

# Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic

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## Welcome New Kitten!

At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic we know pets are very important members of your family. Our goal is to provide your pet with compassionate, top quality medical, surgical and preventive care.

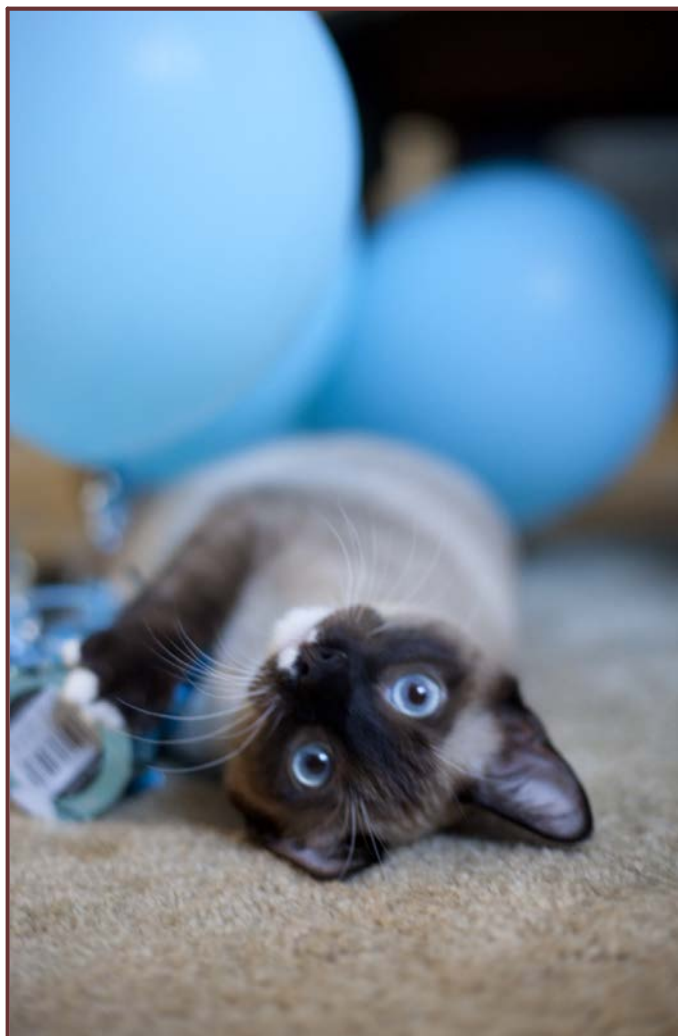
We strive to combine our years of practical experience with cutting edge technologies and the latest advancements in veterinary medicine.

We believe top quality veterinary care requires an active and informed partnership between the pet owner and the veterinary clinic. **You** are an important member of your pet's health care team!

Please find enclosed some basic information we would like every new pet owner to have. For more detailed information, visit our website: [www.ssmanimalclinic.com](http://www.ssmanimalclinic.com).

We look forward to a long and healthy relationship with you and your new pet!

"You are an important  
member of your pet's  
health care team!"

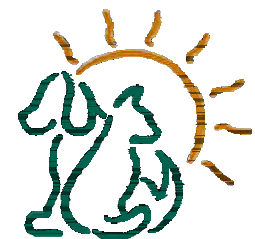


Get to know us on-line: [www.ssmanimalclinic.com](http://www.ssmanimalclinic.com)



Please feel free to call us any time you have questions - we look forward to hearing from you!

**705-759-8888**



# The First Year



## First Appointment (Recommended at 6-8 weeks of age):

**General Physical Examination and weight measurement**  
**Feline Rhinotracheitis, Calici Virus & Panleukopenia (FVRCP) Vaccination.**  
(Kittens from Humane Society or breeder may have had this needle already)  
**+/- FeLV/FIV Blood Test**  
**Fecal Examination**  
Dispense flea and intestinal parasite control as required

## Second Appointment (Recommended at 10-12 weeks of age):

**General Physical Examination and weight measurement**  
**FVRCP 2nd Booster Vaccination**  
**+/- Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) Vaccination** (if contact with other cats)  
**+/- FeLV/FIV Blood Test** (If not done previously)  
**Fecal Examination**  
Dispense flea and intestinal parasite control as required

## Third Appointment (Recommended at 14-16 weeks of age):

**General Physical Examination and weight measurement**  
**FVRCP 3rd Booster Vaccination**  
**+/- Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) Booster Vaccination**  
**+/- FeLV/FIV Blood Test** (If not done previously)  
**Fecal Examination**  
Dispense flea and intestinal parasite control as required  
**Rabies Vaccination**

## Spay or Neuter + - Declawing (Recommended at 6 months of age):

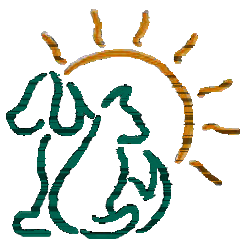
These are surgical procedures requiring General Anesthesia and an overnight stay in hospital (two night stay if being declawed) Best done *before* kitten reaches puberty (usually at 7-9 months of age), otherwise female kittens may go into heat and male kittens may start to spray urine to mark territory. This is also a good time to have your kitten microchipped.

