



Congratulations on your new kitten. You are about to embark on a wonderful journey together. We have created this booklet to help you through the first phase of your relationship.

### **Simpson Veterinary Clinic**

First just a little about ourselves.

Our facility offers a wide range of services including; Examinations and vaccinations. We have medical, surgical and dental facilities as well as in-house diagnostics. We also offer electronic pet identification (Micro chipping) and an array of prescription diets.

We highly recommend booking an appointment to ensure your kitten is given the appropriate amount of time for his/her visit. Our hours are:

Monday – Tuesday      8:30 am to 6:00 pm

Wednesday              8:30 am to 3:00 pm

Thursday – Friday      8:30 am to 5:00 pm

Saturday                  9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Website: [www.simpsonveterinary.com](http://www.simpsonveterinary.com)

## **Our Team**



**Dr Mankarious**

### **In Case of an Emergency**

You have a choice depending on your location of two out of hour's emergency clinics to provide you with service when we are not available.

1. Vaughan-Richmond Hill Veterinary  
Emergency Clinic  
10303 Yonge St, Richmond Hill  
905-884-1VEC (1832)
2. Veterinary Emergency Clinic  
280 Sheppard Ave E, Willowdale  
416-226-3663  
or  
920 Yonge St, Toronto  
416-920-2002

Now we can get down to business.

### **Crate training**

Training your kitten to enjoy being in a crate is crucial for making sure your car rides are safe and pleasant. Now it will take some practise to get your kitten use to a crate. Making sure you place some favourite bedding in the crate and some toys will ease some of the anxiety they encounter when in a crate.

Having treats along are also beneficial, just don't feed too many to your kitten

or he/she may bring them right back up.



One of the first things you can do is let your kitten explore the carrier with the door open. Let him/her get use to being inside and out with fear of being shut up inside it. They may even take to using it as the bed or some place safe to hide if they don't like strangers in their home. Take your kitten in his/her carrier as often as you can in the car. Making car rides a pleasant experience will reduce the likely hood of your kitten talking to you the whole way. Just like child seats in cars the crate is the safest place for you pet since cats' are quite capable of getting under your feet while you are driving and causing an accident.

### **Exercise & Play**

Unlike dogs most cats will not go for walks on a leash. Games to stimulate their minds and to give them exercise are your best option with cats. There are many different toys available on the market for you and your kitten's enjoyment. It can be quite entertaining for your family to participate in your cats play time. Keep these sessions short and varied to keep your pet interested. Don't be discouraged if your pet gives up not long after you start, cats are made for short bursts of energy and then long periods of sleep.



One of the simplest games you can play is to get out a flash

light and have your kitten chase the beam of light around. A ball with most cats is stimulating also. Like children be careful of toys with small pieces that can come detached, they become choking hazards as well they can block the intestines if swallowed. This will mean your pet may have to have surgery to remove it.

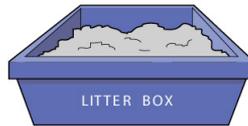
They love to chase things so toys that can be pulled along the ground are a good choice. Make sure you supervise your pets play time to prevent accidents from happening.

To prevent damage to your furniture, besides keeping your kittens nails trimmed, make sure he/she has access to a scratching post. This can be as simple as a piece of wood wrapped in an appropriate carpet type to a whole cat condo for climbing and sleeping on. Cats love to climb, it's in their nature. These condos are an appropriate place for your cat to climb, instead of on your counters.

Now a word about catnip, not all cats like it in fact only about 50% do. It has been discovered that cats have to have a gene that enables them to get pleasure from this plant. If your pet doesn't seem interested in a toy that contains it you may own one of these cats.

## House Training

It is recommended that when you are training your kitten that you have them in a confined space with a litter box until they are use to using it. The general rule of thumb for litter boxes is 2 boxes per cat. Cats can easily get into the habit of urinating in one box and defecating in the other. These boxes should be changed daily, with a thorough cleaning out weekly. Use a mild detergent to wash out the litter box. Never use strong smelling cleaners such as



bleach to clean, they can have ammonia in them and cause your cat not to want to use the box. This can lead to undesirable behaviours like urinating in inappropriate places in the home. When choosing a litter for your pet make sure it has no perfumes added. These are only for your benefit and in fact since your cat has a very sensitive sense of smell will also cause them to not want to use the litter box and find some where else to go.

