

The Cat's Meow

Selkirk Veterinary Hospital

Facts For Feline Fanciers

The cat is a creature of habit, as anyone who has had the privilege of sharing their life with one or more of these fascinating, infuriating and beguiling creatures will be able to tell you. However, the cat is also a creature of paradox. Just when you think

you know its every thought and action, it confounds you with an uncharacteristic act. What is more, this behavior will, in all likelihood, be the exact opposite in nature to your feline's customary routine. The cat's curiosity is outstripped only by cunning

intelligence and the ability to doze at any time or in any place, no matter how unlikely a spot or uncomfortable a position. When it comes to stealth and agility, there is no creature able to challenge the cat!



Feline Facts Did you know?...

- Cats may drool when affectionate, excited, or under stress—for instance, on a visit to the veterinarian.
- Blue-eyed cats, especially white ones, are often deaf. Deaf cats should *always* be indoor cats
- The cat's tail is more than just a balancing pole. It is also a steering mechanism and a mood barometer.
- Cats are true carnivores and need the amino acid, taurine, arachidonic acid, and vitamin A supplied only from meat.
- Cats frequently live into their teens and can often live into their 20's: the oldest recorded cat was "Puss" who reached the grand age of 36 years according to *The Guinness Book of Records*.
- There are estimated to be 30-40 million cats in North America, about 4 million of them in Canada.
- If pregnant, you should use gloves while handling the litter box and wash your hands thoroughly afterwards. Pregnant women need to be aware of *toxoplasmosis*, a disease carried by cats that can cause birth defects. Your cat can be kept free of infection by feeding it only commercial food and keeping it indoors.

F In recent years we have all become more aware of nutrition, exercise and taking care of ourselves. We often forget, however, about our pets. Obesity is not cute! It is a potentially life threatening problem. These questions may indicate that your portly pussy-cat requires veterinary attention:

A I cannot easily feel the outline of each of my cat's ribs when I gently stroke his side and underbelly.

T I notice excess flesh on my cat's underside and beneath his back legs when he walks away from me.

C My cat stays indoors and / or gets limited exercise.

A If you answered yes to even one of these factors, your cat may be prone to obesity. Speak to your veterinarian about optimum feeding to reduce, and hopefully eliminate obesity. It is up to you to start making changes in the daily habits of your cat. It is hard to resist the eyes of a begging cat, but it's harder to learn that your beloved cat has developed liver disease.

Should You Insure Your Indoor Cat?

Indoor cats get sick too!

Just because Patches stays inside does not mean that she is immune to the variety of illnesses which attack cats, particularly if you have a multi-cat household. Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP) is a contagious disease that is spread

through direct contact or is passed to kittens in the womb. Stress can increase the rate of infections as can steroids, crowding, malnutrition and other infections like Feline Leukemia. Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease is another com-

mon illness in cats.

Accidental injuries are just that and can occur in the home as well as outdoors. Don't wait for a *cat-astrophe* to occur before considering the financial protection and peace of mind that pet insurance provides.