## General Physical Examination and Vaccinations

Recommended at approximately 16 months of age then annually. You will receive reminder notifications for:

**General Physical Examination and weight measurement**  
**FVRCP/Rabies/FeLV Booster Vaccinations** as needed  
**Fecal Examination**  
Dispense Flea and Intestinal Parasite Control as required

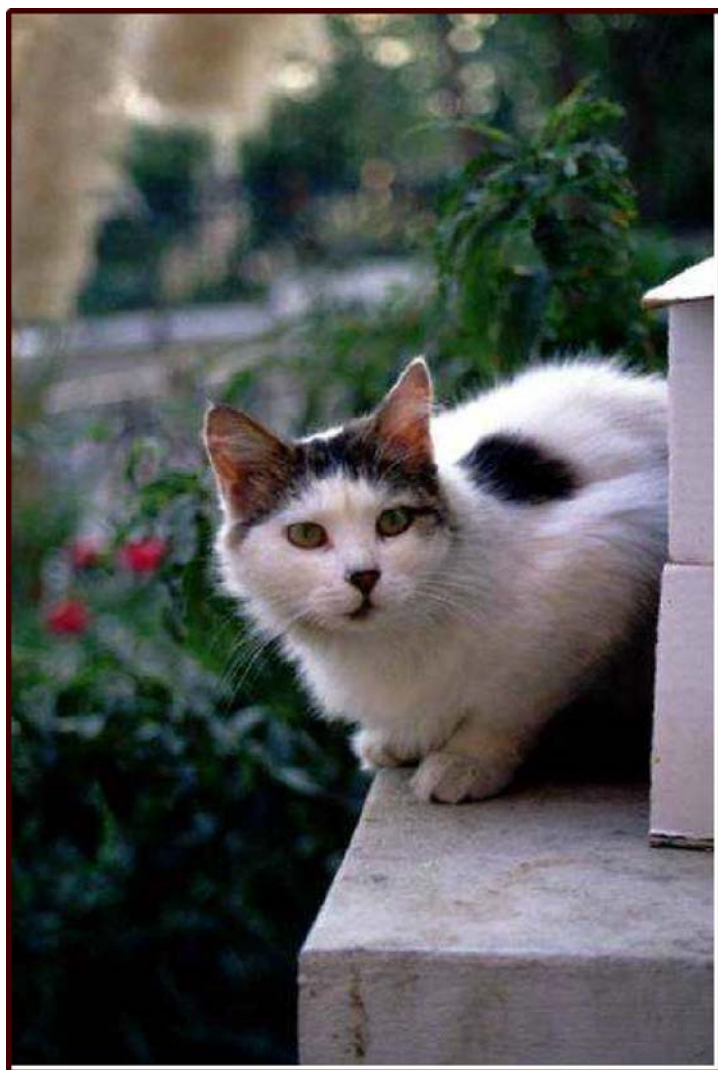
**Remember, pets age more quickly than people...even indoor cats should receive a complete general physical exam at least once a year!**



# Feline Leukemia Virus and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus

**Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) are viruses that infect cats only.** These viruses act somewhat similar to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) in people; cats infected with FeLV or FIV develop severely compromised immune systems.

Infected cats can appear perfectly normal but will usually die within a few years of overwhelming infections or certain types of cancer. The viruses are transmitted by close cat to cat contact such as mutual grooming and bite wounds. Kittens born to an infected mother can be infected before birth or through the mother's milk. Fortunately, **a simple blood test can tell us if a cat or kitten is carrying one of these viruses.**



## FELV / FIV TESTING

**Who:** All new cats or kittens entering a household should be tested. This is particularly important if you have other cats at home that could potentially be at risk of being exposed. New "house mates" should be kept separate from each other until the FeLV/FIV status of each cat is known.

- Any kitten or cat with unexplained or chronic disease
- Any cat with significant dental disease or gingivitis

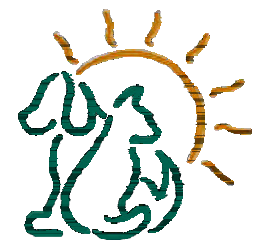
**What:** A screening test (ELISA) for FeLV/FIV can be performed on a small blood sample from your cat. Results are generally available within 48hrs.

**When:** Ideally, testing should be done as soon as possible after acquiring the new kitten or cat. Samples may be obtained during a routine office appointment such as a "Health Check" or vaccinations or we may ask you to leave your pet with us for a short while.

**Why:** FeLV/FIV are devastating diseases for cats. While there is no cure, early diagnosis can help us keep affected cats as healthy as possible for as long as possible. More important however, is that early diagnosis can help prevent the spread of the virus to other cats.

Since it is impossible to tell if a cat or kitten is infected with one of these viruses just by looking at them (or by looking at the mother cat), we recommend that **EVERY** new cat or kitten entering a household be tested for FeLV and FIV.





# Feline Leukemia Virus Vaccination

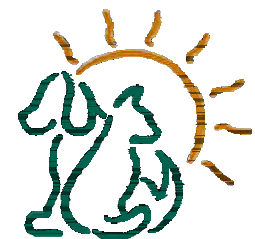
An effective vaccination is widely used to protect cats against Feline Leukemia Virus. It offers good protection if the cat is at risk of being exposed to the virus in the future, it will not however help a cat who is already infected. This vaccine is not part of the “core” vaccines that we give cats and you must let us know if you want your cat to have it.

- Who?** Any cat who has the potential to be in direct contact with other cats whose FeLV/FIV status is not known i.e.:
- cats who go outdoors on a regular basis
  - “indoor” cats who might sneak out on occasion
  - if you “babysit” or foster other cats
  - if you have another cat at home whose FeLV/FIV status is not known or if you are planning on acquiring another cat

**When?** Initially, kittens or cats should receive two FeLV boosters (needles) given one month apart and then receive a booster annually. These boosters are usually given at the same time as the other core vaccines (i.e. FVRCP and Rabies).



