



Mountainview Animal Hospital

WINTER NEWSLETTER



The Bottom Line

A visit to the veterinarian can be stressful for cats and their owners. In fact, 58% of cat owners say that their cat hates going to the vet. And, 38% say that simply thinking about going to the vet is stressful.³

Cat Healthy was created by Canada's top veterinary feline specialist, as an initiative to help more cats receive the preventive health care they need to live longer, healthier lives. Visit their website to find out more: www.cathealthy.ca



HAVE WE SEEN YOUR CAT LATELY?

Did you know that 4 out of every 10 dogs seen by a veterinarian also have cats living in the home that never go to a veterinarian for health care?² There are 8.5 million cats in 36% of Canadian households¹ and half of these cats do not receive veterinary care.² While those facts initially astonished me, upon reflection they strike me as true. It is not uncommon for us to see a family with their new kitten for the first few months, for the initial vaccinations, but once that kitten is spayed or neutered, we are often no longer part of that cat's health care routine. It is not until many years later, when the cat is elderly and very sick that we see the family cat again. And while you know, we are always here to help in any way we can, we often find ourselves wishing that we had had the opportunity to intervene for this cat earlier.

Why the disconnect between the health care the family dog receives and that of the family cat? Well, it is not for lack of love that pet owners have for their cats, we know that with certainty; we see how worried and distressed people are to bring their old, sick cat to us. We believe that there are a number of reasons that cats do not receive regular preventative veterinary health care throughout their lives, and much of that is related to the nature of the cat. Part of what we love so much about them, their CATtitude, is also what makes it so difficult to care for them. We would like to help reduce the stress for cats and cat owners alike by addressing some of the misconceptions and barriers that you face.

Cats Are Masters of Disguise

We often think of cats as predators, hunters, independent and self-sufficient, but they are also prey animals, susceptible and hunted by other larger predators. Instinctually this drives them to hide any sign of pain or illness. Unlike our dogs, cats do not communicate to us when they are not feeling well or are experiencing pain. Instead they quietly suffer in silence.

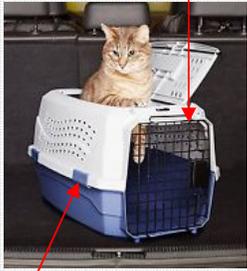
While we recognize that you know your cat best and we rely on your feedback about how your cat is behaving at home, a trained professional will understand how to interpret your observations. Veterinarians are trained to ask the right questions, look for the subtle signs of disease and examine your cat in such a way as to overcome your cat's disguise.

Here are 10 signs to watch for at home and discuss with your cat's veterinarian:

1. Urinating/defecating outside the litter box
2. Changes in social interaction
3. Changes in food and water consumption
4. Changes in sleeping habits
5. Unexplained weight loss or gain
6. Changes in activity
7. Changes in grooming
8. Changes in behaviour
9. Changes in vocalization
10. Bad breath

The Bottom Line

Door can be completely removed

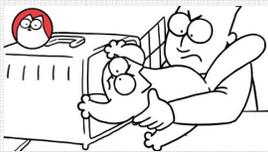


Clips open to remove top

Hint:

Rather than storing the cat carrier in the basement or garage, take the door off, put a cozy little blanket inside, and now it becomes the cat's bed. When it comes time to travel, your cat won't resent being in the carrier at all.

Must see video on youtube:



Box Clever - Simon's Cat

I couldn't stop laughing!

Indoor Cats Are Not Exposed to Disease - The Myth

Indoor cats are often able to sneak out. In one study, 41% of lost cats were considered by their owners to be indoor-only.⁴ Once outside, they can quickly pick up diseases from their neighbourhood, including Rabies.

Furthermore, many of the viruses for which we vaccinate our pets can be brought home by us on our hands or on our cloths. Highly contagious viruses like feline herpes, can be transmitted to our indoor cats, after we have had contact with another seemingly healthy cat.

Finally, diseases like diabetes, heart, kidney and liver disease, arthritis and hyperthyroidism can affect indoor cats just as easily as outdoor cats.

For these reasons the American Association of Feline Practitioners and American Animal Hospital Association recommend a minimum of one wellness exam per year for cats, with more frequent exams for senior and geriatric patients, or those cats with medical or behavioral conditions.

