



Your New Kitten

Congratulations on obtaining your new kitten! Owning a kitten can be a very rewarding experience and a large responsibility. We hope that this kitten package will aid in starting your kitten off on the right paw. We are very grateful that you have chosen us to help in your kitten's health care. If you have any questions or concerns on any subject, please don't hesitate to give us a call at the clinic.

First Appointment (8-12 weeks of age)

- Physical examination
- First set of vaccines consisting of feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus and panleukopenia. (FVRCP)
- Feline leukemia vaccine (FELV) for outdoor cats
- Fecal sample (to test for intestinal parasites)
- Deworming program in accordance with the Center of Disease Control (CDC)
- Discuss blood testing for feline leukemia virus (FELV) and feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV)
- Discuss kitten behaviour, indoor vs outdoor cats, litter box training, use of scratching posts, and appropriate play
- Nail Trimming
- Discuss microchipping and pet health insurance

Second Appointment (10-14 weeks of age or 3-4 weeks after first vaccine)

- Physical examination
- Booster vaccines (FVRCP +/- FELV)
- Discuss any current behaviour problems
- Deworming continues

Third Appointment (16 weeks of age)

- Physical examination
- Booster vaccines (FVRCP +/- FELV) and Rabies (R) vaccine
- Discuss spay/neuter, preanesthetic blood testing and IV fluids
- Discuss any current behaviour problems
- Additional deworming if necessary



**** The above protocol may be modified to address the specific needs or concerns of an individual pet**

Spaying and Neutering

We recommend spaying or neutering your kitten at 6 months of age. A pre-anaesthetic blood profile performed a few days prior to or the morning of the surgery is recommended prior to administering anesthetics. Kittens are fasted (no food after 8:00 PM) the night before surgery. DO NOT withhold water. Your kitten will be admitted between 7:00 AM and 8:30 AM the day of the surgery and will go home the same evening.



Annual Visit

- Physical examination allows us to address any medical or behavioural concerns
- Update necessary vaccines (FVRCP, Rabies +/- FELV)
- Rabies vaccine is boosted annually in cats
- Fecal sample to test for internal parasites
- Annual bloodwork helps in the early detection of disease and establishes individual baselines for future reference





Microchip Identification

Is your pet microchipped?

Why Not?



6 reasons to microchip your pet with M4S ID:

1. Permanent, positive identification
2. North American Pet Recovery Team
3. Stainless Steel collar tag with database phone number and individual tag number
4. No maintenance fees, no address or ownership change fees.
5. Database accessible 24/7 across North America
6. Prevent against theft. An ownership change can only be made after we have written confirmation from the previous owner.

"Tags may be lost,
and tattoos may wear,
but a microchip
is always there"



Ask your veterinarian for more information today!

Getting Off to a Good Start: Bringing A New Kitten Home

Preparing your home for a new kitten



Making plans ahead of time will help the transition go that much smoother. Kittens are very curious by nature and will explore every nook and cranny in your home. Because of this, it is important to kitten proof to help keep them safer. Here are a couple of things that you can do to keep them comfortable and safe:

- Set up an area that your kitten can be kept with no supervision (small bedroom or playpen)
- This location should have a food bowl, litter box, scratching post, water bowl and toys
- This area should be free of nooks and crannies where your kitten might hide or get stuck
- Limiting the space available to your new kitten will allow it to get used to its new surroundings faster
- Get rid of potential dangerous items that may harm your kitten, such as:
 - Electric cords- use PVC pipe to put your cords through to protect against tiny kitten teeth
 - Rubber bands, paper clips, childrens toys
 - Needles and thread can be very dangerous if ingested! Keep out of reach and away in a box so your kitten can not eat it.
- Areas where they can jump or climb should be avoided while not supervised
- Using a Feliway Diffuser (Pheromone that aids in decreasing stress and anxiety in a cat) can be plugged into the wall in the area where your kitten will be staying its first couple of days. This can help decrease the stress of a new environment and the anxiety of being away from its litter mates.

Once your kitten seems comfortable in its new surroundings, then gradually introduce them to the rest of your home. This will allow you to monitor their behaviour and also keep them safe. If left on their own in a large space, kittens can quickly get into trouble.