It is important to perform a blood test on all cats and kittens before vaccinating them against Feline Leukemia for the first time because the vaccine will not help a cat who already has the virus in its system. The vaccine can only protect the cat from becoming infected with the virus in the future.



# Parasite Prevention

The physical exam will help us diagnose the external parasites but we need to examine a sample of your kitten's stool ("poop") using a microscope to accurately diagnose intestinal parasites. This test is called a fecal floatation. Stool samples can be dropped off any time during regular office hours in one of our fecal containers or in a baggy or small plastic container. Samples should be fresh (i.e. less than 24 hours old ) and we don't need a lot...about a teaspoon full. A little kitty litter will not affect results.

**Parasites can pose a serious health threat to your pet and some parasites can also pose a threat to human health.**

**We recommend checking a stool sample from all new kittens on at least two separate occasions and then annually as adult animals.**

There are many products available to prevent or treat fleas and / or "worms" in cats. Since there is a wide variation in how effective and how safe these products are, we suggest you ask us before purchasing an "over-the-counter" remedy. Cats that go outside, hunt or share a house with a dog who goes outside are at a higher risk of being infected with parasites.

## PRODUCTS FOR CATS

**revolution®**  
(selamectin)  
Small tube of liquid applied to back once a month



FLEAS



HEART  
WORM



ROUNDWORM  
HOOKWORM



EAR MITES

**advantage multi®**  
for cats

Small tube of liquid applied to back once a month



FLEAS



HEART  
WORM



ROUNDWORM  
HOOKWORM

**profender®**  
SPOT-ON  
Small tube of liquid applied to back - repeat in 1 month



TAPEWORM



ROUNDWORM  
HOOKWORM



Cats can become infected with **TAPEWORM** by hunting or by having fleas. Tapeworm can sometimes be diagnosed by fecal floatation or often the owner will see what looks like little bits of white/brown "rice" on the underside of the tail near the anus. If you think your cat might have tapeworm give us a call, we have effective medication available.

# Spaying And Neutering



**We recommend all kittens be spayed or neutered by six months of age.**

For female kittens this involves an ovariectomy, the complete surgical removal of the ovaries and uterus (spay) and for male kittens it involves removing the testicles (neuter).

There are many health and behavioral benefits to having these surgeries performed including a decreased risk of mammary and reproductive cancers, decreased urine spraying or marking territory, decreased aggression towards other cats, decreased roaming and prevention of unwanted pregnancy.

These procedures require general anesthesia and possible overnight stay in the hospital.

## Laser Surgery

Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic is pleased to offer Laser Surgery for our patients. Laser Surgery involves using a sophisticated instrument that focuses high frequency light energy to cut tissue instead of using a traditional scalpel.

This cutting edge technology offers several advantages over traditional surgery techniques. The high energy light beam seals blood vessels and nerves as it cuts so it results in significantly reduced bleeding, swelling and pain at the site of incision. This translates into increased comfort and a more rapid recovery for your pet.

**Cats being declawed particularly benefit from the use of Laser Surgery**

### Indoor vs. Outdoor?

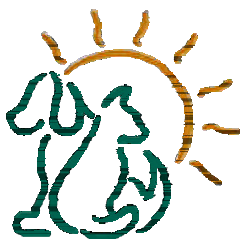
Outdoor cats are at higher risk for:

- getting a bite wound or developing an abscess
- being hit by a car
- flea infestations
- becoming infected with intestinal parasites
- becoming infected with FeLV or FIV
- being exposed to toxins such as antifreeze
- "disappearing"



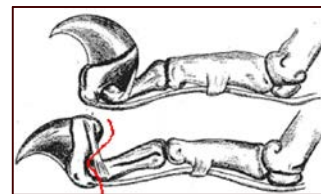
Most indoor cats are very happy living the pampered life (particularly if they never have known anything different). If you are concerned that your indoor cat might lack stimulation or social interaction, you could consider getting another cat for company. (Talk to us first about making sure the new addition is an appropriate companion and is free of disease such as FeLV and FIV)





# Declawing

Declawing of cats has become a very controversial subject with many organizations (Including the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association) publicly condemning the procedure and some state/provincial governments calling for an outright ban. Many cat owners struggle with the decision of whether or not to declaw their cat and many people have strong feelings on the subject.



Declawing involves the surgical removal of the entire claw and nail bed of all of the digits on the front feet. The procedure is done to stop cats from marking their territory by scratching things such as furniture, carpets, and door frames. Declawed cats often still 'go through the motions' of scratching because they have scent glands in the pads of their feet that they 'mark' territory with. However, they do not damage things when they do this as they would if they had claws. We do not remove the back claws because they don't 'mark' territory with these, however, they can still occasionally scratch horizontal surfaces (such as a leather couch) if they run or jump off quickly. A declawed cat is not completely defenseless as it will roll onto its back and kick with its hind claws if tackled, however, **a declawed cat should not be allowed outdoors.**

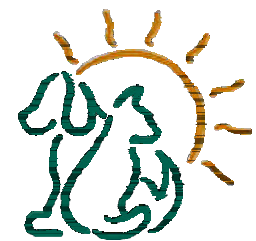
Pretty well everyone has seen or heard horror stories about cats being declawed and suffering chronic pain, deformed feet and nails growing partially or completely back. It is true if the procedure is not done correctly, the results can be both heart breaking and devastating. It is also true that it can be an extremely painful procedure if proper pain control measures are not taken. That being said, as experienced cat owners ourselves, we know that a cat can be very destructive to furniture and not all cats respond well to attempts to train them to use a scratching post. At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we have been declawing cats for over 25 years and feel that the vast majority of our patients completely recovered from the procedure with minimal short or long term complications. We now use a much more liberal and effective pain control protocol both during the procedure and after. Using a surgical laser for the last few years has been a 'game changer' for us as we are still impressed by how comfortable the cats seem to be after having the procedure done.