After all, the earlier we detect any of these diseases, the better the chance we have of improving the quality and length of our cats lives.

Traveling With Your Cat

Probably the most common problem preventing cats from receiving the healthcare they deserve, is the challenge cat owners face in traveling with their cats to the veterinary hospital. Here are some tips:

- Look for a carrier with proper ventilation, made of sturdy plastic, that opens from the front and the top, and that can be easily taken apart. This allows the cat to remain in the bottom of the carrier, where it is more comfortable, for part of the examination.
- Each cat should come in its own carrier.
- After you've placed your cat in the carrier, place a towel over the carrier. This should help calm your cat.
- The carrier should be placed in the back seat; front seat airbags can injure a cat even in the carrier. Secure the carrier in the car with the seatbelt.
- To reduce motion sickness, withhold food (not water) for a few hours before the trip. If this is not enough, talk to your veterinarian about medications to treat nausea.
- In the car, drive smoothly and reduce the noise (music, honking, etc.). Instead, talk to your cat, as your voice can be reassuring. A cat's sense of hearing is 4 times sharper than ours.
- While in the clinic waiting room, keep the towel on the carrier and sit as far away as possible from dogs. Whenever possible, we will try to put you and your cat in an examination room right away, to avoid the stress of contact with other pets.
- After returning home (if other cats are around), take a cloth and rub the other cats. Then rub the returning cat with the same cloth - this transfer of scents can reduce conflicts.
- Don't worry if your cat seems unhappy after their visit to the clinic. The minor stress experienced is not harmful to your cat's health or to your relationship with it. And, the information gained from the trip to your veterinarian is well worth the stress.

Train your cat to like the carrier. Ideally this should be done in advance of the visit:

The Bottom Line

Your cat's physical exam:

Eyes: signs of disease, discharge or watering, abnormal movement or reaction to light

Mouth: signs of periodontal disease in teeth and gums, bad breath

Ears: signs of ear infection, pain, tenderness, redness, swelling, "yeasty" smell and discharge, mites

Heart: weak or abnormal heart sounds, rate or irregular rhythm

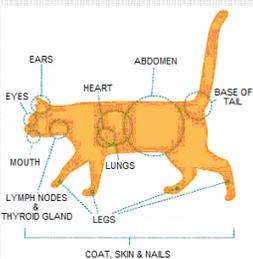
Abdomen: any irregularities in the size and shape of the liver, spleen, kidneys, bladder, lymph nodes, intestines, stomach, presence of masses

Lungs: wheezing, crackling, or other abnormal lung sounds

Legs: range of motion, signs of pain, thickening, grinding or clicking in joints

Lymph nodes & thyroid gland: any irregularities or change in size

Coat, skin & nails: poor overall quality, lumps and bumps, rashes, areas of hair loss or excessive dander; matted or saliva stained fur; fleas or ticks, calluses, overgrown or ingrown toenails, dehydration



- Place the open carrier in an undisturbed area where your cat likes to spend time. With time, your cat will get used to it.
- Feed the cat in or near the carrier.
- Place a piece of clothing with your scent in the carrier. Include soft bedding, their favourite treats, or familiar toys in the carrier.
- Gently rub a cloth around your cat's face. With the scented cloth, rub it on your cat's carrier to make it smell like home.
- Use a synthetic facial pheromone like "Feliway" in the carrier 10 - 15 minutes prior to travelling.



The Angry Cat

Findling, the love of Dr. Ewing's life, was a little grey tabby cat, no more that 8 pounds at her heaviest. She was a happy, active and affectionate cat.....to Dr. Ewing only. To the rest of the world, she had the CATtitude of a lion. Many years ago when Dr. Ewing worked for another clinic in Brampton, she brought Findling to work with her to give her a check up and collect a urine sample. Findling had urinated outside the litter box, so Dr. Ewing was concerned that she had a bladder infection. While Dr. Ewing had warned everyone that Findling could be aggressive, no one was prepared for how extreme this little cat's behaviour could be. By the end of her examination, Findling had bitten or scratched everyone, and had pooped and urinated on the examination table. Little Findling's behaviour was an early lesson, that a fearful cat in an unfamiliar place, with unfamiliar people can become uncharacteristically aggressive.

