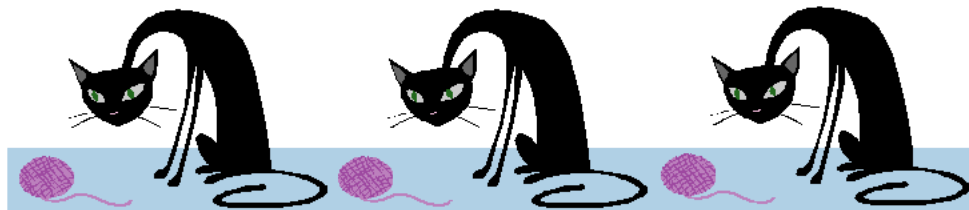


FELINE TIDBITS



FOOD that you feed your cat can affect her health as well. Read the labels on her food just like you should be doing with your own food. If fillers like corn or wheat are close to the top of the ingredient list, your cat may not be getting the nutrition required. Cats need high-protein diets such as meat, poultry and fish. These should optimally be listed as the first ingredients. Specialty pet food stores and health food stores offer many varieties of high-quality foods.

VOMITING -If a cat is vomiting then you will notice her body contracting. If she is regurgitating, there won't be any contracting, and the food will come up effortlessly.

SOCIALIZATION -Kittens are part of a litter. Many think that the longer a kitten stays with her littermates, the more tolerant she will be of other cats. There are, of course, exceptions. Arrange for the kitten to meet plenty of people; this will socialize your cat and it will probably not hide when an adult.

GROOMING - Both long- and short-haired cats need to be groomed regularly. For long-haired cats brushing will prevent mats that could eventually tear their skin. All cats benefit from being groomed because it removes excess hair that otherwise causes hairballs. Some cats groom themselves excessively. Sometimes these cats are bored, perhaps because they receive little human or feline interaction. These cats suck obsessively at their fur, some even going so far as to mutilate themselves. Often too, the cause can be allergies. On the other hand, a sick cat may groom less frequently or stop grooming altogether. Consult your veterinarian with any concerns you may have.

GREENS - To meet your cat's need for greenery, grow her a box of oats or wheat grass of her very own. This may prevent her from chewing on houseplants which isn't very good for the plants and it is a healthy alternative to eating grass outdoors which may be treated with pesticide or infested with parasite eggs.

MICE - Many cats love to catch mice. It is NOT a good idea not to let them eat them because of disease. The same goes for birds. This behavior is considered a sport to cats.



ALL KITTENS ARE NOT EQUAL - Not all kittens are born healthy. Some have a visible disease or problem while others do not show any signs or symptoms till it may be too late. For this reason, it is very important to have your new kitten or cat checked by a licensed veterinarian after you acquire her

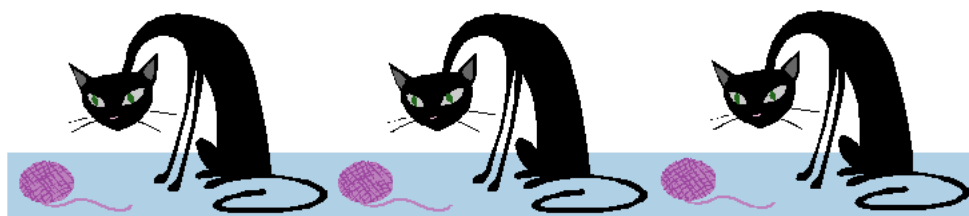
Kittens learn to kill and eat prey by practicing on live victims provided by their mother. Their habit of seemingly playing with their prey before administering the kill is related to the high level of arousal brought about by the thrill of the hunt. Because cats are attracted by motion, prey that tries to escape may motivate a cat to continue stalking and pouncing until it tires of the game or becomes stimulated enough to deliver the killer bite. When the prey is finally dead, the cat may be so excited it continues playing with its food. But not all cats carry through the hunting behavior to its logical conclusion. Hunting and killing are learned abilities. A kitten who doesn't learn these skills from his mother will have no idea how to kill a mouse or bird. Instead, attracted by the sound and movement, she play with the animal as she would with a toy. Cats who do learn hunting skills may need the stimulation of stalking and pouncing to trigger the killer instinct. Prey that is inactive may not elicit the fatal bite.