People are concerned about declawing being a painful procedure for their pet. This is a valid concern however there are several steps we take at Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic to ensure that declawing is not a painful or traumatic event for your cat.

1. Using a **Surgical Laser** to perform the procedure dramatically reduces the pain, swelling and bleeding experienced by a cat having the procedure done. We have been so impressed by how comfortable cats who have been declawed with a laser are post operatively that it is now the only way we will do the procedure. Using a Laser seals the nerve endings and blood vessels as it cuts so it has also eliminated the need for bulky, uncomfortable bandaging in most cases.
2. We use an aggressive **Pain Prevention Protocol** since it is now known it is much more effective to *prevent* the cat from experiencing pain than to try and control it once the cat is showing signs of discomfort. We also send your cat home with several days worth of pain medication just to make sure he or she remains comfortable.
3. We keep cats in the hospital for two nights after the procedure to restrict their activity level and to monitor their progress and comfort level.
4. We recommend that kittens who are going to be declawed have the procedure done at the same time as spaying or neutering. Our experience has been that this is the optimum time and that older cats who are declawed will have a longer recovery period.

If you have any questions please feel free to give us a call.  
We are happy to discuss whatever concerns you might have.



# Preanesthetic Blood Screen

## What is a Preanesthetic Blood Screen (PABS)?

A preanesthetic blood screen is a series of laboratory tests performed on a blood sample to help identify patients who may be at a higher risk of complications during general anesthesia and surgery. It screens for abnormalities in liver and kidney function, protein levels, red cell and platelet numbers, all of which could adversely affect a patient's ability to respond to the demands of general anesthesia and surgery. Since the frequency of these kinds of abnormalities tends to increase as pets age, a preanesthetic blood screen is mandatory for all pets over the age of 7 who are scheduled to receive a general anesthetic or surgical procedure. The testing is usually optional for younger pets in good health.

## My pet is scheduled to be spayed or neutered. Does he or she need a PABS?

It is not mandatory to perform a PABS on a young healthy animal undergoing elective general anesthesia and surgery. Fortunately, anesthetic or major surgical complications in this age group are relatively rare. It is however sometimes possible to have subtle or early changes in a patient that appears to be perfectly normal and healthy on physical exam. Performing a PABS can help to identify a pet who might be at a higher risk of complications and take steps to help minimize these risks.

## I think I would like the extra "peace of mind", how do I get a PABS for my pet?

For healthy, young pets undergoing spay or neuter procedures, we generally obtain a blood sample the morning of their surgery and have it analyzed within the hour. For older pets undergoing dental or other procedures, the blood sample may be drawn a few days prior to the procedure.



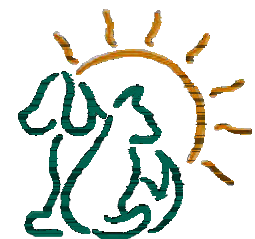
## Are there any other extra precautions we can take to minimize the risks?

Older pets and pets who have been identified with health issues that may be of concern during general anesthesia or surgery will be put on intravenous fluids (through an intravenous infusion pump) for the procedure. Intravenous fluids or an "IV" support the patient and help them cope with the stress of surgery. An IV also provides a way to administer drugs quickly and effectively should any complications arise. While it is not mandatory for most young pets undergoing routine spaying or neutering, intravenous fluids do provide an extra margin of safety.

**At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we do not believe in "cutting corners" when it comes to the care of your pet. Your pet's well being and safety are our primary concern.**

- **Premium injectable and gas anesthetic agents**
- **All patients are intubated** (a breathing tube is placed in the windpipe)
- Heart rate, pulses, breathing, anesthetic levels and oxygen concentrations are **monitored continuously** using a combination of high tech monitors and good old fashioned, hands on clinical skill
- **Individual surgical packs and suture materials packs** for each patient
- **State of the art surgical equipment** is sterilized in our state of the art sterilizers
- Enrolled in **quality assurance program** through outside lab to ensure proper functioning of our sterilization equipment.
- **Liberal but judicious use of pain killers (analgesics)** help ensure a safe, comfortable experience for your pet
- **Oxygen Therapy Chamber** for high risk patients
- **Warming pads**





# Kitten Socialization And Training

Cats are popular pets because they are relatively independent and usually require very little training. As the owner of a new kitten however, you have a 'window of opportunity' between approximately 8-12 weeks of age where they are particularly receptive to new experiences with out being overly fearful. This is a good time for supervised exposure to children, dogs and other cats. It is also an ideal time to for a kitten to learn to accept gentle handling of feet and face for nail trims and future exams or tooth brushing. A kitten that receives lots of gentle voluntary cuddle time learns that interaction with people is desirable. They should receive lots of positive reinforcement for good behaviour with praise, petting (if they are enjoying it) and treats.