Some of you reading this have experienced the same thing with your cats; your wonderful little cat becomes a terror at the vets. We never like to see a cat that upset and angry, because we understand that they are acting out of fear, just like Dr. Ewing's Findling. However, in most cases, it no longer needs to be this difficult. Here are some tips:

- The angry cat still needs and deserves veterinary health care just as much as any other cat.
- Often, the stress begins at home....for the both of you. See the above section on how to train your cat to be much more comfortable with the cat carrier.
- Feliway™ spray is a product that simulates feline pheromones. This can be sprayed into the cat carrier 10 to 30 minutes before the trip to your veterinarian. Feliway spray can be purchased at most veterinary hospitals.
- There are many new and safe medications on the market that can be given at home, before the trip to the veterinary hospital, to calm a fearful cat and make them much easier to handle. If your cat is fearful and angry, please talk to your veterinarian before booking your appointment about your concerns.

¹ Statistics Canada 2006 Census

² IPSOS-Reid Survey. The facts and statistics on companion animals in Canada.

³ Volk JO, Felsted KE, Thomas JG, et al. 2011. Executive summary of the Bayer veterinary care usage study. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 238(10):1275-1282.

⁴ Brown, M., et al. (2010). AAFP-AAHA: Feline life stage guidelines. *Journal of the American Animal Hospital Association*, 46(1), 70-85.

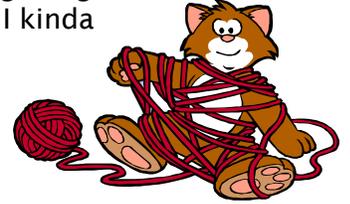
The Bottom Line

The Emergency Veterinary Clinic on HWY 10

- Licensed Veterinarians and Registered Technicians are on site waiting to care for your pet's emergency needs
- It is designed and equipped for the assessment and treatment of trauma cases, intensive care treatment, on-site blood and urine testing, radiology (x-ray) services, anesthesia and emergency surgery, and continued care for chronic and life-threatening illnesses
- It provides for 24 hour constant monitoring of your pet in conjunction with your family veterinarian
- The Emergency Veterinary Clinic will transfer your pet's medical record directly to your family veterinarian after the emergency care is complete, providing safe continuity of care

TIME WITH TUX

You know at night when you toss and turn to find that perfect position to sleep, and how wonderful it is when you find it. Well, I have found the perfect spot in the clinic to nap; in the bedding drawer! The drawer is large and deep, and it is where all the cat beds for the patients are stored. If I'm really fast, I can sneak in there when the humans are getting out some bedding for one of the patients. I jump in, hunker down and hope to not be noticed. If I'm lucky, they don't realize I've snuck into the drawer and they close it; it's cozy, warm, and nice and dark. I get a great sleep. Eventually, one of them misses me and comes looking; I kinda hate it when they disturb my nap time. Lately, they've been watching me, it's getting harder to sneak in. If I get caught, I turn on "the old Tux charm", it always works on the ladies.



HOLIDAY HOURS



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|--|-------------------|
| Dec. 24 th - Christmas Eve: | Open 9:00 - 12:00 |
| Dec. 25 th - Christmas Day: | Closed |
| Dec. 26 th - Boxing Day: | Closed |
| Dec. 27 th - Tuesday: | Closed |
| Dec. 31 st - New Years Eve: | Open 9:00 - 12:00 |
| Jan 1 st - New Years Day: | Closed |
| Jan 2nd - Monday: | Closed |

Unless otherwise specified here, Mountainview Animal Hospital will be open during its regular office hours. Animals in the hospital over the holidays will receive the same great care and attention as always. For those patients requiring emergency care over Christmas and New Years, The Emergency Veterinary Clinic on Hwy 10 will be open to serve your pet's medical and surgical needs. You can call ahead at 905-495-9907 or go directly there. The Emergency Veterinary Clinic is located on the south east corner of highway 10 and Wexford Rd, just one block north of Bovaird (Highway 7).

From all of us at Mountainview Animal Hospital,
we wish all of you

*A Very Merry Christmas,
A Joyous Holiday Season
and
A Happy New Year!*