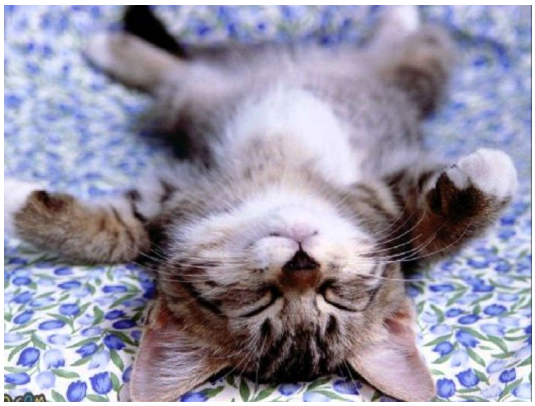
North Westchester Veterinary Office

2068 East Main St, Cortlandt Blvd.

Cortlandt Manor NY, 10567

914-736-9500

Your kitten's first visit (6-8 weeks of age)



- Care and instruction overview
- General physical exam with Doctor
- Intestinal parasite exam (stool sample)
- Initial routine deworming
- Appropriate flea/tick preventative
- Possible FeLV/FIV blood test (if not done already)
- 1st set of core vaccines
    - Feline Distemper vaccine

Your kitten's second visit (10-12 weeks of age)

- General physical exam with Doctor
- Possible FeLV/FIV blood test (if not done already)
- 2nd set of core vaccinations
    - Feline Distemper vaccine
- Possible introduction of non-core vaccines
    - Feline Leukemia
- Appropriate flea/tick preventative
- Second routine deworming

Your kitten's third visit (15-16 weeks of age)

- Visit with Veterinary Technician
- 3rd set of core vaccinations
    - Feline Distemper vaccine
    - Rabies Vaccine
- 2nd set of appropriate non-core vaccines
    - Feline Leukemia
- Appropriate flea/tick preventative

Your kitten's final visit of the year (6 months)

- General physical exam
- Recommended pre-anesthesia blood work
- Spay or neuter procedure
- Optional ResQ Chip implantation under anesthesia
- Discussion of appropriate diet at discharge

Vaccines

Core Vaccines

Core vaccines are what every cat should be vaccinated for on a regular basis.

Rabies Vaccine: Rabies is a viral infection that affects all mammals (including people) and is 100% fatal. It is given to healthy cats at 12 weeks of age and older for prevention of disease due to the rabies virus. Revaccination is necessary 1 year later, then every 3 years thereafter. THIS VACCINE NEEDS TO BE GIVEN… IT IS NEW YORK STATE LAW.

Kitten Distemper Vaccine (FVRCP): It aids in the prevention of multiple diseases, i.e. feline rhinotracheitis, feline calicivirus (FCV) and panleukopenia. These viruses are highly contagious, are common in unvaccinated kittens and cats and can cause significant illness. The initial vaccine is given to kittens 8 weeks of age or older. It then needs to be boostered every 3-4 weeks until the kitten is at least 16 weeks old. A minimum of 2 vaccines are needed. The kitten Distemper Vaccine is good for one year.

Feline Adult Distemper Vaccine (FVRCP): Is the same as the kitten distemper vaccine. It is given to adult cats once every 3 years starting one year after their initial kitten series.

Non-core Vaccines

The non-core vaccines are given to kittens that are at a high risk for a particular virus/disease.

Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV): Feline Leukemia is a common infection caused by an immunosuppressant retrovirus. The virus directly or indirectly causes more deaths than any other organism and is widespread in the cat population. FeLV is a recommended vaccine for all kittens that will be outdoors due to the high rate of transmission from cat to cat. This vaccine series is given to kittens at 10-12 weeks of age and then boostered 3-4 weeks later which at that time the vaccine will last for one year.

Why does my kitten need more than one vaccination?