Choosing the right carrier

Anytime your cat is taken into the car for any reason he/she should be put in a carrier for their safety. If left to roam the car, there is a potential that they could escape through the door when you get out of your car; or even fly through a window in a serious accident. You can never predict any of these, so it is best to keep them safe in a carrier.





When bringing your cat to the vet, it can be very stressful for both of you. To help keep it a positive experience and as low stress as possible, we recommend to get a carrier that the *top can come off or open up easily*.

- If the only option of exit from the carrier is through the front, we will have to reach in to take them out which can be very scary for your kitten.
- Also, having to “dump” a cat out of a carrier is very stressful for them, and makes it that much more difficult to get them out the next time.
- Having a carrier that opens at the top will help prevent a stressful situation at the vet clinic, and allow the veterinary staff to provide a low stress interaction with your cat.

Kittens first car ride

You will no doubt have to go pick your new kitten up for the first time in a car. Cats should always be transported in a carrier while travelling in a car. Introducing your kitten to a carrier while they are young will help them enjoy travelling in a carrier in the future. There are a couple of things you can do to make it a more enjoyable experience:

- Making the carrier a comfortable place to be will also aid in an enjoyable ride for your kitten. Place a small towel or blanket on the bottom of the cage.
- Spraying the towel with Feliway (anti-anxiety pheromone) will help aid in any stress or anxiety that your kitten may have with travelling.
- During the winter months, cover the cage with a towel to help keep the heat in.



Kitten arrives home

Making your kitten's first day home a positive experience will help speed up the process of them accepting their new surroundings.

- Bring your kitten to the area that you have predesigned to keep them safe away from other pets in the house at first.
- Set the carrier on the ground and open the door.
 - Do not pull the kitten out!
 - Allow them to come out on their own terms. Some cats may take several seconds to come out, some may take several hours.
 - They will come out when they feel comfortable.
- Make sure the environment is free of loud noises while your new kitten gets used to all the new sights and sounds.



Introductions To Family Pets

Although some kittens may show fear and defensive postures towards other animals in the home, most young kittens are playful and inquisitive around other animals.

After your kitten has spent a couple of days exploring your home free of the other pets, it's time to start introducing them. Your other pets in the house have no doubt sniffed at the door to where your kitten has been staying. This is the best way that they can get used to each others scent. You can also swap beds or blankets so that they can smell each other that way.

Introduction to family cat:

- Allow the new cat to have their own room for a couple of days, while the rest of the cats have the whole house.
- During feeding time, put each cat's bowl on either side of a closed door. This will allow them



both to associate each others scent as a positive association.

- After 2-3 days, swap rooms so that they can smell where each other have been. This also allows your new kitten to explore new areas of your home.

- A fast introduction might cause unnecessary stress for your resident cat and the kitten. Slow introductions are important to keep every interaction positive, so that the bond they form will last.



- Introductions through a play pen is optimal

after they are used to each others scent, as they can see each other and smell each other. If you do not have a play pen, then put your kitten in their carrier and allow your cat to sniff them through the cage door.

- After several positive interactions, allow them to meet without the barrier. Closely supervise to avoid any fights.
- Some cats will take to kittens very fast, others might take several days to weeks to become accustomed to another cat in the house.

Introduction to a family dog:



- If your dog has never been introduced to a cat before, then it is very important to do it very slowly to avoid any accidents.
 - Put your new kitten in a room by itself for a couple of days so that they can smell each other through the door.
 - Allow them to switch rooms to sniff around without meeting face to face yet.
 - You can attempt a face-to-face introduction in a controlled manner after the new kitten seems comfortable in his/her environment.
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- Put your dog's leash on, and using treats, have him either sit or lie down and stay. It must be a controlled meeting, with your dog on a leash. A basket muzzle can be put on your dog to ensure the safety of your new kitten (as long as the muzzle is introduced to your dog in a positive way first).
 - Have another family member or friend enter the room and quietly sit down next to your new cat, but don't have them physically restrain him/her. Have this person offer your cat some special pieces of food or catnip. At first, the cat and the dog should be on opposite sides of the room.
 - Lots of short visits are better than a few long visits. Don't drag out the visit so long that the dog becomes uncontrollable. Repeat this step several times until both the cat and dog are tolerating each other's presence without fear, aggression or other undesirable behaviour.
 - Next, allow your cat freedom to explore your dog at her own pace, with the dog still on-leash and in a "down-stay." Meanwhile, keep giving your dog treats and praise for his/her calm behaviour. If your dog gets up from "stay" position, he should be repositioned with a treat lure, and praised and rewarded for obeying the "stay" command. If your cat runs away or becomes aggressive, you're progressing too fast. Go back to the previous introduction steps
 - Although your dog must be taught that chasing or being rough with your cat is unacceptable behaviour, he must also be taught how to behave appropriately, and be rewarded for doing so, such as sitting, coming when called, or lying down in return for a treat. If your dog is always punished when your cat is around, and never has "good things" happen in the cats presence, your dog may redirect aggression toward the cat.
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- **Warning:** Because they're so much smaller, kittens are in more danger of being injured, or even being killed by a young energetic dog, or by a predatory dog. A kitten will need to be kept