If you wish to move your litter boxes to a different area in your home make sure you do this gradually. If you move them suddenly this will cause your cat stress and again accidents will occur.

### **Vaccines**

A complex series of defence mechanisms that help your pet to resist infection is the definition of immunity. Unfortunately immunity is not absolute. In certain circumstances immunity can be overwhelmed and cause the pet to become ill. Vaccines help to stimulate and build immunity with out causing illness.



There are two types of vaccine available. The modified-live vaccine is one that has been altered so that it is no longer harmful but will stimulate a protective immunity. The killed vaccine is one that has been rendered harmless but often needs something added to it (an adjuvant) to stimulate a longer-lasting immune response. You'll notice that some vaccines are given locally; an example is the kennel cough vaccine which is given in the nose. Most vaccines though require an injection to stimulate a systemic response. The doctor will discuss with you what your kittens' requirements are since there are many factors to be considered before vaccination occurs.



Most kittens for the first few weeks have immunity from their mother, but this slowly declines over the next twelve weeks. This is why we recommend that your kitten begin a series of vaccines at 8 weeks of age. This is repeated at 4 week intervals until 16 weeks of age. It is crucial that this schedule is maintained very closely this is because if a large lapse of time occurs between boosters you may have to start the whole process over again. Since it is very complicated, not to mention costly to test your pet's immunity status we recommend annual re-vaccination to maintain your pet's immunity level. The exam the doctor gives prior to vaccination is to make sure your pet is healthy at that time to receive the vaccines.

You may notice your kitten is lethargic after the vaccines are given this is perfectly normal. If a killed vaccine is administered you may find that a lump forms where the injection site was. This too is normal but if it should be painful or persist for more than a week or so and it doesn't get any smaller please consult our doctors. On occasion some cats develop a severe reaction to the vaccine. The signs usually develop within a few minutes of the vaccine, although they may be delayed for a few hours. Always be on the look out for breathing problems,



salivation, vomiting or diarrhea. You may also see facial swelling; these are all signs that your pet is having an allergic reaction. Please bring your pet back to us right away, if we are not open proceed to the nearest emergency clinic for medical attention.

### **Nutrition**

Like us kittens need good quality food to keep up with their growing bodies. Cats are carnivores meaning they eat only meat. We recommend high quality diets by either Medical Development® or



Hills Prescription Diet p/d®. Both of these products assist your kitten to grow at a moderate rate that helps bones to form properly without deformities and keeps obesity in check. Feel free to come and have your kitten weighed every couple of

weeks to make sure his/her nutritional needs are being met with out excess.

Most kittens do well on either of these diets. Cats are not big on change therefore it is not necessary to give them a variety of different foods. The staff at your veterinary hospital will give you an appropriate feeding guide line to follow based on your kittens' weight. The amount of food recommended for daily consumption should be divided in to two or three separate meals for the day.

Appropriate treats are acceptable to give, adjusting the amount of food fed accordingly, especially when training. We have the Medical Meditreats<sup>®</sup> that can be broken and used as a reward when training.

Lastly, you should never feed human food to your pet. Not only can it cause your pet to become obese but also promotes the bad behaviour of begging. Some pets will decide not to eat their food any more if table scraps are offered. This can cause malnutrition if this behaviour is maintained.



### **Neutering & Spaying**

The best time to spay or neuter your pet is between 5 and 6 months of age. We recommend a pre-anaesthetic blood test, which not only makes sure your pet is healthy enough to go under anaesthetic but also gives us a base line to work from for the rest of their lives. This procedure reduces the risk of inappropriate sexual behaviour, aggression and accidental breeding.

