

# Charlestown Animal Hospital, PLLC

23 Main St., PO Box 330 • Charlestown, NH 03603

Tel: (603) 826-3300 • Fax: (603) 826-3400

## CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR NEW KITTEN!

Something cute and fuzzy.....but what a big responsibility! The first 4-8 months are usually very busy with vet visits, socialization, handling, appropriate play, and proper kitty manners. Not only do you need to address your current situation, but you need to plan for many possible futures your pet might have: babies/kids, other pets, car rides, boarding/hospitalization, handling, medicating, etc. The biggest tip we can give you is: **the more time you can put into guiding your new friend in the right direction now, the better he/she will fit into your lifestyle and the less work you will need to do in the future to maintain the wonderful bond you are just starting to share.**

The veterinary aspect of kittenhood involves vaccinations, deworming, heartworm prevention, flea and tick prevention, spaying/neutering, and microchipping. We will also be discussing feeding, handling, socialization, play, scratching behavior, etc. We will have a number of handouts and pamphlets for you to read. Most of them are fairly easy to read, and hopefully easy to understand, but please ask if you have any questions about what you are reading or discussing during your visits, or if there are topics that have not been covered that interest you.

In general, we recommend finding resources that support positive reinforcement and distraction training for your new best friend, as well as ones that help you to understand your kitten so you can be more effective in finding the right motivation and guiding in the best way. We look forward to working with you, now and in the future, to make this new kitten a great addition to your family.

**So, again, congratulations on your new kitten!**

Office Hours by Appointment - 24 Hour Emergency Coverage

Dr. Claire M. Lindo, DVM

Mgr. Rezá Marukelli, CCBW, MAH

2

ORIGINAL

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## Deworming Guidelines For Cats

1



### Kittens

- \* Every 2 weeks until 9 weeks, then once/month until 6 months of age
- \* Repeat treatment at recommended intervals depending on the prepatent period of the parasites.



### Adult

- \* Treat regularly considering potential exposure to parasites and prepatent periods
- \* A continued surveillance of parasite prevalence in your area is recommended.



### Pregnant & Lactating Cats

- \* Lactating cats should be treated concurrently with kittens



### Newly aquired Kittens/Cats

- \* Immediately, then repeat after 2 weeks, then follow guidelines above.



***Information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Strategic deworming is a practice recommended by the American Association of Veterinary Parasitologists (AAVP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) .***

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## Basic Handling of Puppies and Kittens

We now know that the first **6 months** of a new kitten or puppy's life is the **critical** time period for handling and socialization. So what does this mean? Why is it important to you?

Most of us have met pets that are happy to let anyone touch them, hold the collar, check their ears, look at their teeth, trim their nails, pick or wash fuzzy junk off the coat, etc. The well-behaved type is easy to care for, a pleasure to be around, and gets better care because they are easier (and less expensive) to check over regularly.

And most of us have also met pets that are sweet *until* you try any one of those things and then they either freak out or turn into Cujo. The freak out/Cujo type sometimes hurts people, they cost a lot more because sedatives or anesthesia have to be part of even minor problems, and they get inferior care because they make such a production out of everything.

### The major difference between these 2 types of pet has to do with how they were handled when young.

What's the key to get a new pet that is well-adjusted and bomb-proof?

Part of the key is that while babies are born with some pre-programmed information, much of what they do as adults they *learned* during puppyhood. They can learn to be prima donnas that refuse to be fussed with, or they can just as easily learn that you, your whole family, and humans in general are going to touch every part of their bodies, and it is really no big deal.

How do we teach them that being touched is no big deal, nothing to worry or freak out about, not to be sensitive?

Some experts say that the best way to de-sensitize is to repeat an experience 100 times. The first 10-20 times the pet will probably wiggle, by 35 times they don't wiggle but they are still paying attention to what you are doing, and by 100 times they are so comfortable and unconcerned with the touch that they are often looking at other things around them while you are touching them.

What do we touch? When do we start?

