

FALMOUTH VETERINARY HOWLER



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PET SPOTLIGHT THIS MONTH IS Shadow Weeks!



Do you remember Shadow? We showcased her in our Adoption Avenue piece during our first newsletter last fall. After a long stay in foster care, Shadow (formerly Sweetie) finally found her forever home this summer! According to her previous foster mom, Shadow is doing very well. She has a kitty sister, a dog friend, and even kids to play with! Her forever family, The Weeks, brought her to their camp where Shadow loves spending time sitting in the window enjoying the sights and sounds of summer in Maine.

Turn those Hisses into Purrrrrs

The ominous hissing, the mournful meows, the defensive scratching or biting, the upset bowels – feline stress is just plain unpleasant for cats and their owners, too! Many cats get stressed when it's time for a veterinary visit. Thankfully, there are ways to help cats relax and enjoy the ride – yes, even in the car.

Try these suggestions, from a technician at KC Cat Clinic in Kansas City, Missouri, to help make your feline a little less frenzied!

Transport your cat in a carrier. Putting cats in a carrier on the way to and from the veterinary clinic is extremely important. Cats are often startled by loud noises or other pets. If you are carrying your cat in your hands, you might not be able to hold on if it abruptly tries to get away. Also, cats that are allowed to roam freely inside the car face the risk of more severe injury should there be an accident.



Choose a hard-plastic carrier with a removable top. Some cats might resist being put in a carrier. Removable tops can make getting resistant felines into – and out of - the carrier easier. Simply undo the screws or latches, lift off the top, set the kitty in the bottom, and replace the top (quickly!). This eliminates the need to force your cat inside, which makes the cat – and you – more relaxed.

Make the carrier a favorite place. Some cats come to love their carriers. When cats see their carriers as safe, enjoyable places, they're happy to go into them and feel safer in scary places. You can try the following strategies to create crate-fondness in your cat:



Leave the carrier out in your house so that your cat can access it at any time.



Make the carrier inviting by putting a favorite blanket or toy in it.



Every now and then, lay a few treats or special food inside the carrier.



Does your cat seem to bristle at the thought of visiting the veterinarian?

Story continues..please see PUURRRR on page 4

The New World of Veterinary Pharmacy is coming to FVH

Starting mid-September, you can make sure your pets get what they need, when they need it!

Introducing VetSource home delivery, the easy-to-use service that saves you time by delivering all your pet's needs right to your door.



- Medications
- Prescriptions
- Hill's® Pet Nutrition products

VetSource home delivery works in 3 simple steps that fit your life:

- 1 Place your order from home through your veterinarian's website or see their hospital staff.
- 2 Your veterinarian will approve your order.
- 3 Products arrive on time, right to your door.

There is also an option for an Auto Refill Program:

Auto refill is designed to help keep your pet healthy through automated, reliable deliveries. Your pet's products will be delivered directly to your door at the frequency you choose. Weekly, every two weeks, monthly or even every six months . . . you decide and we do the rest!

As soon as this new pharmacy is set up and underway, we will send an email with directions on how to sign up! Stay tuned....

Who "Nose" Where Your Dog Is?

Look at your dog's nose – did you know that there's literally no other nose like it? The nose print of a dog is as unique as a fingerprint, and your dog can be positively identified the same way.



Yes, you read that correctly, a dog's nose print is unique to that dog, just as no two human fingerprints are the same. If you look closely at a dog's nose, you will see lines forming patterns, just like fingerprints. This raises the question – Can nose prints be used to accurately identify a dog if found without a collar or tags?

Few places in the United States have adopted dog nose printing as a common way of identifying lost dogs. Currently, the most used and reliable form of identification in the United States is microchipping.

The most common question we get is what is a microchip?

A microchip is a small, electronic chip that is about the same size as a grain of rice. The

microchip itself does not have a battery—it is activated by a scanner that is passed over the area, and the radio waves put out by the scanner activate the chip. The chip transmits the identification number to the scanner, which displays the number on the screen.

Microchips are designed to last your pet's entire lifetime, and once enrolled in the microchip system, they link to a permanent record of your owner information. Your microchip comes with a personal listing in our lost pet database, and this translates to anytime/anywhere pet recovery services. Over 50,000 vets and animal shelters across the country are equipped with scanners that can read your pet's microchip. So, members can breathe a little easier knowing their lost cat or dog can be identified whether he's 3 or 3,000 miles away from home.

Your pet's microchip ID code, just like your pet (and his nose), is one of a kind. When your lost pet is taken to an animal shelter or veterinary clinic, they will scan your pet for a microchip and will read its unique code. This code is stored with your pet's profile and linked to your contact information in our pet database—forever.

There are many different microchip companies to choose from. The veterinarians and staff at Falmouth Veterinary Hospital use and recommend:



Learning the Symptoms of Cat Illness

Cats are masters at hiding the fact that they are not well.



