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BEHAVIOUR ISSUES AND COMMON ILLNESSES OF THE CAT

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ARRIVAL OF A NEW FOSTER

- Isolation
- Examination
- Diet
- Vaccination
- Parasite control
- Weigh on arrival
- Weigh regularly

Isolation

- Incubation periods vs Shedding
- Ideal to isolate new cats from current fosters in an easy to clean room for at least 7-14 days
- Your new foster's immune system may be fighting off illnesses that it is shedding but not showing symptoms of
- Fomites are objects that can carry disease– your clothing and shoes, cleaning equipment, bedding
- Disinfect everything coming out of the room
- Clean bowls, trays and bedding with F10 – don't forget the scrub brush you have used to clean litter trays
- Mop and spray walls with F10 every few days

Best use of F10



- Dilute F10 with water: 1ml F10 to 250ml of water for Ringworm, Flu, Bacterial, Coccidia
- Dilute F10 with water: 1ml F10 to 1:100ml for Parvo and Giardia
- Spray and leave to soak for 10 minutes
- Liquid can use as spray, in mop, in washing machine
- Soak cleaning equipment in fresh F10 after use
- F10 Shampoo – ideal for ringworm
- F10 Hand-cream – disinfect and moisturize
- F10 Foggers are available for carpeted rooms if your foster has an illness in them
-

Examination of your Foster

- Look over your foster:
 - What is their coat like?
 - Patchy? Rough? Any hair missing?



- Any signs of wounds?
- Body condition?
- Eating/Drinking/Toileting normally?
- What is their breath like?
- Are they scratching or over grooming?
- Book them in for a health check if not already done or if showing any of the signs above

Diet of your Foster

- Best to keep your foster on the previous diet for the first few days to encourage them to continue eating
- Then slow transition over 7-10 days
- Ideally any diet change would occur with a slow transition
- In some cases not possible, instead try to only offer one protein option at a time. Avoid offering a buffet of options
- Diarrhoea and vomiting are common reaction to diet change as cat's stomachs very sensitive. Can then cloud symptoms – does cat have diarrhea because of diet or because of illness?
- Chicken is a simple, basic protein that is easy to digest
- Avoid raw diets – common causes of Salmonella and bacterial infections in cats. If you are going to give raw meats make sure they are fresh

Parasite Control Of Your Foster

- Apply on arrival into care
- Monthly applications – available for free from Neko HQ
- Recommend product is Advocate/Moxiclear for 12 weeks old and above as it covers:
 - Fleas all life-stage except pupae
 - Heartworm
 - Intestinal worms including larvae
 - Lungworm
 - Mites
 - Need to give an oral tapeworm treatment every 3 months – first dose worth giving an all intestinal wormer tablet

Additional Considerations

- Cat Carriers - Major source of disease spread.
 - After each use:
 - Change the bedding (wash bedding or throw out)
 - Wipe out any fomites (hair, dirt, faeces, food, etc)
 - F10 soak
- When transporting cats in a car:
 - Cover each carrier with its own towel to prevent aerosol spread
 - Disinfect your hands after touching each cat
 - Spray the car after transport



Dental Care for Cats

Dental disease or Periodontal disease is very common in both cats and dogs because, unlike us, they don't brush their teeth!

It is the formation of plaque and bacteria on the teeth causing inflammation of the gums (gingivitis). As dental disease progresses the gums separate from the teeth and pockets to the roots of the teeth form allowing access for bacteria to create tooth root abscesses and teeth eventually rot and fall out.

Untreated dental disease is very painful and dangerous to your pet's health as it can cause secondary chest infections and permanently damage the liver and kidneys shortening their life span.

Owners can prevent dental disease by:

- Brushing their pet's teeth – speak to your vet about the correct products and technique (always use a pet specific tooth paste as human ones are not good for them)
- Ensure they are chewing every day by:
 - Feeding them a dental friendly diet – these have bigger size kibble
 - Giving dental treats like greenies
 - Giving RAW chicken necks or wings a couple of times a week – these are tasty and chewie (win/win)
- Adding Plaque Off to their diets. This is a powder that helps prevent new tartar binding to their teeth.