A kitten that bites or plays too rough should not be harshly disciplined - they should be told a gentle but firm no and be redirected to play with an appropriate toy. In some cases if the kitten is really wound up, it may be preferable to remove them from the situation by putting them in another room until they have cooled down.

It is a great idea for kittens to become used to traveling in a crate while they are young - this will make future travel or trips to the vet much less stressful for everyone! Leaving the crate out 'as part of the furniture' with the door open and treats, food, a comfy blanket or toys inside can make it familiar and attractive to the kitten.

Kittens have a very strong prey drive - playing games that involve chasing toys or balls or 'cat dancers' can help make sure your feet are not the target. Using treat dispensing toys (Eggcercise) or maze food dishes will help provide some of the mental stimulation they crave.

Cats scratch (usually vertical) surfaces to mark their territory and because it seems to feel good. They have scent pads in their feet so even declawed cats will still go through the motions. They can be trained to use scratching posts instead of furniture. Make sure the scratching post is in a desirable location and sturdy enough that it won't move when the cat pulls on it. Spraying it with catnip spray or cat pheromone can make it more attractive. You can attempt to discourage scratching the furniture by spraying a cat with a water bottle or a making loud noise. However, unless you can do it without the cat knowing you are there they will often just learn not to do it in front of you or worse make the cat afraid of you. There is a product called soft paws - soft glue on nail tips - that can prevent damage to the furniture but they take a tolerant cat and a very dedicated owner to keep them on for extended periods of time.

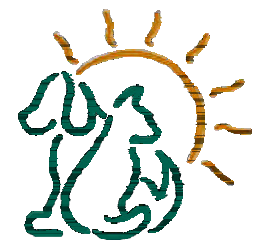
Kittens can be equally happy as an 'only cat' or part of a multi-cat household. When introducing a new kitten or cat to a household, (after it has been tested and known to be healthy and free of parasites, FeLV and FIV) make the introduction to other cats slowly. First put cats in individual rooms then switch rooms so that they can smell the presence of another cat before seeing them. Then let them communicate through a door - so they can hear each other and even reach a paw underneath the door. then you can let them meet face to face supervised. Be particularly aware that older cats may not appreciate the overly enthusiastic play overtures of a kitten - make sure that older cats have set periods of time or places they can go to where they know the kitten won't bother them.

## Litter Box Training:

One of the best things about cats as pets is the ease with which most of them are litter trained. Here are some tips for working with the cat's natural affinity to the litter box:

Keep the litter pan clean! Scoop at least once a day  
Scoopable/clumping litters are best since they leave just enough trace scent to stimulate the cat to go there again  
Do not use harsh smelling disinfectants or cleaners- cat sense of smell is much stronger than ours and they will be overwhelmed by harsh chemical smells  
Place the litter pan in a quiet yet accessible area  
At least one litter pan per cat - even though they all may use all pans  
For very young or very old cats, one litter pan per floor  
Covered vs. uncovered may depend on personal preference of cat and or owner  
Walls/entry should not be too high for very young or older cats





# Pet Health Insurance

There are several companies offering **Pet Health Insurance** to help cover the cost of unexpected veterinary expenses. Many plans do not cover routine veterinary care such as vaccinations and spaying but will reimburse the owner for unexpected veterinary costs incurred as a result of illness or trauma. The cost and the amount of coverage varies from plan to plan. We have included some pamphlets in your folder but further information is available in pet magazines or on the internet.

We strongly recommend pet owners review and consider insurance options - especially for young pets BEFORE they have any health issues that could result in exclusions being placed on their policy.

## Microchip ID

**Microchipping is a safe, effective and permanent way to identify your pet.** A microchip is a small (about the size of a grain of rice) chip that is injected under the skin of your pet between the shoulder blades. It is encoded with a number that becomes registered to your pet. Information such as your address, phone number and some medical information (such as the pet is diabetic or epileptic) is stored in a computerized central data bank by the microchip company. Most Humane Societies and Veterinary Clinics are equipped with scanners that can read these chips and by contacting the microchip company they can identify your pet even without a collar or tattoo.



**We recommend having your pet "microchipped" when they are in for their spaying or neutering.**

The cost includes your initial registration in the data bank. It is the owner's responsibility thereafter to keep the Microchip Company notified of changes of address, phone number and health status.

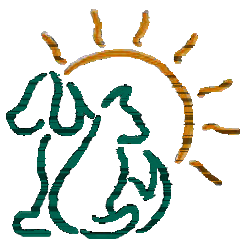
## Diet Recommendations

The diet you choose for your new pet will play a crucial role in your pet's overall health and development. Proper diet will help maintain healthy teeth, skin, urinary tract and weight. Unfortunately, all pet foods are not created equal and there is huge variation in both the cost and quality of pet foods on the market. "Bargain Foods" may end up costing more in the long run! Beware of pet food labels that make impressive claims. The pet food industry is not as well regulated as you might expect and some of those impressive claims may not be backed by valid science or research!

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**At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we carry premium pet foods available only through Veterinarians (at comparable prices to pet store brands) that provide optimal levels of nutrition backed by extensive scientific research.** Please ask for a specific dietary recommendation for your pet.

Cats can be prone to developing crystals in their urine which can lead to life threatening urinary tract blockages ...in the majority of cases, this can be avoided by feeding your cat the appropriate diet. Ask us what diet best suits your cat's needs!