A male cat is more likely to roam in search of a female companion. Their urine also has a strong odour that is not very pleasant to have in your home. They tend to spray on vertical objects to mark territory, again not a pleasant thing to have going on in your home. It is also cheaper on your pocket book to have your male cat neutered since frequent fights with other cats can lead to continues

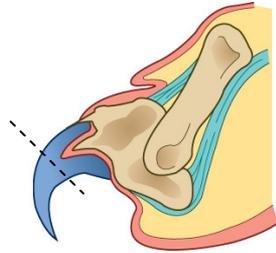
visits to your veterinarian to treat the abscesses that form after these fights.

The female cat should also be spayed for similar reasons. They tend to do a lot of night time howling to attract males when they are in heat. This is very disturbing to you when you are trying to sleep. It also reduces the risk of ovarian and breast cancer.

### **Nail Trimming**

As we stated earlier, your kitten should be trained to have his/her feet touched so as to make trimming the nails easier on you. Get yourself a good quality nail trimmer, there nice small scissor like clippers that are very good for cats.

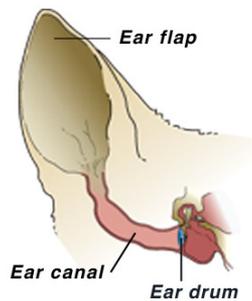
Now if you look at your finger the structure of your cat's nails are similar. You will be able to easily see the 'quick' or the pink area under the nail. You only want to trim back to before this area or you will cause bleeding. This is the leading cause for why cats' shy away from having their nails done. You may have to start slowly and only do a few nails at a time to get your kitten use to this procedure. The frequency with which you will have to trim your pets nails depend on varying factors, such as how much your cat uses it's scratching post and the quality of the diet.



## **Ear Cleaning**

Along with getting your kitten use to having its feet handled and brushing the teeth you should also get him/her use to having their ears touched. This will make ear cleaning a much easier job when he/she is not afraid of you touching them around the head. On a weekly basis, check for any waxy build up in the outer ear and opening to the ear canal. If you see wax use an appropriate cleaner from your veterinarian and cotton ball to clean out the ear.

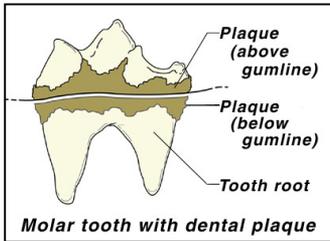
Apply a small amount of the cleaner to the cotton ball and gently wipe out the ear and canal as far as you can reach with your finger. DO NOT use Q-Tips® as you may puncture the ear drum if you go too far. Always be on the look out for redness, discharge or odour from your pet's ears as this is an indication that your pet has an ear infection. Contact your veterinarian and have your pet examined. There are many different causes for ear infections and the correct one must be diagnosed before medication is dispensed.



## **Teeth & Tartar Prevention**

Right now your kitten has his/her baby teeth but soon you'll start to notice that he/she is chewing on things. This is because they are teething this is when you need to

supply them with appropriate chew to chew. Once they have their adult teeth in, by around 6 months of age most of them will be in, you should be brushing your kitten's teeth. Up to this point you should be getting them use to having your fingers in



their mouth using a flavoured toothpaste. Now you can start your work in earnest. You want to prevent tartar from forming on the teeth since this is a very harmful substance to them.

Not only does tartar serve as a place for bacteria to live and multiply in, which can end up in the blood stream and harm various organs, it builds up along the gum line causing the gums to be pushed away from the roots which ultimately leads to tooth loss.

The best way to prevent tartar and tooth loss is to brush your pet's teeth. Ideally brushing daily is the number one method of tartar prevention. If not possible then at



least twice a week with a soft bristled brush and an appropriate cat toothpaste, like CET. The human products are not made for use in animals and may cause frothing if used.



### **Emergencies**

We hope you and your pet never have to experience an emergency situation but if you do here are a few things you need to know about dealing with them.

Here are some common emergency situations and there clinical signs.

**Anaphylaxis:** A severe allergic reaction or acute hypersensitivity reaction. Sudden collapse and severe breathing problems occur with this emergency. Swelling around the face or muzzle, hives on the skin, vomiting or diarrhea and restlessness. It can be caused by many things that vary from insect bites, contact allergies to reactions to injections. Proceed immediately to your veterinarian for assistance.