Start touching your pet right from the moment you bring it home. Touch every part of your pet that you would be comfortable touching on yourself, and in the same way. Don't like fingers touching your eyeballs or up your nose? Okay, don't put your fingers in your pet's eyes or up its nose, either. But *gently* passing your hands over the face, your fingers over the eyelids, touching the ear flaps, etc is perfectly acceptable. Touch the skin everywhere, from head to rump to belly to toenails. Bend and straighten the toes, the wrists, the elbows, the shoulders, the hocks, the knees, and the hips *in the directions they normally move*. Hold onto the tail. Pick up the hind legs to "wheelbarrow". Pick up the front end to "reach for the sky". Use the nose as a handle and then tip the head right left, up, down. Lift the lips and open the mouth to check out all the teeth. Open and close the eyelids. Turn your pet on its back, and hold it there until it gives a big sigh of acceptance (then let it up with a "good puppy!"). Do it all gently but persistently over and over and over again until your pet is so used to it all that it doesn't really care.

Is there a maintenance program? Yes, make it a *daily* routine to do a quick once-over for the first year.

P.S. You're also creating a great bond with your pet. In households where one person does the handling and one person doesn't, the pets tend to seek out and listen better to the touching person!

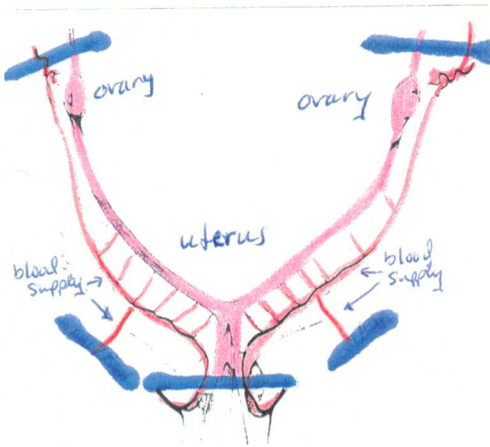
## Notice of a Change in our Spay Procedure:

We are changing our routine Spay procedure from the ovariohysterectomy to an ovariectomy. All other components of our perioperative procedures will remain the same.

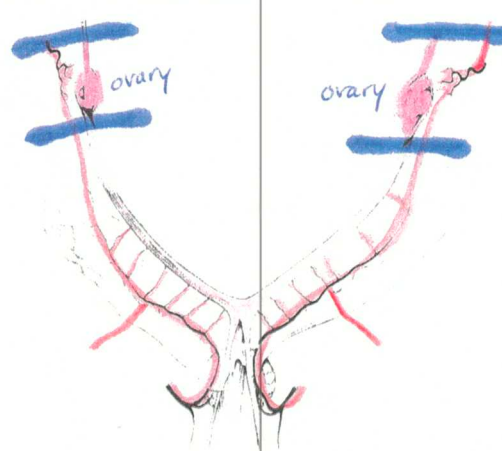
So what's the difference between an ovariohysterectomy and an ovariectomy?

The ovariohysterectomy involves removal of the uterus along with both ovaries while the ovariectomy involves removal of only the two ovaries. Any procedure to remove a part of the repro tract must also deal with its blood vessels. See the pictures below. The blood vessels are red, and each thick blue line represents a suture to tie off the blood supply so the pet does not bleed when the associated part is removed.

The ovariohysterectomy



The ovariectomy



So, why change?

1) The usual spay procedure in the US is a full ovariohysterectomy, and we know the benefits of spaying by removing the uterus with the ovaries include eliminating the risks of uterine infection and uterine cancer (from the uterus) along with an end to heat cycles and ovarian cancer (from the ovaries). Surprisingly, in Europe where the procedure is "only" an ovariectomy, the benefits of the spay are exactly the same, even though the uterus is left behind. It turns out the hormones from the ovaries are the instigator in *uterine* diseases, and once the ovaries are gone, the uterus no longer has the great risks of infection or cancer.

2) This procedure is neither new nor experimental, but is a time-tested and standard surgical option in the global veterinary field.