Pets already suffering from dental disease may need a dental procedure to clean all the tartar from their teeth and remove any damaged teeth.

Most Vet clinics offer FREE dental check-ups and we strongly recommend taking advantage of these every three months as they can assess your pet's teeth and help tailor a dental regime purrfect for you and your pet.



Maneki Neko Flea and Worming Protocol

Kittens

Frontline spray can be applied from 2 days of age and should be applied every 2 weeks when washing your kitten more than twice a week

When your kitten does not required regular baths apply Frontline spray every 4 weeks

All wormer paste should be given orally every 2 weeks from 3-4 weeks of age (Kittens are born with worms so it's important to treat from this young age)

From 6 weeks can use all-wormer tablets (will only need a ¼ of a tablet each)

Once 12 weeks of age can switch to worming every 4 weeks

Adults and young cats 12 weeks old plus

Advocate/Moxiclear is a nearly all in one flea and intestinal worming product. Should be applied once every month – ideally done on the same date each month to help keep track of when due

A tapeworm tablet should be given every 3 months in conjunction with Adovate/Moxiclear

Parasite control can be picked up from Neko HQ during open hours



Litter tray tips

Litter Trays

- Provide one litter tray for each cat in the house, plus one additional.
- Trays should be in different locations around the house to provide multiple and easy access points. In multilevel houses with multiple cats, litter trays should be offered on each floor level. Remember that no one likes walking too far to the toilet.
- Trays should be easily accessible, especially for young kittens, physically disabled cats, and elderly cats. Avoid using high sided trays for these cats.
- Avoid placing trays in high traffic zones or very remote locations.
- Most cats prefer uncovered trays as they like to have more than one exit.
- Trays should be large enough for the cat to comfortably move around in, at least 1.5 times the length of the cat.
- For larger cats consider getting a plastic storage container to use as a litter box, if commercially available litter trays are too small.
- Since plastic can absorb and retain odour over time, litter trays should be replaced annually.
- Do not bother a cat when it is toileting as this may create an aversion to the litter tray.

Litter

- Most cats prefer unscented, clumping (fine, sand-like clay) litter.
- Offer enough litter so that the cat can dig/cover adequately (at least an inch in depth) but not so deep that they sink or slide around.
- Plastic litter liners may be aversive to some cats.
- Some cats have unusual litter preferences. To test a specific cat's preference, a variety of litters can be offered simultaneously and the preferentially used litter retained.

Cleaning

- Most cats prefer a pristine litter tray (who wants to be standing in faeces?)
- Trays should be scooped at least once daily.
- A tray should be completely emptied and washed regularly. This may vary from weekly to monthly depending upon the litter type, cat's hygiene standards, and tray usage.
- Avoid using harsh chemicals when cleaning as these may repel the cats from the tray. If a tray needs extensive soaking/chemical treatments to clear the odour, then it is time to purchase a new tray.



Cat Spraying and Elimination Problems

Urinating and defecating inside the house, outside of the litter tray, is called inappropriate toileting or inappropriate urination/elimination. It is a common problem seen in cats but can usually be solved by resolving the cause.

Causes of inappropriate toileting can usually be traced to a medical, behavioural or ergonomic problem.

Medical Causes

Many medical diseases can cause a cat to lose its normal fastidious toileting habits, so a veterinary consultation is required to differentiate these problems from behavioural problems. Medical causes should always be ruled out first as there can be serious complications of some illnesses if left untreated.

This involves a physical examination, often urine or faeces tests, and sometimes blood tests and x-rays.

Common illnesses that can cause inappropriate toileting:

- Urinary Tract Infections, stones and blocking bladders - early symptoms include urinating small amounts more frequently or in different areas of your house.
- Kidney and thyroid disease or diabetes – early symptoms include increased thirst which leads to increased urination.
- Arthritis – may make getting into and out of the litter tray more difficult.

Behavioural Causes

Cats are highly emotional animals and when stressed can often spray or defecate in response to the cause of the stress.