**Bites & Fight Wounds:** If you see persistent bleeding or a large volume of blood is lost and can not be stopped with direct pressure seek medical attention immediately. Especially serious are wounds that involve the head or where there may have been damage to internal organs.

**Bleeding:** If an injury causes blood to pump or drip so fast that it makes a puddle or it seeps through a normal bandage within minutes seek medical attention as quickly as possible.

**Burns & Scalds:** Due to the furry nature of our pets you are not likely to know that these have occurred unless you witness these occurrences. Contact us immediately if you suspect these things have occurred to your pet.

**Persistent Vomiting or Diarrhea:** If your pet repeatedly suffers from vomiting or diarrhea you should come in right away since the major concern is dehydration. These signs could be caused by anything from poisoning, obstruction of the intestinal tract or acute gastrointestinal infection. Above all DO NOT administer any human medications to your pet, you can cause more harm than good doing this.

**Convulsions:** These are characterized by a serious of violent, uncontrolled spasms. They can last for more than five minutes or be accompanied by defecation or urination. This is very serious and needs to be attended to immediately.

**Hemorrhagic gastroenteritis:** This is a condition where the pet has severe bloody diarrhea and vomiting. If you see blood in the stool, if vomiting or diarrhea persists for more than 6 to 12 hours or if he/she becomes less responsive or weak seek medical attention.

**Heart Failure:** This is also known as a “heart attack”. This can be caused by a condition called congestive heart failure. Unfortunately, this condition may not be diagnosed until the pet suffers from coughing or has a sudden collapse. Signs to look out for are coughing (especially at night), difficulty breathing, a bluish colour of the tongue and decreased exercise tolerance. Should any of these signs occur or your pet collapses seek medical attention immediately.

**Heat Stroke:** This is the number one killer of pets in the summer months, especially when left in a parked car with little ventilation. The signs are excessive panting, distress and lethargy. Unconsciousness and death can quickly follow.

**Injuries:** Any penetrating wound to the chest or abdomen, as well as anything that occurs with the eye should be regarded as an emergency. Immediate attention should be given to your pet if an injury occurs to the head or causes problems with breathing.

**Poisoning:** Look for signs of excessive salivation, vomiting, diarrhea, collapse, skin damage due to a caustic substance, etc. Immediate medical attention is needed to reduce the absorption of the toxin. Always bring any packaging you have with you to the hospital. This way appropriate treatment can be given rapidly.

**Unconsciousness or Collapse:** These may occur with or without seizure activity. It may occur because of a blow to the head or from sudden heart failure and can strike without warning. Seek medical attention immediately.

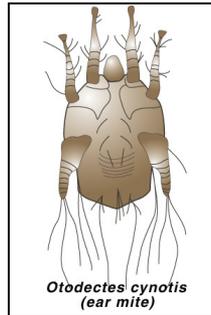
**What to do in an emergency**

1. Stay calm and try not to panic.
2. Contact your veterinarian. Explain what has happened and follow the advice given. Keep your pet warm and quiet.
3. Keep your pet as still as possible especially in the case of limb or spinal trauma.
4. Carry out all procedures and first aid that your veterinarian advises.
5. Transport your pet safely to the hospital.

**Ear Mites**

The ear mite is the second most common parasite found on cats, the first being the flea. Its entire life cycle occurs on your pet. It can be quite common for kittens to be afflicted with this parasite. Some of the signs that your kitten has ear mites are:

Constantly scratching or shaking the head, the ear has a dark waxy or crusty material in it, and in severe cases the outer ear (known as the pinna) may become swollen due to



damage to the blood vessels inside and it fills with blood.

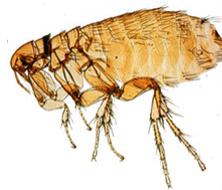
When ear mites are suspected we take a sample of the debris and put it under the microscope to locate the mites. They are usually wandering around on the slide since they are quite put out by the fact that they have just lost their nice warm home. Once confirmed we will clean your cat's ears out and administer medication to kill the ear mites. You may have to continue cleaning the ears out at home depending on the severity of the infestation.

