

Welcome to Veterinarian Clinic Vondelpark and congratulations with your new kitten! To guide you as well as we can with the development from kitten to an adult cat we have put some important information in this letter.

CatFriendly Clinic Vondelpark

Although most kittens are very busy with discovering and exploring during their first consult, we've noticed that most of the adult cats find it frightening to go to the vet. Of course we can't take away all of this, but to make it as pleasant as possible, we've started our CatFriendly Clinic Vondelpark.

Our clinic has received the label 'Cat Friendly Clinic - Silver level' from the international organization Icatcare (www.icatcare.org). This means that we are aware of the stress a visit to the vet can give a cat. We are trying to prevent this stress as good as we can. For example; we have special cat-visiting hours. There will be no dogs in the clinic, and no loud noise. By following a lot of courses focusing specially on cats, we have a lot of knowledge of their behavior and possible diseases. Our waiting room has special parkinglots for cats. That way they can sit up high, and see everything. A cat likes to have control. In our specially decorated cat-clinicroom are calming odours for cats, and we will take of our scary white coats. By doing all of this, we make the visit to us as pleasant as we can.

Chipping

A chip is placed under the skin and contains a unique number which identifies the cat. After we've placed the chip we will make sure that your cat is registered on your name at the 'Nederlandse Databank Gezelschapidieren', a databank that holds all cats and dogs (www.ndg.nl). In case your cat ever goes missing and found somewhere, you can always be found be reading this chipnumber. You will be contacted then. There are also catflaps and feeding trays that will open or close when they rear a chipnumber.

It is not required to chip your cat in the Netherlands, but we highly recommend it. We see a lot of cats going missing, which we can return safe to their owner because of their chip. Usually we chip the cats during their anesthesia for the castration of sterilization, so the cat doesn't feel the chip. If you want it to be done earlier, it is possible to make an appointment for a consult with one of our veterinarians.

Deworming

The most common worm in kittens is the Toxocara Cati (round-worm). This worm can cause problems like losing weight, vomiting, diarrhea and respiratory problems in young animals. All kittens are contaminated through the mothersmilk. Also after they have left the nest a lot of kittens still catch this worms by licking their fur. These worms are contagious for humans, and most important; little children. Concerning this it is very important to deworm your kittens properly! Kittens need to be dewormed at the ages below:

- 3, 5 and 7 weeks old
- every month until they are 6 months old
- after that the rest of their live.

For outside cats it is recommended to deworm them 4 times a year, for an indoor cat 2 times a year is enough. Mostly 'hunters' are very important to be dewormed. For a proper deworming we advise Milbemax® tablets or Broadline® spot-on solution.

Fleas

Fleas can give you and your cat a lot of inconvenience. They give a lot of itchen and can even cause an allergic reaction. To prevent your cat from fleas it is our advice to treat them against fleas every month. We have several options, for instance: a spot-on solution, tasteful tablets or a collar. For an advice on which anti flea-product works best and is the most safe for you and your cat our assistants are happy to help you.

Don't wait with treating your kitten against fleas until he/she already has them! Adult fleas can lay 100 eggs a day which develop to new fleas within 3 months. Because of this cycle it takes a long time before you can get rid of the fleas again. Because of that it is better to prevent than to cure! For more information you can check this website:

www.esccap.com.

Vaccinations

Newborn kittens are being protected against several diseases by antibodies they got from their mother through the uterus and the mothersmilk. These antibodies are used up in the first weeks of life of your kitten. To protect your kitten when this protection fades away, they need to be vaccinated at the right time, so that your kitten can build his/her own protection. In their first year of life kittens are vaccinated two times. This happens at an age of 8-9 weeks old and 3-4 weeks after that. Through these vaccinations the kitten can face different pathogens in a safe way. The defense system of your kitten develops specific antibodies and immune cells that will protect him/her against these diseases.

Kittens in the Netherlands are usually being vaccinated against the following diseases: sneezing-disease (herpes and cilici-virus) and cats-disease (feline panleukopenievirus). There also is an option for the Bordetella Bronchiseptica. After this a yearly vaccination is enough to keep your dog fully protected.

If you are planning to travel abroad, your cat needs to get the Rabies vaccination as well. For most countries it is required to give this at least 21 days before you leave. For the specific requires you can check this website: www.licg.nl. The Rabies vaccination can be given at an age of 3 weeks.