# Fit For Life

There are many factors which will affect your puppy or kitten's overall long term health and quality of life. Some things, such as genetics and breed predispositions, you will have little control over. In other areas such as nutrition, vaccinations, parasite control, spaying or neutering, dental care and the judicious use of a leash, the choices you make as an owner can have a huge impact on your pets health!

**Of the factors you can control, preventing obesity is probably the single most important thing you can do to help your pet live a long and good quality life!**

- Feed **good quality pet food** with appropriate calorie density (your average lap dog does not need a "performance" diet....we can help you make an appropriate choice
- Invest in a **measuring cup!** Feeding guides refer to 250 ml measuring cups....not coffee mugs or margarine containers.
- Know your pets weight and **monitor** it both "hands on" and by the scale. Feel free to drop in any time with your pet to weigh them on our scales. There is no charge for this and it is a good way to monitor for changes.
- **Exercise** your pet. Dogs love leash walks, off leash play in a safe environment and activities like fly ball. Cats can be encouraged to play with toys like lasers and some can be taught to walk on a leash as well. Exercise is crucial for both your pet's physical and mental well being
- **Limit treats** and avoid table food altogether (we can recommend tasty low calorie treats).
- Make your pet **"work" for food** by using kibble dispensing toys or maze feeding dishes. This makes

## Conditions Associated with Obesity:

- **decreased life expectancy** (one study showed a two year difference in life span for overweight Labs vs. lean Labs)
- **decreased quality of life**
- **joint/musculoskeletal problems and osteoarthritis** (not only does it cause wear and tear on the joints but obesity is associated with an increased inflammatory substances implicated in osteoarthritis)
- **heart and lung disease**
- **exercise and heat intolerance**
- **compromised immune function**
- **pancreatitis**
- **hyperinsulinemia, glucose intolerance, and diabetes mellitus**
- **hepatic lipidosis (fatty liver)**
- **increased risk to undergoing anesthesia**
- **decreased fertility/increased dystocia**

**Keep it in Perspective!** Did you know that a 1oz cube of Cheddar cheese is the equivalent of eating one and a half hamburgers for a 20 lb dog or 3.5 hamburgers for a 10lb cat!

A 5lb weight gain for a 30lb dog is the equivalent of a 120lb person gaining 20lbs and a 2lb gain for a 10 lb cat is the equivalent of a 120lb person gaining 18lbs.



Generally speaking,

Your pet is at a **healthy weight** if...

- ✓ Ribs are easily felt
- ✓ Tucked abdomen
- ✓ Waist is easily noted when viewed from above

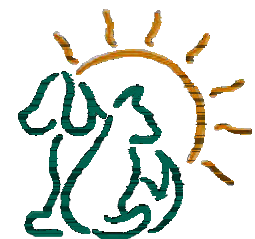
Your pet is **overweight** if...

- ✗ Ribs are difficult to feel under the fat
- ✗ Stomach sags
- ✗ Back is broad and flat
- ✗ Waist is barely visible or absent
















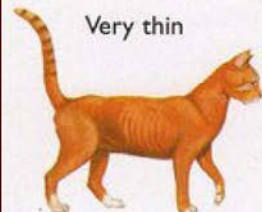
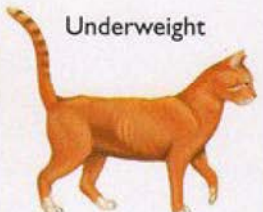



## Calories in Pet Treats

<i>Milk Bone (S,M,L)</i>	20,40,115
<i>Feline Royal Canin Treats</i>	1,5
<i>Pounce for Cats</i>	3
<i>Soft Ice Cream 1/2 Cup</i>	113
<i>Hills Prescription Treat</i>	15
<i>Canine Royal Canin Treats</i>	13
<i>Chocolate Chip Cookie</i>	180
<i>Bone (s/m)</i>	70
<i>Meaty Bones(S,M,L)</i>	27, 60, 93
<i>Denta Bone (S,M,L)</i>	105, 188, 300





# Body Condition Score

<b>Fit</b>				
1	2	3	4	5
				
Very thin	Underweight	Ideal	Overweight	Obese
				
Ribs are easy to see or feel. When viewed from above, there is an accentuated waist.	Ribs are easy to feel. When viewed from above, there is an hourglass shape.	Ribs can be felt. There is a slight waist when viewed from above.	Ribs are difficult to feel. There is no waist when viewed from above.	Ribs are very difficult to feel. When viewed from above, there is no waist and a broad back.
1	2	3	4	5
				
Very thin	Underweight	Ideal	Overweight	Obese
				



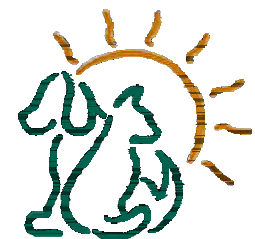
## The Fist/Knuckle Test

How do you know if your pet is overweight?

A good example to go by is your own hand. Run your finger over the back of your hand with your fingers straight. This is the ideal amount of body cover over the ribs.

Now, make a fist with your hand and run your finger over the knuckles. This pet would be under-weight.

Finally, turn your hand over and take your finger over the palm of your hand. If your pet feels like your palm, then they are overweight



# Dental Care for Pets

**Dental diets are an effective way to help prevent plaque and tartar accumulation in pets.** The shape, size and texture of the kibble encourages more chewing action by the pet and work somewhat like a "squeegee" to scrape the surface of the tooth clean. Some diets also contain Tartar Reducing Agents which help prevent plaque from forming into tartar.

