

Kitten Information

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome your new kitten to the Brambles Veterinary Surgery. At the Brambles our aim is to provide you with all you require to enable him/her to live as long, and as healthy a life as possible. Whilst we are here to treat your pet 24 hours a day when he/she is ill or injured, we feel it is equally important to provide you with good quality preventive healthcare to keep your pet in good working order throughout their life.

The first year of your new kitten's life is probably the most important. During this time the body changes dramatically and anything that affects this can have long lasting consequences.

To help you through this important first year, following a full healthcheck with the vet, our qualified nursing staff offer a series of free clinics where they will guide you through the complexities of feeding, worming, socialisation, neutering and much more.

Our commitment to a long and healthy life for your pet does not stop at the age of one. There are many things that can be done during your pet's life to reduce the possibilities of health problems and even to lengthen their lifespan.

To guide you through the first year we have enclosed a 10-point checklist, which outlines all the important topics to consider. Don't worry if it all seems a little overwhelming – we are here to guide you through it and to answer any questions or queries that you may have.

Vaccination Routine Check List For Kittens

1. Feeding

At this age we recommend Hills Science Plan Kitten. The Science Plan range is specifically designed to provide the correct levels of energy, protein, vitamins and minerals for a growing kitten.

The diet is fully balanced so there is no need to use supplements, but always ensure there is a constant supply of drinking water. There is no need to give milk, as this can actually cause diarrhoea.

At 12 months of age your kitten can move on to Hills Science Plan Adult to continue optimum development.

Not only is this the best food for your cat it also works out approximately half the cost of feeding tinned food!

2. Vaccination

This begins with a course of two injections and protects against Cat Flu, Feline Enteritis and Feline Leukaemia. To maintain your cat's immunity against these diseases a yearly booster is required - we will send you a reminder when it is due!

3. Insurance

Pet health insurance is recommended to cover unexpected veterinary fees; it also provides many other benefits including specialist fees. Unexpected illness or accidents can be very costly, but being insured means that your pet's health is never compromised. Don't put it off until it is too late.

4. Worming

This is necessary for all cats. Initially for kittens we recommend Milbemax tablets at monthly intervals until 6 months old. At 6 months of age we use milbemax every 3 months.

5. **Flea Control**

We advise the use of Program injection. A single injection lasts for 6 months and ensures your house is a flea-free zone. This is probably the most effective and easiest flea treatment there is! Another effective alternative is Advantage spot-on. It comes in a box containing four month's supply. It is easy to use; a single tube is applied to the back of the neck giving your cat one month's protection. For year round cover, simply apply one tube per month, it also helps treat the house as well.

6. **Neutering**

This is a most important subject. Our policy is neuter all cats at 6 months of age. If left un-neutered your female cat could become pregnant and is more likely to roam whilst looking for a mate. Male cats develop strong smelling urine and could start to spray in the house. They are inclined to roam and become involved in fights with other cats. A female cat spay is only £32.50, a male cat castrate is only £25.00.

7. **Dental Care**

We clean our teeth twice a day - imagine what our mouths would be like if we didn't - cats are no exception! It is important to develop a dental care regime at an early age to get your cat used to it. We suggest 'Logic Oral Hygiene gel' or CET toothpaste. 'Logic Oral Hygiene Gel' is extremely easy to use. In fact your kitten will probably regard it as a treat! Let your kitten lick the required amount directly off the tube. The gel then coats the teeth and begins the breakdown of plaque. Or if your kitten will allow you to, you can brush his/her teeth with the special CET toothpaste and brush. The gel or the toothpaste should be used daily to keep your kitten's mouth in tiptop condition.

8. **Housetraining**

Usually the kitten has learnt to use a litter tray from its mother. If not, place the tray in an easily accessible place making sure the kitten is aware of it. Clean it regularly as a cat may reject a dirty tray. As your kitten grows older and begins to go into the garden, move the tray closer to the door and eventually outside.

9. **Behaviour & General Training**

Never punish a kitten. The punishment will not necessarily be associated with the crime, and it may in fact confuse and frighten the kitten. Use a firm 'No' to discourage your kitten – and be consistent. Don't let behavioural problems get you down; don't forget we are at the end of the phone. Our Nurses would be happy to listen, and offer constructive suggestions to help overcome any difficulties you may be experiencing.

10. **Identichip**

This is a tiny microchip (about the size of a grain of rice) which is injected under the loose skin at the back of the neck. This provides your pet with a secure proof of identity - unlike collar tags that can get lost or be taken off! Each microchip has a unique identification code, this along with your pet's and your details are registered on a central database, which is available 24 hours a day. If your pet should get lost or stray it would usually get taken to the local authorities, a charity organisation or veterinary centre. Immediately on arrival the animal would be scanned - and you would be reunited with your pet as soon as possible. It only costs £19.99 for the chip and lifelong registration (or £17.99 if given at the time of vaccination).

There is now a microchip that contains a temperature sensor which tells your cat's temperature without the use of a thermometer! The cost of this chip is only £ 25.00 and will mean that as well as being permanently identified your cat need never have the trauma of a thermometer.

The above points are a brief summary of some of the beliefs and protocols of this Practice. If you would like to discuss any problems you are having, or would just like a bit of advice - do not hesitate to contact us - it's what we are here for!