted by prolonged direct physical contact with an infected cat; mainly through saliva, urine and faeces.

Vaccination is recommended, although a vaccinated cat should never be deliberately exposed to FeLV (no vaccination is 100%). Sadly most cats will succumb to infection within 3½ yrs. of the diagnosis. The vaccination for leukaemia can now be given as part of a triple vaccine with the enteritis and cat flu.

Vaccine courses

The primary course of vaccinations can be given from 9 weeks of age, followed by a second injection 3 - 4 weeks later. Your cat or kitten should not go outside until a week after the course is completed. To ensure immunity, you must follow up with an annual single booster.

Primary course costs approximately **£75** Annual booster costs approximately **£45**

ROUTINE HEALTH CARE

Fleas

Apart from the obvious itching and agitated meowing, you can also look out for brown specks on your cat's fur or bed as a sign of fleas.

Unfortunately due to central heating, fleas can lay eggs and survive in your cat's fur all year round. Regular treatment is therefore needed to stop a major infestation and unhygienic discomfort to your cat. Your vet can advise on different available treatments, usually applied every 4 weeks.

These products can be supplied by the vet, or for a small charge, you can obtain a prescription that will enable you to buy the products on line. Remember fleas jump between animals so treat every animal in your house and should an infestation occur, sprays are available to treat your carpets, furniture and the cat's bed.

Worms

Worms are parasites that can be caused by fleas and live inside your animal's stomach. The two most common types are roundworms or tapeworms. Signs to spot include diarrhoea, constipation, erratic appetite, swollen belly as well as general sickness.

It's important to treat regularly for both fleas and worms; Kittens should be treated at the age of 4-6 weeks thereafter every 3months.



**WE ADVISE THAT YOU USE FLEAING & WORMING PRODUCTS
THAT ARE RECOMMENDED BY YOUR VET**

Ear mites

You should regularly check your cat or kitten's ears for a greyish brown wax as this could point to ear mites: if discovered take him/her to your vet to be checked out.

Grooming

Every cat loves to be stroked, but not all like being combed! Make sure your cat is accustomed to being groomed and bear in mind before you take on a long haired cat, that they will require - and come to expect - daily brushing as well as strokes.

Whether long or short-haired, you need to brush your cat regularly - ideally everyday - since this reduces the amount of hairballs they swallow when they clean themselves fastidiously.

When you groom your cat, keep an eye on their teeth, claws and ears. Special cat toothpaste can be bought and administered with a baby toothbrush and may prevent dental problems later on. Claws may grow too long and curl, particularly if your cat is older or a 'house cat'. If you are in any way uncertain about clipping your cat's claws with the correct clippers, then take them to a vet or professional groomer.

'Please also read Settling in Your New Cat or Kitten'

FOR MORE ADVICE, PLEASE CONTACT US:

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