separate from an especially energetic dog until she is fully grown, and even then she should never be left alone with the dog. Usually, a well-socialized cat will be able to keep a puppy in its place, but some cats don't have enough confidence to do this. If you have an especially shy cat, you might need to keep her separated from your puppy until he/she matures enough to have more self-control.

- Until they are 100% comfortable with each other, and your kitten has fully grown, they should always be separated while there is no supervision.



Kitten Socialization

The prime socialization period for cats occurs between 2 and 12 weeks of age. Most kittens are highly social, but if they are not continually social it can begin to fade after 2 months of age. Because of this, it is important to introduce your kitten to as many things as possible in a positive manner (men, women, children, dogs, other cats, different objects, sounds, etc.). By treating every event in a positive manner with treats/praise/toys, this will increase the chance of positive associations in the future.

Pair each of the activities below with treats/praise/toys (whichever your kitten responds best to) to help create a positive association.

Environment

- Car Ride
- Vet Office (scale, exam table, handling, restraint, needles)
- Crate/Carrier
- House Situations (using different tools, cleaning, working, music)
- Outside (while on a harness)
- Groomers (while in carrier or on harness)

Animals

- Other cats and kittens (all well socialized and vaccinated)
- Dogs (only cat friendly ones)
- Birds (in a manner where the bird is safe)
- Any other animal they can come in contact with

Situations

- Guests in home
- Being held
- Nails clipped
- Bathing
- Medicating (pills, liquid)
- Having a picture taken
- Tooth brushing
- Grooming
- Syringe feeding
- Wrap in a towel





Kitten Training Basics

How can I teach my cat to enjoy handling?

Depending on the personality and early experiences as a kitten, your cat may enjoy, accept, or dislike certain types of handling, from petting to bathing. In order for the cat to learn to accept and enjoy a variety of types of physical contact from humans, it is critical that the human hand only be associated with *positive experiences* and that all physical punishment is avoided.

- Begin with those types of handling that the cat enjoys or is willing to accept, and provide small treats at each of the first few sessions.
- Once the cat learns to associate food with these sessions, slightly longer or more intense sessions can be practiced. This type of handling can be used to help the cat become accustomed to, and perhaps enjoy.
- Over time you can introduce a brush or comb so that you can help keep your cat's coat clean and free of matts. Regular grooming will also help decrease hairball formation (in long haired cats).
- Never force this type of handling upon your cat, as any negative experience will only make the problem worse and the cat more resistant to future handling.

It is important to remember that physical discipline is inappropriate. It can scare your cat and make him or her afraid of you.

What type of play behaviour should I expect from a kitten?

Encouraging proper play activities is very important from the first day in your home. Stalking and pouncing are important play behaviours in kittens and have an important role in proper muscular development. If given a sufficient outlet for these behaviours with toys, your kitten will be less likely to use family members for these activities. The best toys are lightweight and movable.

Kittens should always be supervised when playing with string or ribbons, because these items can cause serious intestinal problems if they are swallowed. Any other toy that is small enough to be swallowed should also be avoided.



My cat scratches my furniture, what should I do?

Scratching is a very normal behaviour for cats. They do it to sharpen their claws and to also mark safe places that they have been. When your cat begins to scratch your furniture it is important to tell them where they CAN scratch. Using negative training such as yelling, spray bottles, air cans, or even shaker cans are **not** recommended!! They cause fear and anxiety, and might even make your cat scratch that area even more!

So how do you stop them from scratching?

