



Runnymede Hill Veterinary Hospital  
and Chobham Road Veterinary Centre



Here for you and your  
cat whenever you  
need us

## Whenever you need us

Sharing your life with any pet is both a joy and a privilege, and our aim at **Pets 1st**, is to help you keep your cat happy and healthy so that you can enjoy every minute of your time together.

We've put together this guide to answer any questions you may have on a range of common topics:

- Vaccinations
- Worming
- Fleas
- Insurance
- Diet and nutrition
- Dental care
- Microchipping
- Neutering

You might be interested to know that our **Pets 1st Health Club** includes all recommended routine preventative care for your cat and allows you to spread the cost through monthly direct debit payments and saves you money offering great value and complete peace of mind. *Please ask at reception for more details.*

In addition, of course we are always happy to discuss specific issues and make recommendations tailored to the needs of you and your cat. Please do feel free to speak with any of our team, at any time.

With best wishes from the Pets 1st team

*P.S. Did you know that we are accredited as a Cat Friendly Clinic, with gold status, by the International Society for Feline Medicine; recognising our commitment to ensuring that every aspect of our service is feline friendly?*



# Vaccinations



**We recommend routine vaccinations** in order to provide protection against four potentially fatal viruses:

- Feline Infectious Enteritis
- Two types of Cat Flu
- Feline Leukaemia Virus

Kittens can be vaccinated from 9 weeks of age, with a second injection given three to four weeks later. A booster injection every year then provides continued protection against these nasty, but all too common, diseases.

There is ongoing discussion as to whether the beneficial effects of vaccinations may last longer than one year. We use the very effective and safe vaccines containing only the necessary components each year to avoid over vaccination. Older cats can still succumb to these killer diseases

A full health assessment is carried out at the time of every vaccination, and this is always a good opportunity to examine your pet for any underlying problems - early diagnosis of any condition is generally the key to successful outcome!



# Worming

**Worms are very common parasites** that live in the intestines, and even the best cared for cats can pick them up.

*Kittens can obtain worms through their mothers' milk as well as whilst in the womb.*

Then, as predatory and naturally inquisitive animals, adult cats are exposed to all kinds of parasites on their travels. The most common are roundworms and tapeworms.

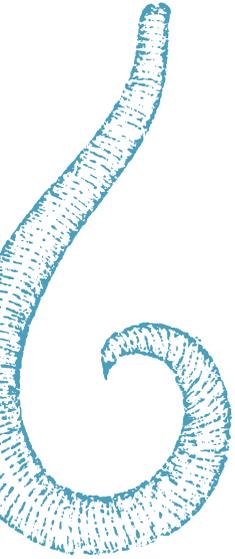
**Roundworms** These look like strings of spaghetti or elastic bands and may be picked up from the environment, as well as being passed from animal to animal. Roundworm eggs are almost invisible to the human eye, so infestation can be difficult to spot.

**Tapeworms** You may find segments of these worms excreted in your cat's faeces (they look like flattened grains of rice). Tapeworms cannot be passed directly from one animal to another; they rely on an intermediate host such as a passing flea. Therefore if you see tapeworm segments in your cat's faeces, you must treat for fleas also.

**Worms** reproduce prolifically (a female can produce 20,000 eggs every day) and therefore regular worming control is required in order prevent them causing a health risk to your pet, and to your family. Heavy worm infestations can result in:

- Vomiting and severe diarrhoea
- Loss of blood, weight and condition
- Weakened immune system
- Pneumonia

**a female worm can produce 20,000 eggs every day**



Tapeworm

The greatest threat to human health comes from the eggs of the roundworm *Toxocara*, which can easily be picked up by children not washing their hands before eating. Although serious consequences are rare, these worms can cause blindness, heart problems and epilepsy.

We recommend a highly effective **single dose tablet** to protect against roundworms and tapeworms.

Our recommended flea product is also extremely effective against roundworms, although you will still need to treat with a dual wormer at a reduced frequency for tapeworm.

**It's important to remember that no wormer will prevent re-infestation.**

Therefore, kittens should be **treated every two weeks until twelve weeks old**. Between twelve weeks and six months they should be wormed monthly. Thereafter, adult cats should normally be wormed every three months although if your cat catches mice and birds, we recommend monthly worming.

*Please ask if you are at all unsure about the best course of action and we can advise on an appropriate worming regime for your cat.*



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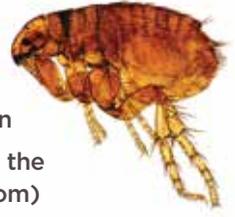
# Fleas

**Fleas are likely to play a part in every cat's life** at some time or other, no matter how clean your pet or your home is. They are present all year round and therefore regular treatment is essential, both of your cat and your home.



The signs of a flea problem are:

- Excessive scratching
- Small scabs and spots on the skin
- Small brown specks of flea dirt in the fur (particularly around the bottom)



Many pets become incredibly sensitive to fleabites, which can lead to intense itchiness, severe self-inflicted trauma, hair loss and skin infections. Fleas are also responsible for transmitting tapeworms and a severe infestation can lead to blood loss and anaemia.