**We recommend Hill's T/d or Royal Canin Dental diets and treats to help prevent plaque and tartar accumulation in healthy adult dogs and cats.** These diets are extensively researched, clinically proven and guaranteed - if your pet won't eat it, you can return it for a full refund.

**Dental care is an important part of your pet's overall health care!**

Appropriate **chew toys** such as "Dental Kongs" (available at most pet stores) can be helpful but be careful not to give your pet anything too hard. They can actually chip or break teeth with overzealous chewing. Avoid real bones as they can cause broken teeth, can splinter, be swallowed and they can be a source for significant bacterial infections.

We carry a raw-hide chew treat called **Denta Pro Dental Chews** that not only encourages good chewing but are coated with an enzyme that will help prevent tartar formation.

**Brushing is an effective way to prevent plaque and tartar from accumulating.**

Use **pet toothpaste** and a **pet toothbrush**. Human tooth paste foams and is not designed to be swallowed; most pets don't know enough to "spit". There are many different models of pet toothbrushes available, you might have to try a few to find what works best for you. Start brushing early in your pet's life before plaque and tartar have a chance to accumulate. Aim to brush everyday but even twice a week will make a significant difference.



Puppies and kittens have deciduous or baby teeth that start to fall out around four months of age. By six months of age they will have their full set of adult teeth.

"Home Care" ideas are great ways to prevent or significantly reduce plaque and tartar accumulation, however they will not remove existing tartar or treat established gingivitis and periodontal disease. The only way to effectively treat *established* dental disease is with a professional cleaning of the teeth under general anesthesia. Some pets may require additional treatment such as a root canal or extractions. Your pet's annual physical examination includes an assessment of oral and dental health and recommendations for appropriate treatment.

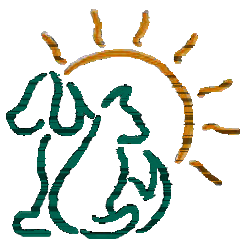
Without intervention, the majority of pets will accumulate plaque (a sticky, yellowish substance made up of bacteria and food debris) on the teeth. Plaque hardens into tartar which is followed by gingivitis, an inflammation of the gums. Left untreated this will progress to periodontal disease or a loss of the bony structures around the tooth.



Not only is dental disease associated with bad breath and tooth loss, it can be a significant source of pain and infection for your pet. Bacteria associated with dental disease can travel elsewhere in the body through the bloodstream and can cause life threatening infections in organs such as the heart and kidneys.



**Remember to "Flip the Lip" of your pet on a regular basis!**



# Emergency Care

The veterinarians of the seven Sault Ste. Marie Ontario Veterinary Hospitals work together to provide twenty-four hours, seven days a week emergency service for their clients. If you require emergency service for your pet please

**DO NOT COME DIRECTLY TO THE CLINIC - CALL (705)-759-8888 FIRST!!**

If our clinic is not open, an answering machine will give you directions for contacting the answering service who will take your name and phone number and a brief description of the problem. The "On-Call" veterinarian will be paged and they will call you right back. They will help you to decide whether or not your pet needs to be seen on an emergency basis. If your pet does need to be seen, please pay attention to which Veterinary Hospital the "On-Call" veterinarian is calling from so that you go to the right one!

"If you require emergency service  
for your pet

**DO NOT COME DIRECTLY TO  
THE CLINIC - CALL FIRST!**

**705-759-8888**

(We might not be there and  
valuable time could be lost)



There is an additional fee called the "Emergency Fee" to see a veterinarian on an emergency basis or if you and the "On-Call" veterinarian decide that the problem does not require immediate medical attention, you may be charged a fee for the telephone advice.

The "On-Call" veterinarian will provide us with a summary of the treatment your pet received and the follow-up care required.

## Appointment Booking

We try very hard to schedule appointments according to the urgency of the problem, at your convenience and according to availability.

Please call at least two to three weeks in advance to schedule routine preventative care appointments such as vaccinations and one to two months in advance for elective surgeries such as spaying and dental cleanings. Office appointments for examinations and routine vaccinations are scheduled weekday mornings and afternoons. Saturday morning appointments are available approximately once a month.

Appointments for surgery or diagnostic procedures such as taking x-rays and some blood tests will require that your pet be dropped off at the hospital between 8:00 and 9:00 in the morning (usually fasted) and most surgical procedures require an overnight stay in the hospital.

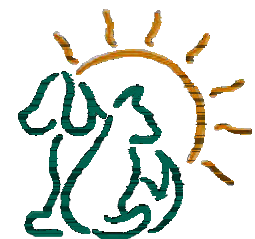
Given the busy nature of our practice, we are unable to accommodate walk-ins. If your pet requires medical care please call and we will try our best to accommodate you. If you are unable to keep a scheduled appointment, please give us twenty-four hours notice. Clients who miss more than one appointment without notification will be charged.

## Payment Policies

Payment is due at the time of service. For pets admitted to the hospital, payment is required at the time of discharge. A deposit may be required at the time of admission.

For your convenience, we accept Visa, Mastercard, Debit and Cash. We will accept personal cheques from regular clients with appropriate identification.