Some cats will learn faster than others. There are a couple of techniques you can use to help prevent scratching furniture.

- Use Scratching posts! There are two types of scratching posts – vertical and horizontal. Every cat is different in how they will scratch. Most cats are vertical scratchers, but don't forget about the cat who loves to scratch horizontally. Some even do both!
- Prepare the scratching post for your cat by placing it right beside the areas where they frequently scratch. If your cat enjoys catnip, then rubbing the scratching post with catnip (or even spray catnip) will entice them to check out the post more often. Continue to apply it every day in order for them to create a routine of scratching these posts.
- Once your cat is using the scratching post, gradually move the posts a foot away from the couch every couple of days until the desired location is achieved.
- If your cat begins scratching the furniture again, start over, and try smaller distances. To make it more of a positive experience, if you see your cat scratching on the post, give him/her a treat to reward them.
- If your cat is not a catnip addict, then you can use Feliway Spray or another version of catnip called Silver Vine which can be bought online.
- If your cat just will not use the scratching post that you have, perhaps they do not like the texture of the rug on the post. If your cat enjoys scratching at your wooden chairs, then perhaps you need to make a standing scratching post made of just wood (screw a 2x4 to a base piece of wood). Find out what your cat likes in texture to make it more appealing for them to scratch. You want to make them WANT to scratch it!!



Orleans Veterinary Hospital
Your best friend's best friend.

Call us at 613-824-7511

My cat just won't stop scratching the furniture

Soft nail caps (such as soft paws) are a great way to stop your cat from scratching through your furniture. They are a soft cap that is glued on to the nail. It should take your cat a couple of days to get used to them being on their nails. Once a month the nails shed, which in turn sheds off the soft paw. They will fall off one by one, so it is important to replace them as they fall off. If you need a demonstration on how to apply them, we would be more than happy to help.





How Can I Prevent Problems From Developing

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure" - Benjamin Franklin

The key to preventing problem behaviours is to be proactive and identify and provide appropriate outlets for your kitten. Sexual motivation can be reduced by neutering or spaying.

- **Predatory/Play**
 - Most physical activity of an outdoor cat would be focused on the hunt or on predatory and social play.
 - Substituting with interactive play using toys such as a wand (toy attached by a string on a stick), or a small toy that your kitten can chase and retrieve will allow them to exert this normal behaviour.
 - Using feeding devices such as a slim cat (ball with holes) or a Aikiou Stimulo (picture to the right) allows your cat to work/hunt for their food and keeps them interested.
- **Exploration**
 - Cats are curious by nature, so having plenty of places for them to explore that you provide for them will help keep them out of trouble.
 - Cardboard boxes and paper bags can be used as exploration devices.
 - Hiding catnip or their food around the house will keep them interested in exploring in spots that are more appropriate for your kitten.
- **Scratching**
 - Scratching is a marking behaviour and a way for your cat to sharpen their nails.
 - Everything in your house is a scratching post for your kitten. It is important to teach them where they CAN scratch, to avoid them scratching your furniture.
- **Elimination**
 - A litter box should be placed in an area that has the least traffic. Cats usually like to do their business in a quiet spot.
 - Generally one rule of thumb for the amount of litter boxes in your home is always have one more litter box than there are cats in the house. If you just don't have the room, then at least one per cat!
 - For example – If you have 2 cats, then 3 litter boxes is preferred.
 - Litter boxes without a 'roof' on are typically preferred by cats.
- **Social Needs**
 - Not every cat is a social one! If you have a kitten who is very social and loves play, providing them with plenty of interactive play will aid in their social needs.
 - Your kitten may also benefit from having a second social and playful cat in the home.





Tips For A Low Stress Visit To The Vet

Make their carrier a fun place

- Have it open at all times so they can go in and out as they please
- Put a comfortable towel inside with their smell on it
- Feed them treats at first when they go in and out of the carrier
- Try feeding them their breakfast and dinner inside the carrier to associate it with positive things
- Your cat will soon begin to enjoy entering the carrier, and it won't be such a struggle to put them in before a vet visit.

Low Stress Pheromone

- Spray a towel with Feliway (an anti-anxiety spray) and place in the carrier. Wait 15 minutes before putting your cat in the carrier to bring to the veterinarian.
- To provide a lower stress environment we will also spray Feliway on a towel to help your cat feel safer while in the examination room.