When the mother nurses its kittens they receive a temporary form of immunity through its mother's milk. This immunity is in the form of proteins called maternal antibodies. For about twenty-four to forty-eight hours after birth, the kitten's intestines allow absorption of these antibodies directly into the blood stream. This immunity is of benefit during the first few weeks of the kitten's life, but at some point, this immunity fails and the kitten must be able to make its own long-lasting immunity. Vaccinations are used for this purpose. As long as the mother's antibodies are present, vaccinations do not have a chance to stimulate the kitten's immune system. The mother's antibodies interfere by neutralizing the vaccine. Many factors determine when the kitten will be able to respond to the vaccinations. These include the level of immunity in the mother cat, how much antibody has been absorbed, and the number of vaccines given to the kitten. Since we do not know when an individual kitten will lose the short-term immunity, we give a series of vaccinations. We hope that at least two of these will fall in the window of time when the kitten has lost immunity from its mother but has not yet been exposed to disease. A single vaccination, even if effective, is not likely to stimulate the long-term immunity, which is so important.

Rabies vaccine is an exception to this, since one injection given at the proper time is enough to produce long-term immunity.

Vaccine Reactions

What to look out for: Any pet can have a reaction to a vaccine, even one that has been given before with no problem. It is important to understand the difference between "normal" reactions and "abnormal" reactions. You should always monitor your pet for at least 2 hours after any vaccination.

Normal Reaction: Pets may feel lethargic, ache-y, have a mild fever or a poor appetite. This is the body's normal, healthy response to immune stimulus and should resolve within a day or so. If symptoms are severe or continue for more than one day, please call the office (914-736-9500).

Abnormal Reaction: Rarely, a pet may experience a serious allergic reaction to a vaccine, leading to anaphylactic shock. This is a serious, life-threatening condition. Signs of allergic reactions can include sudden and profound lethargy, vomiting, diarrhea, swelling of the face or legs, sudden itchiness, hives, collapse or difficulty breathing. These symptoms can occur within a few minutes of a vaccine or a few hours.

You should contact the office immediately if any of the above symptoms occur, or contact a 24-hour emergency hospital:

Veterinary Emergency Group 914-949-8779

Vaccine Site Lumps: Many pets experience a localized swelling at the site of the vaccine injection. This is the body's response to foreign material being injected. Very rarely, a more serious condition may form at the vaccine site. It is important that all vaccine lumps are reported to the Vet's Office. We can then speak with you over the phone and then decide what treatment, if any, is required for your pets. These reactions should be recorded in your pet's chart for future reference.

Flea and Tick Prevention

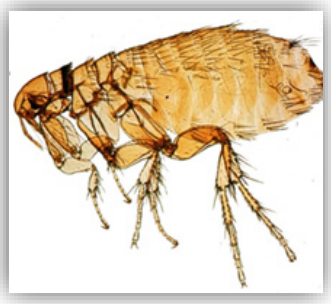
Why should I control fleas and ticks?

Besides making your cat itchy, fleas can lead to anemia, tapeworms and skin infections. Ticks are among the most efficient carriers of disease because they attach firmly when sucking blood, feed slowly and may go unnoticed for a considerable time while feeding.

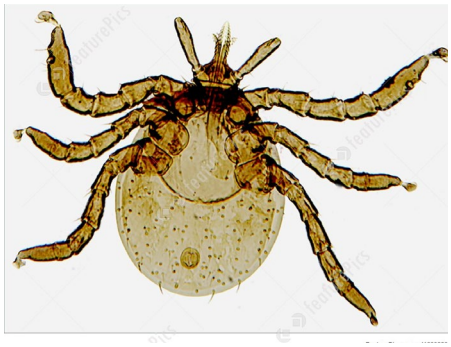
How do I Control Fleas and Ticks?

There are several topical flea/tick controls. Beware of over the counter products which may be harmful to your pet! For indoor only cats we recommend the use of Advantage which is a topical medication that prevents fleas. For Indoor/outdoor cats we recommend Frontline Gold. Frontline Gold is a topical medication that kills ticks and fleas of all life stages. It is a monthly preventative that is applied directly to the skin down the back of cat. When fleas in your home come into contact with cats treated with Frontline Gold, they also die which helps control fleas in your home as well as on your cat.