Effective flea control may involve a three-pronged attack:

- 1 Killing the adult fleas.** Treat all the cats, dogs and rabbits in your house. We recommend a prescription-strength 'spot-on' treatment that lasts for up to one month, as we have found that many non-prescription preparations simply do not work.
- 2 Killing the immature fleas.** This step is very important - fleas develop in warm, dry places such as carpets, bedding and furniture. We recommend a household spray that protects your home for up to 12 months.
- 3 Stopping the eggs from hatching.** Treating your cat with a special tablet breaks the flea's life cycle by damaging any eggs present and preventing them from hatching.

Any of our team would be very happy to discuss all the options further with you, so that you can find a treatment regime that suits you and your cat.

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and anaemia**



## Insurance

**We all want the best for our pets,** especially when they are injured or sick. Advances in modern medicine allow us to treat more cases, more successfully, but the fact remains that excellent veterinary care is not cheap.



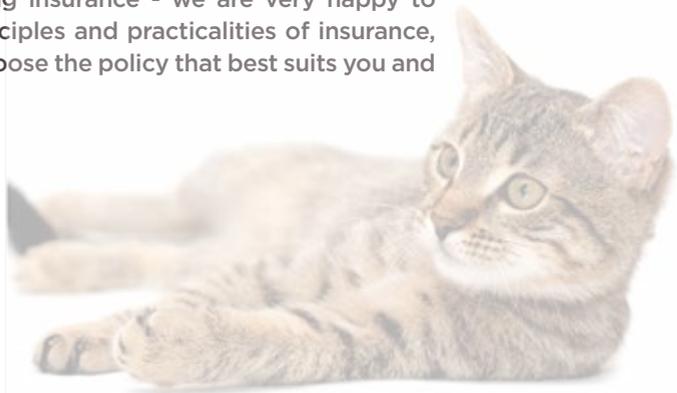
The costs of treatment can quickly mount up, and price is the last thing you want to have to worry about when your pet is seriously ill. Which is where pet insurance comes in.

**excellent veterinary care is not cheap**

There are three main types of insurance:

- 1 12-month / annual policies.** These policies cover a condition for 12 months from diagnosis; after that time the condition will be excluded. You should be aware that when conditions are diagnosed, even if no treatment is given, they are excluded from cover after 12 months.
- 2 Maximum benefit policies** (Individual Condition Cover). With this type of policy you can claim a maximum amount for each condition, without a time limit.
- 3 Lifelong cover.** The huge advantage of a lifelong policy is that common conditions such as arthritis, heart and kidney problems, and skin disease requiring long-term treatment are all covered. These policies are more expensive but offer the best peace of mind in safeguarding your pet.

Please be aware that our practice has no vested financial interest in recommending or selling insurance - we are very happy to advise on the general principles and practicalities of insurance, but ultimately you must choose the policy that best suits you and your pets.



## Diet and nutrition



**Poor nutrition contributes in some way to a remarkably high percentage of the health problems we see:** obesity, dental problems, growth deformities, heart, kidney and skin problems. Feeding your cat a diet that meets the changing nutritional needs of his / her body and lifestyle is crucial if developmental problems or health issues in later life are to be avoided.

There are a wide range of brands and food types available for your cat:

- **Homemade diets** - very rarely are these nutritionally balanced and/or complete. They also have very short shelf lives and specific storage requirements
- **Commercially produced diets** - these are convenient, readily available and formulated to provide the right blend of calories and nutrients when fed as directed. Dry food is more cost effective and helps to keep the teeth and gums healthy.

Of course, fresh water should always be readily accessible, whichever type of diet you choose.

Our practice recommends the **Hill's Vet Essentials** range - high quality diets tailored to meet the nutritional needs of your pet's particular life stage:

- **Kitten** - containing all the nutrients and concentrated calories required to fuel growth and development.
- **Adult** - formulated to reduce the risk of obesity, dental and kidney disease later on in life.
- **Senior** - designed for cats aged 7 and over, they cater for the more relaxed lifestyle of the older pet whilst keeping the skin, coat and internal organs in good health.

Our nursing team run regular weight management clinics to help your cat stay trim and are always happy to give advice on the right type of diet, and the correct amount of food to give. Please contact reception to book an appointment.



## Potential poisoning hazard

**Cats can often be tempted to eat things that they shouldn't**, and in some cases this can have potentially fatal consequences. As many cat owners are already aware, lilies are extremely toxic to cats - licking or ingesting any part of the plant, or even drinking from a vase containing lilies, can cause serious kidney disease and possibly renal failure. If you suspect that your cat has come into close contact with any type of lily, please contact us straight away for further advice.

More information on plants to avoid can be found at [www.icatcare.org](http://www.icatcare.org).