Causes of stress in cats include:

- Presence of another cat outside of the house – cats may spray to 'mark' their territory
- Presence of another cat inside the house – competitive spraying, or tray guarding leading to toileting in another area if no other trays available.
- Separation anxiety – when left for long periods of time, can result in the cat eliminating on your personal items.
- Stress or anxiety due to changes in the household – cat either no longer feels comfortable moving around the house or toilets on the cause of its stress. (e.g. urinating on new household members belongings)

Some causes of stress may not be able to be removed. In these situations, medication and calming pheromones such as Feliway may be required to help manage your cat's anxiety.

Ergonomics

The litter tray can often be the cause of many toileting issues. Cats can be very particular about what they will deem as appropriate to use. Factors that will influence a cat's decision to use the tray are:

- Shape and size of the tray – older cats may not be able to climb into high sided trays, while others do not feel safe toileting in a covered tray when it only has one exit.
- Type of litter – cats are particular, a sudden change in litter type can cause much confusion. If you decide to make a change, try a slow transition of slowly mixing in the new litter with the old.



- Depth of litter – while they want enough litter to cover their eliminations, cats do not like walking in thick layers of litter.
- Location of the litter tray – like us, cats do not want to walk for ages to get to the tray. Ensure for multi-storey houses there is at least one tray on each level and the distance to walk to the tray is not too great. Cats like us, also crave privacy so place trays in low traffic areas such as the laundry and less used rooms, or even behind a barrier of some kind.
- Number of trays – cats have been found to prefer to use different trays for urinating and defecating. They also don't like sharing a freshly used litter tray. To calculate the number of trays your household needs: Litter trays = number of cats + 1.
- How often it is cleaned – cats prefer to use a clean litter tray, if the trays are not cleaned often enough they will seek alternate options.

Adding in extra litter trays around your house, addressing what type of litter you are using and cleaning the trays at least once a day will often sort out most ergonomic problems. Just make sure you clean the areas they have toileted in well to remove the smell which may draw them back to toilet there again.

Retraining your cat to use the litter tray

Once you have sorted out the cause of the inappropriate toileting and rectified the problem you may need to retrain your cat to use the tray.

Ways to retrain your cat:

- Cats do not like to toilet near their bed or food. Confine them to a small room/laundry, with the litter tray, bed, water bowl and food bowl in each corner. They will generally choose to use the tray over the other areas, provided the tray is cleaned regularly. Confinement of one night while you clean the rest of the house is often enough but longer may be required. A slow reintroduction to the house may be required with any doors to other rooms being kept closed.
- If the cat continues to toilet in the same spot even after cleaning with an odour neutralizer try decreasing the attractiveness of that spot by feeding them their or moving their water bowl to that spot. Alternatively place a litter tray in the spot. Once they are using it, move the tray five centimetres a day in the direction you want to move the tray to.
- Following on from the above point determine why that spot is appealing and how you can make the place you want the tray to be have those similar aspects.

If you are struggling with retraining or certain aspects of your house makes it hard to confine your cat, boarding your cat in a cattery for a few days is a viable option.



Cat flu - Did you know cats can catch a cold just like humans?

'Cat flu' refers to upper respiratory tract infections, most of which are caused by one of two viruses - feline herpes virus and feline calicivirus.

What are the signs of cat flu?

- Sneezing and snuffling are common signs caused by inflammation in the nasal cavity and sinuses
- Conjunctivitis results in eye discharges
- Mouth ulcers and coughing may occur
- Viral infection is often accompanied by fever, resulting in listlessness and reluctance to eat, especially if they can't smell their food due to build-up of discharge in the upper respiratory tract
- Some cats become dehydrated

The severity and length of the clinical signs depends on the cat's immune system, so that young kittens, older debilitated cats, and unvaccinated cats are most severely affected

How is cat flu diagnosed?

Cat flu is diagnosed on the basis of clinical signs. If required, the virus can be identified by sending a swab of discharge or tears to the laboratory.

How is cat flu treated?

Since cat flu is caused by viruses, there are no treatments that will kill the virus (except for an antiviral drop for eye ulceration).

Antibiotics are used if secondary bacterial infections are present (or suspected), and supportive therapy includes drugs to stimulate appetite, decongestants, multivitamins, and fluids to prevent or treat dehydration.