3) The ovariectomy (OVE) is technically slightly easier and a slightly shorter procedure than the ovariohysterectomy (OVH), needing a slightly smaller incision with slightly less risk of complications. This means it is easier on your doctor **and** your pet.

Is there anyone who should still have the "old" ovariohysterectomy instead of the "new" ovariectomy? Yes! The uterus should be removed from your pet if:

1) She might be pregnant (and we are aborting the embryos) - Has your cat/dog been through heat yet? If yes, has she been unsupervised outside **at all** or been with a male since going into heat?

2) She has uterine disease (infection/cancer)

3) You wish for her to have the original procedure.

If your pet is scheduled for a spay today, she will be getting an ovariectomy (OVE) **unless:**

*you inform* us of her potential pregnancy or uterine disease, or we already know of the uterine disease,

*you request* the ovariohysterectomy (OVH) or

*the doctor* finds she needs the OVH based on direct observation of her reproductive tract.



## BODY CONDITION SYSTEM

TOO THIN

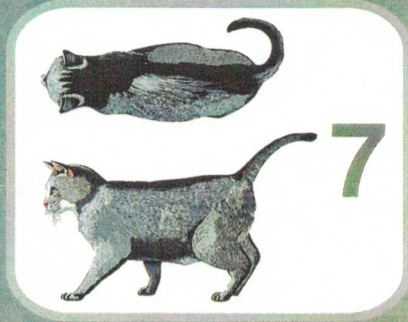
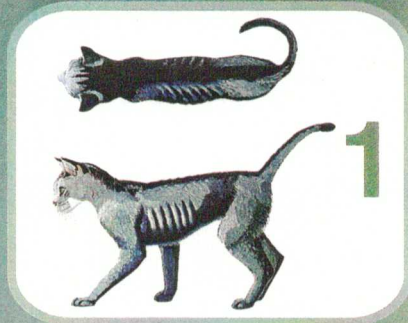
- 1** Ribs visible on shorthaired cats; no palpable fat; severe abdominal tuck; lumbar vertebrae and wings of ilia easily palpated.
- 2** Ribs easily visible on shorthaired cats; lumbar vertebrae obvious with minimal muscle mass; pronounced abdominal tuck; no palpable fat.
- 3** Ribs easily palpable with minimal fat covering; lumbar vertebrae obvious; obvious waist behind ribs; minimal abdominal fat.

IDEAL

- 4** Ribs palpable with minimal fat covering; noticeable waist behind ribs; slight abdominal tuck; abdominal fat pad absent.
- 5** Well-proportioned; observe waist behind ribs; ribs palpable with slight fat covering; abdominal fat pad minimal.

TOO HEAVY

- 6** Ribs palpable with slight excess fat covering; waist and abdominal fat pad distinguishable but not obvious; abdominal tuck absent.
- 7** Ribs not easily palpated with moderate fat covering; waist poorly discernible; obvious rounding of abdomen; moderate abdominal fat pad.
- 8** Ribs not palpable with excess fat covering; waist absent; obvious rounding of abdomen with prominent abdominal fat pad; fat deposits present over lumbar area.
- 9** Ribs not palpable under heavy fat cover; heavy fat deposits over lumbar area, face and limbs; distention of abdomen with no waist; extensive abdominal fat deposits.



## Christmas Tree Tips

It is now the holiday season and with that comes shiny things on trees. As you can imagine, this can be a BIG problem if this is your pet's first time seeing a tree, whether it is real or fake. Here are a couple of tips that may help prevent a huge mess.