## Microchipping

Estimates suggest that charities and local authorities have to deal with more than **300,000 lost or stray cats each year**. Many are found without any means of identification - even if collars and tags are usually worn, they can easily come off or be deliberately removed.

Microchips are required by law if your cat travels abroad under the Pet Passport Scheme.

Microchipping is a quick and easy way to vastly increase the chances of your pet being returned to you should the unthinkable happen and he or she goes missing. A tiny chip the size of a grain of rice is inserted under the skin at the back of your pet's neck. Each chip contains a unique 15-digit reference number that is stored with your contact details in a central database, permanently linking your pet to you. This does of course mean that you must remember to register your new details when you move house or get a new mobile or email address!

This is a quick and painless procedure and the chip lasts for the lifetime of your pet. Please ask at reception for details of current prices and to make an appointment.



# Dental

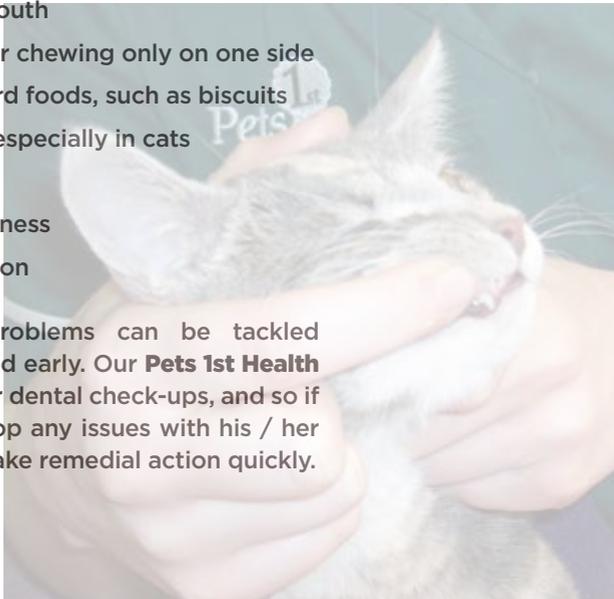
**Dental disease can cause pain long before you realise there is a problem.** Pets can be very good at hiding any discomfort, and initial signs can be subtle, so disease can often be fairly advanced before it is spotted. That's why prevention is always better than cure, and although best begun early in life, it is never too late to implement a good dental hygiene routine.

Plaque naturally forms on your pet's teeth, and if it is not regularly removed, the surrounding gums will become red and swollen and teeth become loose. Infection, inflammation and soreness of the gums follow, along with possible loss of teeth. Bacteria from the infected mouth can also spread to other areas of the body and cause general health problems, particularly in older pets or those with compromised immune systems.

Visible signs of dental disease may include any or all of the following *(It should be noted that in some cases dental disease can be present in the absence of any clinical signs)*

- Bad breath
- Increased salivation or constant licking
- Reluctance to play with chew toys or carry objects in the mouth
- Pawing at the mouth
- Dropping food or chewing only on one side
- Avoidance of hard foods, such as biscuits
- Jaw chattering, especially in cats
- Facial swelling
- General sluggishness
- Sudden aggression

Thankfully, most problems can be tackled successfully if spotted early. Our **Pets 1st Health Club** includes regular dental check-ups, and so if your cat does develop any issues with his / her oral health, we can take remedial action quickly.



# Neutering

**Neutering is a common procedure and your cat will not be required to stay in overnight.** We will carry out a post-operative check on females two to three days after the operation to ensure that she is healing well.

Neutering has a number of benefits:

- Preventing unplanned kittens
- Removing the risk of several types of cancer and diseases
- Reducing aggression, straying, spraying, calling and other anti-social behaviour



In **males** the procedure is called ‘castration’, removal of the testicles and the spermatic cord. Thus your pet cannot get testicular cancer and is less likely to get prostate cancer later on in life. The testicles are the main producer of the hormone testosterone, which can influence behaviour - by removing them, the level of testosterone is reduced, which should lower the chance of your pet straying and reduce dominant behaviour such as fighting and spraying.

In **females** the procedure is known as ‘spaying’, removal of the ovaries and the womb (the uterus). A small patch of fur will be shaved on your pet’s side for the operation, and she will have to wear a collar afterwards to prevent her scratching and biting at the stitches.

Spaying removes the risk of:

- Ovarian cancer, as well as reducing the risk of mammary (breast) cancer later on in life.
- Infections in the womb

**Neutering  
is a common  
procedure**

Traditionally male and female cats have been neutered at around 4 to 6 months of age, but this is after many cats reach sexual maturity. International Cat Care now recommend neutering should routinely take place at around four months of age.



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**Opening hours**

*Tuesday, Wednesday and*

*Friday 8.30am – 7.00pm*

*Monday and Thursday 8.30am – 8.00pm*

*Saturday 9.00am – 2.00pm*

*Sunday 10.00am – 1.00pm*

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**Opening hours**

*Monday to Friday 8.00am – 7.00pm*

*Saturday 9.00am -12.00 pm*

*Sunday - Closed*