### **Fleas & Ticks**

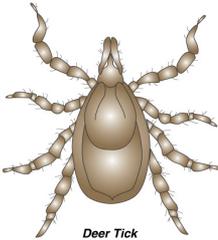
Both of these parasites can cause your pet a lot of discomfort and can carry some serious health problems.

Fleas can cause nothing more than a slight irritation in some dogs where as others can have a severe allergic reaction to their bites. This is seen in the form of extensive itching with hair loss and lesions. If you have a small puppy and a heavy infestation of fleas they can cause your puppy to become anemic. The flea can carry various diseases but also carries the most common parasite known as the tapeworm.

The flea has no wings so to get around it jumps, and that means it has to hitch a ride to go long distances. When they decide to take a ride on your pet they usually have a blood meal along the way. The flea can ingest up to 15 times its own body weight daily. The female flea can lay from 30 – 50 eggs a day. Within about 2 days the larvae have hatch and are hidden



in dark places like carpets and baseboards of your home. After about a week the larvae spins a cocoon and prepares to go onto the next stage of their life. In the pupae form they can live for up to 2 years waiting for some movement to trigger their release. Once they emerge they develop into adult fleas and the cycle continues. There are several products on the market that are great for breaking the cycle. They work by either killing the flea out right or by sterilizing the females so they don't lay eggs.



*Deer Tick*

Ticks also have no wings so they tend to do a lot of crawling. Once they locate a potential meal, through their keen sense of heat detection, they crawl on the animal and

embed their mouth parts. If you and your pet have been in a wooded area or where there is tall grass make sure you inspect both of you for ticks. Ticks can carry Lyme disease and Rocky Mountain spotted fever, both of these can be transmitted to humans. Make sure to thoroughly comb your pet within 4 to 6 hours of exposure to these environments. If you find a tick make sure to remove it safely; use gloves and tweezers and make sure to grab the tick as close to your pet's skin. Then gently pull until the tick is freed from you pet. Make sure to wrap the tick in several tissues and flush it. DO NOT try to crush it as you may spread the harmful bacteria. There is at least one product in Canada that can help prevent ticks from biting your pet.

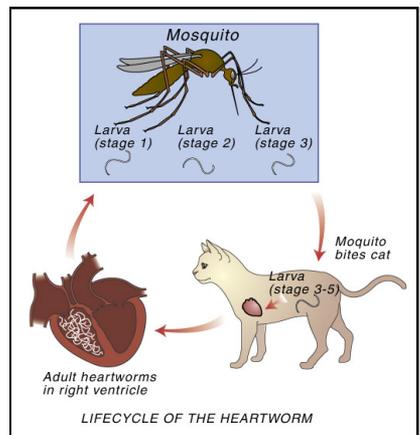
Don't be alarmed if after administering any of these products you see a flea or tick. These creatures must absorb the product which may take a few hours to a few days depending on how recently you have administered the product.

### **Heartworm**

With heartworm disease the adult worms live in the heart and the pulmonary artery of an infected cat. The females release millions of tiny worms, called microfilaria, into the blood stream. These microfilariae are then sucked up by mosquitoes when they bite your pet. The microfilaria develops further in the mosquito, about 10 to 30 days, and then is injected into the next cat the mosquito bites. Once in the cat the microfilaria finishes its development and proceeds to the cat's heart and the cycle begins again.

Now this is where it gets a little tricky. Here in Canada when the mosquitoes start to emerge in the spring they may start biting but may not infect your pet right away. The interesting thing is that the weather has to be warm for at least 21 consecutive days before any microfilaria can fully develop. Once you have this occur the heartworm season has begun.

There is no definitive test for cats' to make sure they are free of heartworm before putting them on a



preventive medication. It's recommended though that you place your cat on a monthly prevention program each spring.

Now you can choose from a topical once a month product to a pill that's given once a month. Most of these products not only give your cat protection from heartworm but also fleas and certain intestinal parasites. If you travel to the southern United States during the winter months here you may wish to keep your cat on this preventive medication all year round.

**We wish you and your kitten a long and happy life together.**

We hope this booklet is informative and feel free to call us with any questions you may have. If you have concerns about any of these topics and you wish to learn more we would be happy to print you more in depth handouts on any and all topics.

