

YOUR NEW BABY KITTEN

How to help your cat survive kittenhood with all NINE LIVES still intact.

For all their energetic ways, kittens are fragile babies! The first weeks with their adoptive families are critical to their future health and well being.

- ❖ For the first week, the kitten needs a room of her own. Set her up with her litterbox, water bowl, bed, a dish for dry food, and a scratching post. Don't introduce her to other pets, yet. Visit her often, play and cuddle with her there, but let her get used to the sounds, smells, and rhythms of your household, from a secure place of her own. And, confinement makes it easy for you to be sure she's eating enough and using the litterbox.
- ❖ Free feed the kitten a high quality brand of kitten-formula dry food and offer canned food twice a day. We suggest Science Diet, since, unless we tell you otherwise, that's what she's used to eating. Don't leave more dry food out than she eats in 1 day. Keep up her appetite by feeding canned cat food twice a day...no more than she will clean up in 5 to 10 minutes. At this stage, she's growing so fast you *can't* feed her too much.
- ❖ Always supervise carefully when young children are with the kitten. Teach them how to handle the kitten and to play with her using toys rather than clothing, hands or feet. Gently clip the kitten's claws (just the tip--we, or the vet can show you how) to avoid scratches. Until the kitten is 4-5 months old and familiar with safe "hiding places" in the house, NEVER leave her alone with young children.
- ❖ Observe the incision from your own kitten's spay or neuter surgery for signs of redness, swelling, or seeping. For a few days following the operation, don't encourage her to jump, climb or wrestle. Familiarize yourself with the other "no-no's" mentioned in your kitten's post-operation instructions.

Make your appointment for your free wellness check-up with your vet for the end of your kitten's first week with you. You can discuss any concerns you have before introducing the kitten to the rest of the house, other pets, etc.

EXPANDING HER HORIZONS

When she's ready to explore the rest of the house, go slowly. Continue to use her room as her home base for awhile, until she's familiar with the lay of the land.

- ✓ Confine her to her room when you are away or can't supervise her.
- ✓ Give her some time each day to rest there alone, without other children or pets.
- ✓ Don't move all her things out to their permanent places in your home all at once. Make sure she can find things in their new locations – especially food, water, and litterbox.
- ✓ If your house is large or multi-storied, consider having a litterbox in various locations, so your kitten can find it quickly when "nature calls."
- ✓ Kitten proof your house! Put away anything that could be hung by, chewed up, or swallowed.

Remember, if you are wondering when to call your veterinarian, **CALL NOW.**