Stay Quiet and Calm

- When you arrive at the vet office, stay as quiet and as calm as possible. If you are anxious, your cat will pick up on this.
- While in the exam room, open the carrier door allowing your cat to have the option of coming out on their own. If done before the doctor arrives, it will give your cat time to acclimitize to the room. Remove the whole top of the carrier if possible. Preferably, use a cat carrier that opens from the top.



Low Stress Handling

- Our staff is trained for low stress handling to help make it a positive experience for your cat



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Your best friend's best friend.

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- We have different handling techniques for every cat. Not every cat likes to be handled the same way.
- When a cat begins to struggle for a procedure, we try our best to go through a variety of holding methods.



Kitten Health

Why should I spay my female cat?

Spaying refers to the complete removal of the uterus and the ovaries. Spaying has several advantages

- Heat periods (beginning at 5-6 months) occur every two to three weeks. Spaying prevents these.
- Mating behaviour in female cats can be annoying and neighbourhood male cats may be attracted from blocks away, fighting or marking their territory outside the house while she is in heat.
- The urge may be so strong to mate, that your indoor cat will attempt to escape outdoors to breed.
- Spaying prevents unplanned litters of kittens.
- It's been proven that as a female cat gets older, she will have a significant risk of developing breast cancer or a uterine infection called pyometra, if she has not been spayed.

Why should I neuter my male cat?

Neutering refers to the complete removal of both testicles in a male cat. Neutering offers several advantages.

- Male cats go through a significant personality change when they mature. They become very possessive of their territory and mark it with urine to ward off other cats.
- The tomcat's (un-neutered male cat) urine develops a very strong odour that will be almost impossible to remove from your house.
- They may fight continually with other male cats in the neighbourhood, which can result in severe infections and abscesses.
- We strongly recommend to neuter your male cat at around 6 months of age. If he should begin to spray his urine before this time, he should be neutered immediately.

Can you recommend something for pet identification?

The most widely recommended pet identification device is the microchip. This tiny device is implanted with a needle under the skin. A special scanner can detect these chips; veterinary hospitals, humane societies, and animal shelters across the country have these scanners. If they were to get lost and brought to these locations, the unique microchip number can be looked up in a national registry and your pet can be returned to you. We **strongly recommend** microchipping! *Make sure your information is always up to date with your microchip company!*

Ear Mites

- Ear mites are tiny insect-like parasites that can live in the ear canal of cats and dogs.
- Most common signs of an infestation is scratching the ears, and sometimes the ears will have black material in the ear canal.
- Your veterinarian will use an instrument called an otoscope to look into your kitten's ears
- We can find the mites by taking a small amount of black material from the ear and examining it under the microscope
- Ear mites can be transferred through direct ear to ear contact



What can be done about fleas on my kitten?

Fleas don't spend their entire life cycle on your kitten. They will occasionally jump off and seek another host. Fleas are constantly laying eggs that fall off of your pet into the environment. This sets up a life cycle that continues to grow.

- The most effective products for flea control are available only by your veterinarian and are administered once per month. These medications kill adult fleas, but more importantly address the immature life stages of the fleas.
- We would be happy to discuss the various products available to you and help you choose the most appropriate program for your kitten.

Do all kittens have worms?

Intestinal parasites are common in kittens. Kittens can become infected with parasites almost as soon as they are born. One of the most common sources of roundworm is through the mother's milk.

A microscopic examination of a stool sample will usually detect intestinal parasites. A stool sample from your kitten should be performed on a yearly basis to make sure they are clear of intestinal parasites. We routinely deworm kittens with a broad spectrum deworming product that is safe and effective against almost all common worms in cats. These deworming pills are given every 2 weeks for 3 treatments, and then monthly. Periodic deworming throughout the cat's life is recommended for cats that go outdoors.

Tapeworms are one of the most common intestinal parasites of cats. Kittens will usually become infected after swallowing fleas. Once swallowed, the tapeworm inside the flea attaches itself to the intestinal lining. Cats can also get tapeworms by eating mice or birds.

- Cats infected with tapeworms will pass small segments of the worms in their stool.
- They are white in colour and look like grains of rice.
- They may stick to the hair under the tail.
- The segments do not pass every day or in every stool sample; therefore, inspection of several consecutive stool samples is needed to find them.
- If found, they should be brought in so that we can identify them.