In most cases, cats get better over the course of a couple of days as the cat's immune system overcomes the virus.

How can I help my cat with cat flu?

The most important aspect of treatment is to avoid your cat or kitten from becoming dehydrated.

It is essential that you remove eye and nose discharges with moistened tissues, and encourage your cat to eat by offering highly flavoured foods.

Warming your cat's food in the microwave or even offering very smelly foods such as warmed sardines may aid in stimulating your cat's appetite.

You can aid nasal decongestion by placing your cat in a steamy environment, such as a small bathroom with the hot tap turned on, or by using a steamer available from chemists.

Some very sick kittens or cats may even require hospitalisation and intravenous fluid therapy (i.e a drip).

What is a 'chronic snuffler'?

These are cats with chronic persistent signs (ie. nasal discharge and sneezing) and they often require management for years.

After a bout of cat flu, many cats become virus carriers who shed virus either continuously or intermittently when they are stressed (eg a change of environment, a new pet in the household or boarding).



New studies show adding Probiotics (specifically for cats, avoid the human brands) can improve not just digestive health but respiratory health and reduce chest infections in chronic cat flu cats.

How can I prevent cat flu?

Vaccination from an early age is recommended to build up antibodies to prevent infection.

Vaccination needs to be continued yearly throughout your cat's life. It is not a guarantee against infection, but will limit its severity and the length of illness.

If your cat has had cat flu, do not allow him to come into contact with unvaccinated cats or kittens, since it is likely he is a virus carrier and may be shedding virus, putting the new cat or kitten at risk.

Maneki Neko Vaccination Protocol:

Kittens

- 4 weeks old
- 8 weeks old
- 12 weeks old
- 16 weeks old

Adults

If vaccination history unknown

- First vaccination the week arrives into care with MNCR
- Booster one month later
- Then annually

If vaccination history known

- Annual booster



Common Illnesses in Rescue Cats

Why Are we Here?

The majority of cats we rescue come to us via pounds

Pounds are breeding grounds for disease because:

- Stressed cats (trapped, confined in small spaces, lots of other cats)
- Often un or under vaccinated prior to arrival
- Come from different areas/colonies in the council area
- Each cat entering the pound may be a carrier for a different disease
- Volunteers or under trained staff may not be following best practice disinfection protocols
- Incubation periods mean most cats won't show signs of ill health until 10-14 days after contracting the illness BUT have been shedding the disease

Common Diseases seen in Victoria

- | | |
|--|--------------------|
| • Rhinotracheitis/ Feline Herpes Virus | • Ringworm |
| • Calicivirus | • Fleas |
| • Chlamydia | • Intestinal worms |
| • Parvovirus | • Coccidia |
| • FIV | • Giardia |
| • FeLV | |



RHINOTRACHEITIS / FELINE HERPES VIRUS

Symptoms

- Cat Flu Virus causing inflammation of the respiratory tract
- Sneezing & Nasal and eye discharge - can cause scaring
- Congestion of mucous
- Anorexic due to blocked nose
- Mild fever
- May lead to pneumonia in severe cases or kittens

How it spreads

- Shed in secretions
 - Saliva
 - Eye and nasal secretions
- Direct contact
 - With cat
 - With sneezes
 - On fomites
- Incubation period 3– 7 days
- Will shed for 1-3 weeks post infection

Diagnosis

- Vet check recommended
- Diagnosed via symptoms
- Blood tests are available but not often required

Treatment

- Depends on age and severity of symptoms
- May require antibiotics to prevent secondary infections
- Clean eye and nasal discharge
- Steaming/vapourisers for congestion
- Strong smelling foods
- Ensure don't get dehydrated
- Warmth and rest

Considerations

- Herpes staying in the system for life
- Can become symptomatic during periods of stress
- Can shed during these periods
- Scaring of the tear ducts can lead to ongoing tear duct problems
- F10 everything and isolate where possible
- F3 vaccination



CALICIVIRUS

Symptoms

- Virus affecting the upper respiratory tract
- Pyrexia (fever)
- Mouth ulcers
- Joint pain from inflammation
- Nasal and eye swelling and discharge
- Hair loss
- Anorexia
- Pneumonia