Your pet cat still has the same instincts as a cat in the wild. To avoid attracting the attention of would be predators cats will hide any sign of weakness, illness or pain.

Fortunately, there are feline medications to treat most of these illnesses. Learning the symptoms of cat illness will help you know when to seek treatment.

In order to understand cat symptoms, we need to talk for just a moment about cat anatomy. Nothing complicated ...just be aware that cats have a liver, kidneys, lungs, heart, pancreas, stomach, intestines, gall bladder, urinary bladder ...and these organs are almost identical to ours. Pet health prevention and treatment is therefore almost identical, also. So

Here are 10 Signs of Illness in Cats

(Adapted from healthycatsforlife.com and Dr Susan Little, DABVP)

- ✚ **Inappropriate Elimination:** A cat that urinates inappropriately could have any number of conditions associated with the behavior, including lower urinary tract disease, urinary tract infection, diabetes mellitus, and more.
- ✚ **Changes in Interaction:** Cats are social animals, so changes in interactions with humans or pets can signal disease, fear, anxiety, or pain.
- ✚ **Changes in Activity:** A decrease in activity is often a sign of arthritis (Did you know your little feline friend can get cat arthritis?) or systemic illness, while an increase in activity can be caused by hyperthyroidism.
- ✚ **Changes in Sleeping Habits:** If your cat is sleeping more than normal (keep in mind that average adult cats sleep 16-18 hours a day – though much of that is “catnapping”), it could be a sign of an underlying disease.
- ✚ **Changes in Food and Water Consumption:** Most cats are not finicky eaters. Decreased food intake can be a sign of several disorders, ranging from poor dental health to cancer. Increased food consumption can be caused by diabetes mellitus, hyperthyroidism, or other health problems.
- ✚ **Unexplained Weight Loss or Gain:** Sudden weight loss can be a sign of hyperthyroidism, diabetes mellitus, or a host of other diseases. Obesity, on the other hand, can cause an increased risk of diabetes mellitus, joint disease, and other problems.
- ✚ **Changes in Grooming:** Patches of hair loss or a greasy or matted appearance can signal an underlying disease. Cats who have difficulty grooming often suffer from fear, anxiety, obesity, or other illnesses. An increase in grooming can also signal a skin problem.
- ✚ **Signs of Stress:** Stressed cats may exhibit signs of depression, hide more, or spend more time awake and scanning their environment. These signs may indicate a medical condition, so it’s important to rule out physical ailments before addressing the stress behaviorally.
- ✚ **Changes in Vocalization:** An increase of vocalization is often seen with an underlying condition like hyperthyroidism or high blood pressure. Many cats vocalize also if they’re in pain or anxious.
- ✚ **Bad Breath:** This can be an early indicator of an oral problem – studies have shown that 70 percent of cats have gum disease as early as age three.

Story continues...please see *MEOW!* on page 4

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Head to the veterinary clinic for “happy visits”.

Then take her on a few stress-free trial runs. Call the clinic to ask if the schedule would allow you and your cat to stop in for five or 10 minutes. You won't be making a medical visit, but rather a mock appointment that allows your cat to experience all the steps of a routine visit without the exam or vaccines. The free-of-charge “happy visit” gives your cat the chance to get used to the sounds and smells of the clinic, meet the veterinary team members, and eat a few treats all while enjoying the safety of her carrier. After some canoodling, you and your cat will head back home.

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One other thing ...many of the major pet health issues that cats experience can have very similar symptoms to each other, especially elderly cat health problems. For example, diabetic cats, cats with kidney disease, and cats with feline hyperthyroidism will all drink more and urinate more.

Keep in mind, the early warning signs may build up so slowly over such a long time that by the time you notice them they aren't early warnings anymore. Please remember that your cat's chances of being helped are much greater AND your expenses much less if you go to the vet at the first sign of something

If a car ride alone puts your cat into a tailspin, entice your cat into her carrier and start by going for a test drive around the block.



Continue to take a drive every now and then, gradually increasing the amount of time you and your cat spend in the car. Eventually, you'll work your way up to doing a drive that will allow you and your cat to make a “happy visit.” Positive reinforcement is the best way to modify feline (and canine!) behavior, so making car rides and veterinary visits pleasant will help decrease your cat's anxiety.

unusual.

But don't worry. If you notice any of the cat symptoms of diseases that are mentioned here, your veterinarian can match those symptoms with the appropriate disease with a thorough exam and usually blood work. Occasionally, x-rays, urinalysis, or even ultrasound may be needed.

Think “meow” is the time to make an appointment?

Feel free to give us a call!



Have ideas for the next Howler? Let us know!

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“We will treat your pets with the same care and concern as we would our own”