What kind of food should I feed my kitten?

Diet is extremely important to the growth of your kitten. Knowing what kind of food to feed them will help keep them healthy and growing properly. Here are a couple of things you should know:

- Diet should be specific for kittens
- This food should be fed till about 12 months of age
- Buy a certified food that is approved by the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA)
- Kitten foods are available in dry, canned and semi-moist formulas
- Table foods are not recommended, as they are generally very tasty for cats and they will often begin to hold out for these instead of their well balanced cat food.
- Commercials for cat food can be very misleading. Watch carefully and you will notice that commercials promote food on one basis: TASTE! Nutrition is rarely mentioned. Most

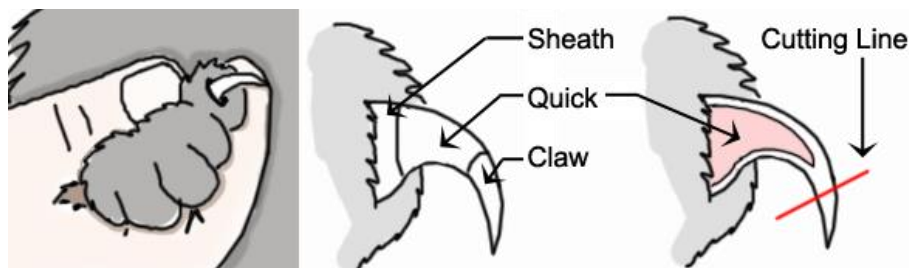


“gourmet” foods are marketed to appeal to owners who want the best for their cats; however, they do not offer the cat any nutritional advantage over a good quality food.

- A mix of both canned and dry food is ideal. Canned food (if good quality) is important to increase the overall water intake, especially in male cats that can have urinary related issues.

Trimming cats nails

Kittens nails can get very sharp. Because of this, you should cut their nails at least every 2-3 weeks. Getting your kitten used to nail clipping is essential to their nail health further down the road. If your kitten becomes terrified of nail clipping, then it will be very difficult when they are older to clip their nails. Nails can become overgrown into their pads making it extremely painful for them if they are not clipped regularly.



To visualize the nail, push on the top of the toe and the pad on the bottom. Look closely at your cat's nails, you should see a “quick” which is a pinkish area at the base of the nail. If you cut this “quick”, it will bleed like crazy. The only way to stop this bleeding is to apply a styptic powder (like Kwik-stop). To avoid this situation here are a couple of tips:

- Use sharp nail trimmers, as dull trimmers tend to crush the nail and cause pain
- Keep away from the “quick” – at least 1-2 mm away
- If the nails are black, clip off the “hook” of the nail – right where the nail goes from being thick to thin.

When should my kitten be vaccinated

There are many diseases that are fatal to cats. Fortunately, we have the ability to prevent many of these by the use of vaccines. In order to be effective, these vaccines must be given as a series of injections. Ideally, they are given at about 6-8, 12 and 16 weeks of age.

Why does my kitten need more than one vaccination for feline distemper, upper respiratory infections, and leukemia?

Your kitten receives a temporary form of immunity through colostrum when it nurses from its mother. This immunity is in the form of proteins called maternal antibodies. For about 24-48 hours after birth, the kitten's intestine allows absorption of these antibodies directly into the blood stream. This “passive” immunity protects the kitten during its first few weeks of life, while its immune system is maturing. At some point this immunity begins to fail and the kitten must produce its own, longer-lasting “active” immunity. Vaccines are produced for this purpose.



Many factors determine when the kitten will be able to respond to vaccines.

- Immunity in the mother cat
- How much of the antibody has been absorbed by the nursing kitten
- General health and nutrition level of the kitten

Since we do not know when an individual kitten will lose its short-term passive immunity, we give a series of vaccinations. We hope that at least two of these vaccines fall within the window of time when the kitten has lost the immunity from its mother but has not yet been exposed to disease. Rabies vaccine is an exception to this, since one injection given at the proper age and time is enough to produce a lasting immunity.

Visit us at www.oreansvet.ca

For more information on Heartworm check out our resources page <http://www.oreansvet.ca/pet-ed/>
Our most up to date information will be on Facebook and Twitter