How it spreads

- Air transmission
- Sneezing releases the virus into the air
- Highly contagious
- Incubation 2-14 days
- Shedding for up to a month

Diagnosis

- Vet check recommended
- Diagnosed via symptoms
- Blood tests are available but not often required

Treatment

- Antibiotics and pain relief/anti-inflammatory
- Eye ointments
- Severe cases may require hospitalization on fluids
- Supplement feeding/Syringe feeding
- Warmth and rest
- Clean eye and nasal discharge regularly
- Usually very sick for 5-7 days then recovers over another week

Considerations

- Calicivirus can be deadly
- Usually only in kittens
- But some recent strains will kill healthy adults too
- Seek treatment asap
- First symptoms in kittens appear like they have injured their leg
- Keep in an eye to clean environment
- F10 everything and isolate
- F3 vaccinations



CHLAMYDIA

Symptoms

- Bacterial infection
- Eye swelling and discharge
- Often extremely painful with eyes swelling shut
- Nasal discharge and sneezing
- Low grade fever

How it spreads

- Conjunctival and nasal discharge
- Air born and fomites, but does not survive in the environment long
- Kittens can become infected during birth
- 5-10 incubation period
- Can be shedding for up to 60 days (sometimes longer)

Diagnosis

- Vet check recommended
- Diagnosed via symptoms
- Blood tests are available but not often required
- Can appear to be Herpes or Calici

Treatment

- Oral antibiotics and eye ointment
- Pain relief/Anti-inflammatories
- Clean eyes 4-6 times a days
- Ensure they are eating

Considerations

- Can take some time to clear despite being bacterial
- Expect resentment!



PARVOVIRUS

Symptoms

- Diarrhoea, vomiting as the gut lining is damaged
- Lethargy, Anorexia
- Pyrexia then a sudden temperature drop
- Severe low levels of white blood cells
- Death

How it spreads

- Shed in faeces and urine
- Can survive in the environment for many months
- Ingested from drinking/eating off infected surfaces and from grooming
- Incubation 2-5 days
- Shedding for a couple of days up to 6 weeks

Diagnosis

- If you suspect your cat may have parvo get them straight to the vet, along with any cats they have been in contact with
- Warn the clinic that you are concerned about parvo
- Diagnosed via a faecal snap test in clinic (same one used for dogs)

Treatment

- Treatment depends on stage of illness
- Fluid therapy § Pain relief/anti-inflammatories
- Antibiotics
- Supplement feeding
- Euthanasia if temperature drops below normal

Considerations

- Disinfect everything with F10, multi-cleans daily for at least 3 days – long survival in environment (6 months+ if not disinfected properly)
- Have all remaining cats/kittens in house tested and vaccinated
- Avoid fostering new cats until everyone has been symptom free for more than three months
- When start fostering again foster vaccinated adults



FELINE IMMUNODEFICIENCY VIRUS

Symptoms

- Retrovirus that attacks white blood cells
- Weight loss, recurrent fevers, lethargy
- Prolonged healing
- Enlarged lymph nodes
- Gingivitis/Stomatitis
- Chronic/reoccurring respiratory, ocular, intestinal disease
- Chronic skin disease
- Neurological disease

How it spreads

- Virus is shed in the saliva ongoing
- Saliva to blood contact (bite)
- Can take years for symptoms to appear
- Does not last long in the environment

Diagnosis

- Blood test
- In clinic snap test checks for immune response to virus – this can have false positives if vaccinated
- PCR blood test – sent to the lab, checks for the presence of the actual virus but expensive

Treatment

- No cure
- Symptomatic treatment only
- Keep indoor only to reduce spread and risk of disease/injury
- Regular vet checks
- Good quality diet for dental, skin and intestinal care

Considerations

- Slow killer, but doesn't mean the cats cannot have a number of good years first
- Will likely require regular dental surgery
- FIV vaccination
- Indoor only and de-sexed cats are less likely to contract FIV



FELINE LEUKEMIA VIRUS

Symptoms

- Weight loss
- Anaemia
- Lymphoma (cancer in the lymph nodes)
- Disease secondary to poor immune response
- Death