As another option we also recommend the Seresto collar. The collar lasts for about 8 months and similar to Frontline, the collar prevents ticks and also kills fleas of all life stages.



Microscopic view of flea



Microscopic view of tick

Intestinal Parasites

On your pet's first visit, and all annual visits, a stool sample should be run to screen for any intestinal parasites. Intestinal parasites are microscopic and generally not seen with the naked eye. Parasites can be transmitted from one cat to another, most often through their feces. Some can also be transmitted to humans by walking through the grass barefoot and/or not washing your hands well. Be sure to have your pet tested regularly and treated accordingly.

Do all kittens have worms?

Intestinal parasites are pretty common in kittens. Kittens can become infected with parasites before they are born or later through their mother's milk. The microscopic examination of a stool sample will usually help us to determine the presence of intestinal parasites. We recommend this exam for all kittens. Deworming is done at the kitten's first exam and then repeated about three weeks later. It is important that it be repeated because the deworming medication only kills the adult worms. Within three to four weeks, the larval stages will become adults and need to be treated. Kittens remain susceptible to re-infection with hookworms and roundworms. Periodic deworming throughout the cat's life may be recommended for outdoor cats.

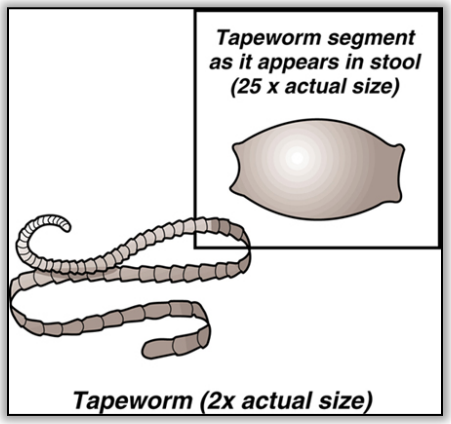
Is there more than one type?

There are several types of intestinal parasites, most commonly:

- **Roundworms:** Roundworms are long bodied words averaging about 3-6 inches in length, and they live freely in the intestines. A roundworm infection can be transmitted from cat to cat via infective eggs shed in the feces or via exposure to the intermediate hosts of roaches, earthworms and birds. If a growing kitten is infected with a large number of roundworms, it can cause poor growth, abdominal discomfort, decreased appetite, vomiting and diarrhea. These kittens have a characteristic 'pot bellied' appearance. Roundworms can be transmitted from cat to cat via infective eggs shed in the feces.
- **Hookworms:** Hookworms are barely visible to the naked eye and are approximately 2-3mm in length. Cats tend to harbor hook worms much less frequently compared to the large amount we see in dogs. The hookworm attaches to the lining of the intestinal wall and as a result of blood sucking, can cause severe anemia. In addition, the infective larvae lives in the soil so it can enter the host either by mouth from grooming or through the skin, particularly the feet. Besides

anemia, other evidence of a hook worm infection include the presence of digested blood in the stool, poor haircoat and weight loss.

- **Tapeworms:** Tapeworms are one of the most common intestinal parasites of cats. Kittens become infected with them when they swallow fleas; the eggs of the tapeworm live inside the flea. When the cat chews or licks its skin as a flea bites, the flea may be swallowed. The flea is digested within the cat's intestine; the tapeworm hatches and then anchors itself to the intestinal lining. Therefore, exposure to fleas may result in a new infection. *Dipylidium caninum*, the common tapeworm of the cat, causes few problems but has the occasion to cause weight loss, and digestive upsets like vomiting.



- **Whipworms:** Large intestinal worms that cause gas and diarrhea.
- **Giardia:** A one-celled parasite that lives in the intestines and causes diarrhea.
- **Coccidia:** A microscopic protozoa causing severe damage to the intestines and diarrhea.

Figure 1 Giardia