- When you first get your real or fake tree set up, either set it in a VERY sturdy tree holder or try to anchor it to the ceiling. This will prevent the tree from tipping or falling down should your pet try to climb it.
- Let your tree just sit there for a few days (I find 3 days to be the magic number). This gives your pet a chance to climb the tree without knocking down all of your bulbs, lights, or garland. This also gives you a chance to see how your stand or ceiling hooks hold up to test of being climbed.
- After you've decorated your tree, hang some cheap or tough homemade bulbs/toys on the very bottom branches of your tree. Encourage your pet to play with these and not the shiny ones on the higher branches. If they knock one of these down, do not scold them as this just tells them to try for another and that one may be a breakable one. Instead, just pick it up and hang it back on tree.
- Avoid having the garland or ribbons you may use to wrap around your tree having obvious ends showing. If they see that, they will try to snag it and run away to play with it like a piece of string and may cause damage. Also try to avoid putting tinsel (if you must use it) on the lower branches where your pet may be able to grab it and eat it. This can cause blockages and severe illnesses if it gets stuck in the GI tract of your pet.
- When watering your tree be aware that no matter what you do, your pet will almost ALWAYS find a way to drink the water. So you should avoid putting harmful products in the water that may cause sickness; such as aspirin, bleach, viagra, etc... (don't laugh some people do use it). Also to that effect, do not spray you tree with hairspray or any other products that may harm your pet as he or she will eat/chew on the branches.
- Finally, when setting presents around your tree, make sure to leave gaps or holes for your pet to roam through so that he or she does not have to jump on or through the presents (tearing them to shreds...). There should be at least 3 holes or gaps for them to travel through. Certain packages should be put out as late/close to Christmas as possible. This includes wrapped cloth or soft items, baked goods, treats, or anything with a smell. Pets can smell these things through the paper and they may become a favorite for pets to shred/open. Be advised that some pets will just love to tear open paper and so nothing you do may prevent this behavior of them opening your presents before you are ready.

We hope that these tips help you in this coming season and help both you and your new pet to enjoy the holiday season without hardships.

## How to trick a cat into eating something new

Cats, like most animals, learn what tastes are safe based on what they are exposed to when they are young. Some are very adventurous and will try new things at least once, but most are rather conservative and won't touch different-smelling things (unless, of course, it is expensive/rare/precious and they weren't supposed to get into it!). So adding in something new (like fish oils or PerioSupport dental powder) can sometimes be difficult.

### For super-easy cats

Put a small amount (like 1/8 to 1/4 of the recommended dose) of the supplement (oil, powder, etc) on your cat's food the first day. See that he/she shows no hesitation to eat the food with something new on it and that he/she licks it all up. Over the course of several days to a week, gradually increase the supplement until at the recommended amount and continue every day. You can brag to your veterinarian, but don't tell your friends about this unless they really like you because you might lose a friend or gain a black eye. - )

### For the normal cats:

Start by adding a **single drop** or **tiny pinch** of supplement onto the cat's regular food at meal times. If this is tolerated (ie. your cat actually eats the meal with the new flavor on it), continue with just a single drop (pinch) on each meal for a whole week. Add 2 drops (pinches) per meal for the second week. Add 3 drops (pinches) per meal for the third week. Week by week slowly increase the amount of the supplement until months after first starting you have reached the recommended/desired amount of supplement per meal and continue with this for life.

**Note:** Because cats can be so finicky, unless your cat seems to love the supplement and licks it up first, it is worth going slowly so he/she doesn't get overwhelmed and change his/her mind about eating it at all. Consider yourself lucky your cat will cooperate with the slow method!

**For not-so-easy cats** (you know, the ones who would rather starve than eat even a single morsel of the food you so rudely contaminated!).

### Do NOT put the supplement on your cat's food!

Start by putting a drop (pinch) of the supplement on a separate dish **NEXT TO** your cat's food. This way your cat gets used to the **smell** of the supplement without having to actually **taste** it, or more accurately your cat gets used to the **smell** of the supplement without having to refuse to eat his/her meal. Every day for 3-4 weeks clean the dish and put a new drop (pinch) on the dish – we don't want to offer rancid or stale supplement, which smells and tastes different from the fresh supplement. After the 3-4 weeks, your cat should no longer be acting like the supplement dish might jump up and grab him/her, and instead should be sniffing at or at least ignoring the supplement dish.

At this point, go to the instructions for normal cats.