How it spreads

- Saliva and nasal secretions
- Possibly blood and faecal transfer also
- *Infected water source
- Does not survive long in the environment
- Sheds while present in system

Diagnosis

- Blood Test
- In clinic snap test (will be positive if virus present)
- Send away test (will be positive if the virus has bonded with the cat's DNA – NON CURABLE)

Treatment

- The cat's immune system will try to fight the virus
- Possible to cure IF the immune system can rid itself of the virus prior to it binding to the cat's DNA
- Supportive care
- Indoor only to reduce risk of disease spread

Considerations

- Can vaccinate against
- Most cats won't show symptoms prior to the virus bonding with their DNA but can be shedding the virus



RINGWORM

Symptoms

- Fungal infection
- Appears as circular lesions +- hair loss
- Appears first on the thinnest parts of the skin around nose and ears
- A cat can be a carrier with no symptoms but spread it to others

How it spreads

- Fungal spores can be present anywhere:
- Hair/ Skin cells & Dirt/Surfaces
- Bedding/toys/carpets
- Contact with skin is all it needs to infect another
- Highly contagious between animals and humans!

Diagnosis

- Vet visit to confirm ringworm
- Two types of Ringworm
- One fluorescence under a blue light
- The other diagnosed via a fungassay

Treatment

- Oral tablets or topical cream usually prescribed (aids the body to fight the fungal infection)
- Bath twice weekly in Malaseb or F10 shampoo (stops the spores being released by the fungi and removes current spores from their coats)

Considerations

- Keep isolated in an easy to clean room
- Avoid carpet
- Prefer bathroom/laundry
- Metal crates
- Disinfect with F10 anywhere the kittens have been, any items used
- Wear PPE when handling





PARASITES – FLEAS



Life cycle

- Ectoparasite
- Adults live and feed on host (species specific)
- Lay eggs which fall off into environment
- Hatch into larvae that feed on the skin cells and faeces of adult fleas
- Pupae stage form a cocoon around self that is bomb and chemical proof
- Hatch as adults in the presence of warmth and vibrations

Symptoms

- Adults only make up 5% of the population and fast moving so not always visible
- Scabbing often present where cat scratches themselves
- Thinning coats
- Flea allergy dermatitis

How they spread

- Fleas can jump from host to host
- Eggs and pupae live in environment until host activates them

Diagnosis

- If you cannot see adult fleas but suspect fleas:
 - Comb the coat
 - Put any dirt looking particles onto white paper
 - Place a drop of water onto the dirt
 - If it turns red it is flea faeces

Treatment

- Prevention is the best treatment
- Treat on arrival then monthly ongoing
- Make sure you select a product that kills adults, larvae and stops the eggs hatch
- Ongoing treatment required as no products will penetrate the pupae shell

Considerations

- Eggs and pupae can get deep into carpets and furniture
- Can survive in these places plus in soil for months
- To help remove from carpets stomp around prior to vacuuming – warmth and vibrations cause the eggs and pupae to hatch and rise up seeking a host
- While fleas have preferences in species will be opportunist in hosts
- Wildlife, cats, dogs, rabbits



PARASITES – INTESTINAL WORMS

Common types and how they spread

- Tapeworm – infect host when they groom and consume fleas, infected meat, faecal oral
- Roundworm – faecal oral, invitro, in mother's milk, infected meat
- Hookworm – faecal oral
- Whipworm – faecal oral

Life cycle

- Adults live in the digestive tract, feeding from the intestinal wall (drinking the cats blood)
- Larvae travel in the blood stream meaning they can end up in the eyes, brain, lungs, muscles, anywhere
- Fleas can ingest tapeworm from the cat's blood and host it
- Eggs passed in faeces often survive in the environment for months

Symptoms

- Symptoms not always visible – especial in low burdens in healthy adults
- Weight Loss & Diarrhoea/Vomiting
- Failure to thrive
- Swollen belly but gaunt elsewhere
- Irritation of the anus
- Anaemia
- Coughing
- Neuro signs or changes in sight

Diagnosis

- Adult worms may appear in vomit or faeces when high level of burden or after treatment
- Eggs are tiny, can be seen under the microscope (faecal float test)

