

Keys to a Healthy Senior Cat (7 years and older)



● **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION.** A year between physical examinations for your cat is like seven years between annual examinations for us. We recommend examinations *every 6 months* to monitor and catch problems early.

● Senior Wellness Lab Screenings – The most important thing you can do for an older cat is yearly laboratory testing (similar in importance to a mammogram or prostate screening for people) to detect any health problems early. This allows any necessary treatment to begin as soon as possible, enabling your cat to maintain its optimal health. **A Complete Blood Count, Blood Chemistry Profiles, Electrolyte levels, Thyroid hormone level, and Glaucoma Screening tells us volumes about your cat's health and helps us help you keep him/her as healthy as possible**

● Annual **Internal Parasite Examination** and **Strategic Deworming**. Regular (every 3 months) deworming is recommended for cats that go outdoors (even for short periods of time). Heartworm preventive should be used every month– we recommend **Heartgard for Cats®** or ask about the liquid form!

● **Annual Vaccinations, including:**

- ❖ **Distemper, Herpesvirus, Calicivirus, & Chlamydia Vaccination**
- ❖ **Rabies Vaccination**
- ❖ **Feline Leukemia & Feline Immunodeficiency Virus Vaccinations** – for cats at risk

● Cats should be kept flea-free and not allowed to eat dead birds or rodents in order to prevent tapeworm infestation:

- ❖ **FRONTLINE TOP SPOT or ADVANTAGE Once Monthly**
- ❖ Regular House Treatment

● Feline Leukemia virus and Feline Immunodeficiency virus (i.e. FIV) testing should be performed annually, for cats that go outdoors (even for short periods of time) or as deemed medically appropriate.

● **Daily Exercise.** Provide toys such as catnip toys, balls--things that cats will not swallow. Avoid string toys and sewing needles, which can cause injury to the intestinal tract.

● **Feed the highest quality Senior Cat food you can afford.** Premium foods are much more digestible and result in a healthier pet and less stools in the litter box. In addition, they can add up to 2 years to your cat's life. Always choose an AAFCO approved adult diet. **We recommend and sell Royal Canin brand foods because we feel they provide the best and most scientifically advanced nutrition available.**

● While you pet your cat daily, observe closely for any abnormalities, lumps, rashes, growths, fleas, etc. Cats should be brushed daily to decrease hairball accumulation in the cat's stomach.

● **Use a pet toothpaste twice weekly** to aid in the prevention of dental disease. Examine the teeth regularly for the possible need for dental cleaning. Also, feeding CET Dental Treats once or twice daily also reduce plaque and tartar buildup. **Ask us about these products - they really work!** Tartar on teeth leads to kidney, liver, and heart valve infections, as well as loose, painful teeth. **Experts estimate that keeping your cat's teeth clean can add 2-4 years to his or her life!**



● Have the cat's teeth cleaned when tartar begins to build up, or you detect bad breath or red gum lines. Pay particular attention to the "back teeth," where it often begins.

● Change the litter box daily. Completely dump litter box contents weekly.

● **NEVER** give Tylenol™ to a cat.

● **Prevent obesity** in your cat by monitoring their weight every 3 months. If you think your cat is gaining weight, decrease his/her food amount by 10-20% and let your veterinarian know about the change in weight.

● Don't hesitate to ask our advice. We are here to help your cat live a long, healthy life. Preventative health care is much more than just vaccination!