# Cats are not small dogs!

## (and other helpful tips for new cat owners)

- Cats are not small dogs! They need CAT food, not dog food. Cats have higher protein requirements than dogs and they also require the essential amino acid Taurine, which dog food may be deficient in. If your cat steals the odd kibble of food from Fido, it won't hurt him but a steady diet of dog food could leave him or her with serious nutritional deficiencies.
- Never give a cat Tylenol! Cats lack an enzyme necessary to metabolize acetaminophen (Tylenol). In fact a single extra strength Tylenol can be fatal to an average sized cat.
- Never use any flea or insecticide product on a cat that is not specifically labeled for use in cats. Cats are extremely sensitive to certain pyrethrins - a broad class of insecticide used in many canine flea/insecticide products. In fact, some cats can experience severe reactions just by being in contact with a dog who has been treated with one of these products.
- Never let a cat come in contact with antifreeze (ethylene glycol). Given the opportunity, cats will drink it and as little as a teaspoonful can be fatal to an average sized cat.
- Cats do not like a dirty litter box! Many "litter box issues" can be avoided by keeping the litter box scooped out regularly and providing a litter box per cat in the household.
- Keeping a cat indoors is an easy and effective way to avoid many serious problems such as bite wounds, being hit by a car, parasites and "disappearing".



**Cats are masters of disguise when it comes to being ill. Their natural defense mechanism is to hide all signs of illness or weakness until a disease or condition becomes so advanced that they can't hide it any more. Therefore, yearly physical exams are particularly important for your cat's long term health, comfort and quality of life.**

### Subtle signs your cat might not be feeling well:

- Cats are naturally clean, fastidious animals. Cat saliva contains a natural deodorizer so a healthy cat should have very little "body odour". If a cat stops grooming them self or develops an "unkempt" appearance, it should be a red flag that they might not be feeling well.
- Never ignore a cat who is urinating out side of the litter box or appears to be having difficulty urinating. Cats can develop crystals in their urine (often related to diet) and these crystals can lead to a complete blockage of the urinary tract. Male cats in particular are prone to becoming "blocked" and this is a true veterinary emergency....cats can die with in a matter of hours if not treated. Cats who are straining to urinate, passing only small amounts of urine, spending extra time in the litter box, or urinating in unusual places such as the bath tub or on the floor need to be seen ASAP!
- Cats are very much creatures of habit. Sudden changes in a cat's behaviour or daily patterns such as "hiding under the bed" can be an indication something is wrong.
- Cats can develop arthritis just like dogs and people! Unlike people and dogs however, the signs can be a lot more subtle - such as hesitating or not jumping up on furniture or counters. Arthritis can be effectively treated with a combination of things including diet and medication.
- If you notice or even think you notice a change in your cat's weight, thirst, or the amount they urinate it is probably significant and should be discussed with us!

## Feeling a little overwhelmed?

Adopting a new puppy or kitten is exciting and fun but it can also be challenging and a lot of work. It is perfectly normal to feel a little exhausted and overwhelmed at times!! There is a lot to learn and the new pet owner/pet parent is flooded with (often conflicting) advice from well meaning breeders, pet stores, friends, neighbors, family members, and a multitude of online resources.

**Don't worry, trust your instincts and you will be a terrific pet owner/pet parent to your new addition!**

At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic we are all pet lovers and over the years have had many, many pets between us - so we've all been there! To the right is Hudson, Dr. Palmer and Dr. Lewis-Palmer's Portuguese Water Dog as a puppy.



# Hudson's 'Take Home' Tips

**You are an important member of your pet's health care team!** We rely on you to both bring your pet to us when you feel something is out of the ordinary and to follow through with our recommendations. Please feel free to ask questions at any point in time and ask for clarification when needed. There is no such thing as a stupid question!! We want both you and your pet to enjoy coming to see us so please let us know if there is anything we can do to make visits more comfortable for you and your pet. Feel free to stop by any time to weigh your pet or just pop in for a treat - the treat jar is always full!

**Join our on-line community** by liking us on Facebook and following us on Instagram, Twitter and Google+. We love to share pictures of our adorable patients as well as provide timely information, updates and helpful tips. Our website [SSMAnimalClinic.com](http://SSMAnimalClinic.com) provides more detailed information about us plus a comprehensive library of pet health articles for our clients. We would encourage you to register using the password "ssmac" on our website to have access to the complete library.

**Regular check-ups are an important part of your pet's overall healthcare.** We give every pet a complete physical exam every visit - this is particularly important since pets can't talk so we must rely on both our observations and the owners observations to identify changes and potential problems. Vaccine schedules will be tailored to your pet's lifestyles and risk factors.

**The biggest decision you as a pet owner will**

**make for your pet every day is What you put in their bowl.** Feeding the appropriate diet for your pet can prevent a multitude of problems and health issues. The diets we sell are made with premium ingredients and backed by extensive research - they are also cost competitive with many pet store/grocery brands that may not have the same degree of research and quality control behind them. The second part of this statement is **How much you put in the bowl. Keeping your pet at a lean healthy weight is probably the single biggest thing you can do to help them enjoy a long and healthy life.**

**"An ounce of prevention..."** At Sault Ste. Marie Animal Clinic, we emphasize preventive medicine and care. **Routine vaccination and parasite prevention for your pet are an important part of keeping both you, your human family members and your pets healthy.** Investing in proper nutrition can prevent a multitude of health problems and save you significant amounts of money in the long run. Keeping a cat indoors and a simple \$5.00 leash for your dog can prevent future expense and heartache.

Spending time training and/or socializing in your new puppy or kitten will pay off in the long run. Obedience classes for puppies/dogs are time and money well spent.. **Teaching your puppy basic manners will help him or her grow into more secure and confident adult, will strengthen your bond with them and will make him or her much more welcome in a variety of situations.**