Treatment

- Oral or topical treatments
- Kittens 4-12 weeks every 2 weeks
- 12 weeks – 24 weeks every month
- 6 months plus every 3 months after initial 2 treatments

Considerations

- After treatment adult worms will be defaecated out while still alive
- Oral worming treatment often only kills adults
- Advocate kills larvae as well
- Spread between species
- Can be zoonotic



COCCIDIA

Diagnosis

- Faecal analysis – faecal float in clinic
- Because doesn't shed in every stool a pooled sample is best for accurate testing

Treatment

- Baycox – once daily for 3 days
- Possible to reinfect during treatment

Considerations

- F10 EVERYTHING twice daily, including the brushes used to clean the trays
- Ideally bath to remove any faecal matter off the body
- Most colonies are infected with coccidia, adults not showing symptoms but shedding
- Can kill kittens
- Spreads between species
- Zoonotic



GIARDIA

Diagnosis

- Faecal analysis – at the lab or snap test in clinic

Treatment

- Fenbendazole (Panacur)
- Metronidazole if symptomatic
- F10 environment
- Hills ID or Hills Biome diet to help with nutrient absorption

Considerations

- Symptoms can persist post treatment long term due to damage to the bowel wall lining
- Can be spread interspecies and zoonotic
- Boiling water and cooking food properly prevent spread
- F10 to disinfect the environment and cleaning equipment
- Probiotics and an easy to digest diet are recommended

Also see specific document about GIARDIA in the file section



TOXOPLASMOSIS

Toxoplasmosis Facts

“Toxoplasma gondii is common, worldwide and everywhere and affects a variety of mammals and birds”
– Companion Animal Parasite Council

- Leading cause of toxoplasmosis in humans is through ingestion of undercooked meat. – CDC
- Direct contact with cats is not considered to be a risk factor for toxoplasma infection in people, particularly when cats are kept indoors and fed a commercial diet. – CAPC
- Toxoplasmosis is transmitted to humans from cats when humans accidentally swallow the parasite through contact with cat faeces that contain Toxoplasma. – CDC
- Toxoplasmosis can be prevented if the following are done: clean the litterbox daily (the parasite takes 24 hours to become infective in cat faeces), wash hands with soap and water after exposure to soil, sand, raw meat or unwashed vegetables, and ensure cats are kept indoors and eat only cat food. – CAPC
- Only about 1% of cats are active hosts of toxoplasmosis able to shed the parasite. – CAPC
- Infected cats shed for only about 1 to 3 weeks following infection. – CAPC
- Because cats only shed the organism for a few days in their entire life, the chance of human exposure is small. – CFHC
- Cats and dogs become infected with toxoplasma by ingestion of infected mammalian or avian tissues or ingestion of the parasite from articles contaminated by feline faeces (e.g., soil, water, vegetation). – CAPC
- About 19% (~60 million) of the human population in the United States has already been exposed to (may be infected with) Toxoplasma. Of those who are infected, very few have symptoms because a healthy person's immune system usually keeps the parasite from causing illness. – CDC
- A 2013 study by VanWormer, et al. showed reduced prevalence of toxoplasmosis in cats who were fed and considered managed by humans as compared to wild felids and cats subsisting on wild prey.

Solutions to Consider

- Keep cats indoors and prevent them from hunting and consuming undercooked meat, encourage cat owners to scoop litterboxes daily.
- Support sterilization to reduce kitten births, since kittens and young cats are at greatest risk to become newly infected and shed the parasite.
- Advocate for wildlife officials, conservationists, animal welfare advocates and veterinarians to work together to solve problems using the latest science combined with humane methods.

Resources/ References

- Companion Animal Parasite Council (CAPC) – www.capcvet.org
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) – www.cdc.gov
- Cornell Feline Health Center (CFHC) – www.vet.cornell.edu/fhc/
- VanWormer, E., P.A. Conrad, et al. (2013). “Toxoplasma gondii, Source to Sea: Higher Contribution of Domestic Felids to Terrestrial Parasite Loading Despite Lower Infection Prevalence.” *EcoHealth* 10, 277-289