

Towcester Vets - Kitten Information

Congratulations on your new kitten! Getting a kitten is an exciting time for everyone in the family, but you may have a lot of questions. We hope that this page will help to answer some of them, but if you are unsure about any aspect of your kitten's care, please do not hesitate to contact our team on **01327 350239**

- Coming to a new home can be a stressful time for a new kitten. They should be given plenty of time to adjust to their new surroundings. They also need a warm bed, as well as a litter tray and food/water bowl.
- You should make sure that all windows and doors are initially closed. It is also sensible to block off any fireplaces, so that your kitten does not choose to hide in them.
- Introduction to members of the household should be gradual. Children should be encouraged to sit on the floor and wait for the kitten to come to them.
- Kittens should not be left unattended with any other pets in the household until they are well established, and introductions should be gradual.

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are given against Feline Leukaemia Virus, two causes of respiratory infections (Feline Calicivirus, Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis) and Feline Panleucopaenia (which can cause gastrointestinal signs as well as other disease). Kittens require two vaccinations initially. The first vaccine is generally given at nine weeks of age and the second vaccine 3-4 weeks later.

If a kitten is already infected with Feline Leukaemia Virus at the time of vaccination (which is commonly asymptomatic at this stage) the vaccination will not prevent the virus causing clinical signs at a later date. Blood tests are available to test for FeLV infection if you are concerned.

Kittens are able to go outside a week after their second vaccination when their levels of immunity should be high enough to protect them from disease. However, many owners prefer to keep their kitten indoors until they are neutered to limit unwanted pregnancies.

Worming

Roundworms are very prevalent in kittens and can be passed to the kitten in the mother's milk. Kittens are often wormed with their breeder but still generally require further worming.

It is especially important to worm kittens that are in contact with young children and vulnerable adults as certain types of roundworm are zoonotic, meaning they can cause disease in humans.

Our team recommends using Stronghold at the time of your kitten's first vaccination. This is a spot-on treatment which treats roundworm, as well as a selection of skin parasites and ear mites.

Kittens may also carry tapeworms. These are most commonly picked up through ingestion of fleas and from hunting. At the time of their second vaccination, we recommend the use of Milbemax which is a combined wormer meaning that it treats both roundworm and tapeworm infestations. Chat to your vet about future worming advice.

Other parasites

Kittens can be infected with other parasites such as fleas and mites (particularly ear mites) but Stronghold (see above) treats these infestations.

Microchipping

We can microchip your kitten at any time, although we prefer to carry this out at the time of the second vaccination or when your kitten is anaesthetised for neutering.

Diet

It is important to feed your kitten a good quality, balanced, complete diet. Feeding guidelines are provided on feed packets, although this varies between individual brands. Kittens should be fed little and often as they have small stomachs. Up to 12 weeks of age they generally require four feeds per day, up to six months old they will usually eat three meals per day and from six months onwards two meals per day.

Feeding cow's milk should be avoided as this can cause diarrhoea in cats.

Toilet training

Kittens generally learn to use a litter tray by copying their mother. In their new home you may need to show them where the litter tray is. It often helps to place the kitten in their tray after he/she wakes from a sleep or after a meal or if he/she is showing behaviours suggestive of needing to go. These include sniffing, scratching or crouching.

If you want your kitten to toilet outdoors the tray should be gradually moved towards the door. Placing some cat litter on a well dug area of soil in the garden can also help.

Neutering

Neutering is generally performed from four months of age. Chat to your vet at your first consult for more information.

Timings

9 weeks

- First vaccination and full check over with a vet
- Free insurance for four weeks with Petplan offered
- Discuss microchipping, neutering and any concerns
- Weighing and Stronghold application

12 weeks

- Second vaccination and check up with a vet
- Weighing and worming
- Microchip if requested

4-6 months

- Book in for neutering

We hope you have found this information useful, but remember, if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact our clinic on **01327 350239**.