



## Kitten School part 2

Congratulations on completing your kitten's vaccine series!  
You've taken an important step in protecting their health.  
Here are some other important ways to help your  
kitten live a happy and healthy life.

### PARASITE PROTECTION

Your kitten should continue receiving heartworm and intestinal parasite protection every month. Because these parasites can't be seen, they can cause significant damage inside your pet's body before symptoms develop.

There are chewable and topical options to control internal parasites. Our VetWell Care Team can help you find the best long-term option for your pet!

Tapeworms look like small grains of rice on the cat's poop. These worms are transmitted by fleas that are swallowed during grooming. Prevention for fleas & tapeworms can help keep your kitten healthy.

We also recommend year-round flea and tick protection for all cats that go outside. Indoor cats should be on flea prevention if there are other pets (dogs) that go inside & outside. Fleas & ticks affect pets and their people, causing skin irritation and transmitting serious bacterial infections.

### DENTAL CARE

Has your kitten been biting on everything lately? This is a common behavior when kitten teeth fall out and adult teeth come in, usually between 4-5 months of age. Have plenty of chew toys available in different textures, and prevent boredom through physical activity & social interaction.

These new adult teeth are sparkly and clean. Start dental protection for your kitten now, before infection, inflammation, and pain develop.

At-home dental care needs to be done every day!

Brushing is best, but there are many other options if you can't brush your cat's teeth every day. Find the list of effective dental protection options at [VOHC.org](http://VOHC.org). Choose the products that work best for your family, and make protecting your cat's smile an easy part of your daily routine.





## SPAY & NEUTER SURGERY

These surgeries prevent pregnancy AND decrease the risks of certain infections and cancers in cats. Cats can also have significant behavioral benefits from these surgeries. This will help cats live longer, happier lives.

### Female cats- “Spay” surgery

- Removes: uterus, ovaries
- Prevents: pregnancy, uterine infection
- Reduces risk: mammary (breast) cancer, aggression, anxiety

### Male cats- “Neuter” surgery

- Removes: testicles
- Prevents: pregnancy, testicular cancer
- Reduces risk: prostate enlargement, urine marking, roaming, aggression, anxiety

After spaying or neutering, cats don't typically show changes in their relationship with people in the household.

It is easier for pets to gain weight after surgery, so it is important to measure their feeding amounts and monitor their weight & body condition monthly.

In the RGV, there are more animals than loving pet homes. Animals that don't have caretakers can end up as strays or in shelters. Spaying & neutering decreases unwanted animals, so pets are more likely to find a family.

## SOCIALIZATION

This is an important time for your kitten to learn more about the wider world. Kittens should be exposed to new people, places, pets, and objects to learn about them & feel safe. Never force your kitten to approach or be approached by anything. Reward your kitten early & often with praise, toys, or treats for trying new things. Monitor your pet's body language throughout all socialization activities.

Cats should be calmly exposed to:

- Adults
- Children
- Other pets
- Objects that move
- Objects that make noise
- Car rides in a carrier
- Sounds (thunder, fireworks, mower)
- Places (vet clinic, friend's house)

Carrier training is the most important way to help your kitten avoid stress. Pick the right carrier, and leave it out for daily interaction with the door open. Have comfortable bedding and treats inside.

A cat that's comfortable in a carrier will be less stressed for medical care, travelling, or moving. For more information, visit:

<https://catfriendly.com/be-a-cat-friendly-caregiver/getting-cat-veterinarian/>