Even if your pet is not a mom-trained mouser, when you see your kitten or cat pouncing on a ball or chasing her tail, you are seeing prey chasing and catching behaviors in action.

Please keep your cat indoors for its own safety and longevity and provide a catnip mouse for enjoyment.

PLAYTIME - Playtime with your cat is important to the bond that you share with her. Some special time for petting and affection, along with time to play with special string toys or toy mice, will keep your feline friend happy and healthy. Exercise is very important to maintaining a healthy weight. Both male and female kittens can happily chase after a rolling object, however, males seem to engage more in "object play" than females do.

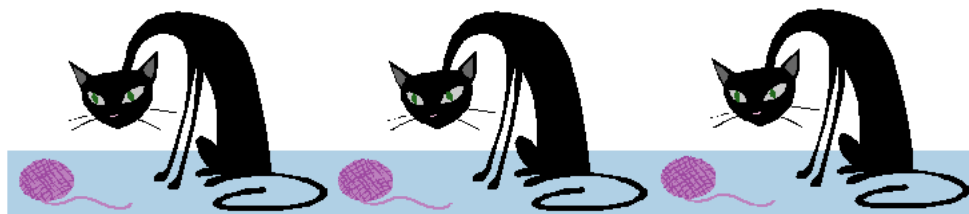
TAKING A CAT'S PULSE - It is fairly easy to take your cat's pulse. The best pulse can be found at the femoral artery. It is inside the thigh. The normal cat heart rate is anywhere from 120 to 240 beats per minute while at rest.



LOVE - Does your cat say I love you? When she wants to let you know she loves you she might nuzzle your face and touch your nose with hers. Or she might bring you a "present" that she has killed. Or she might just try to be with you wherever you are in the house. Your cat may do something else to say I love you. No matter what it is, you will understand and know the joy of loving and being loved by a cat. Most of all, make sure your cat knows you love her and have patience with her. She still needs a lot of love and attention, even though she may seem to be the easiest pet you've ever owned.

HANDLING - From kittenhood, accustom your cat to being handled. Look into its ears (clean, white and light pink), eyes (clear, no runniness, inner eyelids may blink but should remain open), nose (clean and pink, or its normal color) and mouth (clean, light pink gums) regularly. Hold it still and look at its anus; pick up its paws and look at the pads and claws. This will have the added benefit that you will notice any changes from normal quickly and be able to call up your vet if something is wrong.

PURRING - Researchers have discovered that PURRING originates in the brain. Purring is one of the most special elements of a cat, as far as humans are concerned. Caressing a purring pet has proven relaxing, and can lowers blood pressure. A purring cat or kitten is sure to bring a smile to the face of any person, and cats have made a real difference in the lives of those in nursing homes and other institutional settings, just by being cats. (But careful observers of the cat know that purring isn't just a sound of contentment. Cats also purr if they're injured, while giving birth, even when dying. Some researchers have observed that purring is "a sign of friendship" - either when the cat is contented with a friend or when it is in need of friendship, as with a cat in trouble.) Some liken a purr to the human smile. You smile when you're happy, to be sure, but you can also smile when you're nervous, or even when faced with a threat. In some situations, it's kind of a "Hi, I'm a nice person, don't hurt me" sign. And the same is true with purring. Kittens start purring even before they open their eyes, rumbling while nursing in what must be a reassuring sound to their mother, who is likely purring herself. Although the experts are clear on why cats purr, they're not yet certain as to how. There are many explanations sited for this behavior.



BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS - If your cat is having behavior problems, keep your expectations reasonable and talk with your veterinarian or a cat behaviorist to start a program to solve those problems. Almost all behavior problems can be solved if you are patient and seek the right assistance. Early intervention is best, even at kittenhood.

CATS AS ALARM CLOCKS - Despite the fact that cats are such experienced sleepers, they are as good as alarm clocks and sometimes worse. If you don't want your waking you up every day at four am to feed him, never respond to his pleas, not even once. Cats learn very quickly and once they realize they can get you out of bed by yowling or meowing, you're history. Teach your cat to let sleeping people lie! Sometimes an impossible task.