Food

It is important to give your kitten special food for kittens until he/she is 6 months old. In this food are more proteins than in adult-food, which is very important for the growth and development of organs. A quality food that we recommend is Hill's Vet Essentials Kitten. This is a food which is academic proofed to have the right amounts of minerals, vitamins, omega-acids and antioxidants for the development of the immune system, bones and joints, the skin, nerves and brains and a good digestion.

Cats have a nature in which they don't drink enough. This is because their natural way of life and diet. A cat that doesn't drink enough is more sensitive to develop bladder problems, for instance crystals or even stones. This is why our advice is to give your cat wet food besides the dry food. He/she gets extra water this way.

Tips:

- put the foodtray and watertray apart from each other, not next to each other.
- don't put the litterbox nearby either of them. Cats are very hygienic and don't like to eat where they go to the toilet.

Changing teeth

The temporary teeth of your kitten contains 26 teeth (12 incisors, 4 canines and 10 premolars). From an age of 3-4 months the temporary teeth are going to change and we will see the adult teeth coming true. This contains 30 teeth. The growing of the adult teeth triggers the temporary teeth to fall out eventually. This can cause little wounds in

his/her mouth and it also is possible that there is a slight smell from his/her mouth. It is very important that you train your cat to look in his/her mouth, so he/she can get used to it. Now you can notice problems of the teeth in time and treat if necessary. Cats are masters in hiding problems and pain and we know that 75% of the cats older than 3 years have dental problems! The best thing to do is to brush the teeth of your cat every day. Make sure that you use special toothpaste for cats, and NOT a humane product. If you are interested in doing this, please contact our clinic. One of our assistants or veterinarians will be happy to explain you how to brush the teeth of your cat.

A happy life for your cat

If your cat has the possibility to go outside when he/she is older, that is wonderful. It is very important to guide your cat properly to get used to a life outside. Make sure your kitten stays inside for at least 3 weeks, so he/she can get used to his/her home. After that you can take him/her outside, with you staying beside him/her, just for a few minutes. After this you can put him/her outside a little bit longer every time. With female cats it is wise to neuter them before you let them go outside to prevent unwanted litters.

A lot of cats in the city stay inside. That isn't a problem, but we recommend thinking about the decoration of your home and how to provide several challenges for your cat. A bored cat is a unhappy cat. You can read more about this on:

- <http://www.icatcare.org/advice/keeping-your-cat-happy/making-your-home-cat-friendly>
- <http://www.icatcare.org/advice/keeping-your-cat-happy/playing-your-cat>
- <http://www.icatcare.org/advice/keeping-your-cat-happy/indoors-versus-outdoors>

Playing with your kitten

On the age of 9-14 weeks kittens have a lot of need in playing! This is for their socialization. For banding with your kitten it is very good to play with him/her. After this age kittens are more interested in toys. It is important that you learn your kitten not to scratch or bite, also not during playing! The best thing to do is playing with toys. If your kitten is biting or scratching, it is best to walk away immediately and ignore the kitten for a while.

Sterilization

Female kittens are in their heat at the age of 5-8 months. If you don't want to breed with your cat, our advice is to sterilize her at an age between 4-6 months.

Sterilization is a surgery and requires a day at our clinic. We give your kitten anesthesia, and at this young age we only remove the ovaries through a cut of 3 cm. All the stitches are beneath the skin, and she will go home the same day, without a collar. Research has shown that young kittens at this age recover faster after this surgery and don't have any problems. There are several advantages of sterilizing female kittens:

- it decreases the risk of developing mammary gland tumors at an older age.
- no uterus infection
- no unwanted litter
- no heat

Castration

Male kittens can be castrated when they are older than 4 months. Castration also requires a day at our clinic. Your kitten will get a safe anesthesia. We will remove both testiness through 2 little cuts in his scrotum. There will be no stitches and your kitten can go home the same day without a collar. There are several advantages of castrating male kittens:

- male cats who still have their testiness have an urge to squirt in their home.
- their urine has a less strong smell
- male cats who are not castrated usually fight more and have a higher risk of getting diseases from this.

After the sterilization or castration the metabolism of your cat changes. Because of this he/she can gain weight easier. You can prevent this by giving a diet with less calories or give $\frac{1}{4}$ less food than before the neutering.

If you have any questions, we are happy to help you!

We wish you a lot of fun and all the best!

Kind regards,

the team of Veterinarian Clinic Vondelpark.