



The Animal Foundation Foster Manual

A GUIDE FOR FOSTER PARENTS

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FOSTER PARENT JOB DESCRIPTION & RESPONSIBILITIES

Thank you for your interest in becoming a foster parent for our homeless pets at The Animal Foundation! Your support and interest is key to making our foster program a success and making a difference in the lives of animals! The Animal Foundation (TAF) foster care program is managed by a Foster Care Coordinator whom is the main point of contact for all foster parents.

Throughout the year The Animal Foundation takes in thousands of animals, including but not limited to young puppies and kittens. Many are not old enough for adoption and often require around-the-clock care. This is where you come in! Our goal is to place these young animals with foster families so they can receive the special care, nourishment, and socialization they need until they are suitable for adoption. Please keep in mind that it is extremely difficult for young puppies and kittens to stay healthy in a shelter environment. Their immune systems are just beginning to develop and they count on you to open up your home to help them grow and develop in an environment that is loving, caring, and stress free.

As of now, our potential candidates for our foster program include kittens and puppies that do not weigh enough to be spayed or neutered as well as nursing cats and dogs with litters. However, keep in mind our program is starting out small, but has much room for expansion. Eventually we hope to have enough foster families to foster out animals that are medically fragile, in need of socialization, and elderly.

Foster care is not only beneficial to the animals you care for, but it is also a most rewarding experience for you. You will have the satisfaction of caring for animals with special needs and helping them become healthy, loving, adoptable pets. Imagine the feeling of watching each of your foster pets individual personalities develop and know you helped in the process of their development. Even better, think of how it will feel to know you are the reason those animals found their forever family. Your participation in our foster program provides an essential service to our furry friends here at the shelter.

Your Main Objective: Provide a nurturing environment where you give animals the time, space, and love to survive, grow, and develop into healthy, adoptable animals.

FOSTER PARENT REQUIREMENTS

In order to be approved as a foster parent, you must meet the following requirements:

- Must be 18 and older
- Must be able to provide a safe, loving and stable environment for the foster animal.
- Foster parents who rent must provide verbal consent from landlord and/or written approval on landlord's letterhead.
- Must fill out Foster Care Application.
- All parties responsible for the care of the foster animal(s) **must** attend foster care orientation.
- Ability to separate foster pets from resident pets.
- Be able to provide transportation of foster pet for pre-scheduled shelter vet appointments, pre-scheduled foster vaccine appointments, or in case of an emergency.
- Ability to provide commitment of a minimum 1- 4 months to the foster program.
- Read and use the Foster Care Manual as a guide throughout your foster care journey.

- Allow for a home check or home visit as thought necessary by the Foster Coordinator or approved TAF Staff member.
- Ability to separate from foster pet when the time comes.
- Foster parents must understand some foster care cases may result in euthanasia of the animal(s) and a decision to euthanize the foster pet(s) is at the sole discretion of The Animal Foundation.

STARTING OUT: SUPPLIES YOU WILL NEED

- A quiet room separate from your own animals and normal household activity
- A kennel
- A three-ring binder or folder for record keeping
- Food and water bowls (some animals are allergic to plastic, so you may want to avoid plastic bowls)
- Small animal bottles
- Pedialyte (to use in case of dehydration)—generic brands are okay
- Newspaper to line the cage
- Rectal thermometer
 - Do not use on kittens under four weeks of age.
- Towels without holes or strings
 - Bedding with holes or strings can be lethal to kittens & puppies of any age—they can easily become tangled in the holes or strings and choke. They also can catch their nails in high-pile towels and get tangled. Puppies can chew & swallow the string & end up tying up their intestines.
- Washable toys (puppy safe/kitten safe)
- Nail trimmer
- Bleach
- Spray bottle
- Paper towels
- Hand sanitizer

Specifically for kittens:

- Litter box
- Non-clumping litter
- High-quality kitten food for mom and kittens
- KMR (Kitten Milk Replacer) for supplemental feeding
- A gram scale to weigh the kittens
- Heating pad with cover

Specifically for Puppies:

- A constant-temperature, waterproof heating pad (for puppies three weeks old and younger)
- Newspapers (*a large supply!*) &/or puppy training pads
- A whelping box, X pen, or room (for puppies three weeks old and younger)
- High-quality puppy food for mom and puppies
- PMR (Puppy Milk Replacer) for supplemental feeding



Kittens & clumping litter

Clumping litter should never be used with kittens under 6 months of age. It can cause serious health problems if eaten, which most kittens do! A kitten can die if the clumping litter forms a blockage in the intestines. It also can cause blockages in the respiratory systems of very young kittens that breathe in the fine grains of litter.



Kitten weight

Kittens should gain about 10 grams per day and need to be weighed daily until they are three weeks old (four weeks if they have no mother).

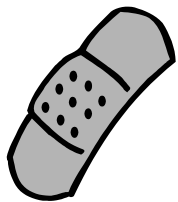
STARTING OUT: PROTECTING YOUR RESIDENT PETS & YOUR FOSTER PETS

The animals we that come through TAF come from various backgrounds. Many are strays brought in by Animal Control and many are owner surrenders. Unfortunately, we barely (if ever) know the medical history of any animal. Therefore it is necessary you take precautions for the health of any pets you may have at home:

- Make sure your veterinarian knows you are going to have foster pets in your home.
- Be sure your resident pets are up to date on any and all vaccines
 - Vaccinations recommended for your cats:
 - Feline Panleukopenia (distemper)
 - Feline herpes
 - Chlamydia
 - Feline rhinotracheitis
 - Feline leukemia (FeLV)
 - Rabies
 - Vaccinations recommended for your dogs:
 - Canine Parvovirus
 - Canine Adenovirus
 - Canine Distemper
 - Bordatella (kennel cough)
 - Canine Coronavirus
 - Rabies
- Consult your own veterinarian for further details and discussion.
- Do not allow foster animals to come into contact with your pets.

It is in the best interest of both foster and resident pets to assume all foster animals, no matter the age, have never been vaccinated before entering the shelter. Also, many foster animals are infested with parasites. A major part of your job as a foster care provider is to help the animal overcome these problems, so you must take extra precautions on behalf of the foster animals and your own pets:

- Do not allow any other animals to “meet” the foster animals. It might be cute, but since your foster animals may not have resistance to disease, it could be deadly to them. Foster care animals must be isolated from other animals.
- Keep the foster animals at home. Do not take them to the park or to meet neighbors.
- Do not allow the foster animals to use facilities (such as runs or kennels) that are also used by other animals.



A Quick Note on Bites and Scratches

If you foster long enough, it’s almost inevitable that you will be bitten or scratched by an angry or frightened foster animal. Obviously, your first priority should be tending to the wound and getting medical assistance if needed. However, as soon as possible, report the incident to the Foster Care Coordinator.

STARTING OUT: LETTING CHILDREN INTERACT WITH YOUR FOSTER PETS

It is important for foster animals to be socialized around children. However, this socialization should never ever take place without adult supervision. Any interaction between your foster pets and children should be 100% supervised. This is both for the safety of the children and the safety of the animals. Older dogs and cats may not be used to children and could easily bite or scratch a child who makes an unexpected or threatening move. Young puppies and kittens are very fragile, and great care must be taken to insure they are not accidentally injured by a child.

Tip: Keep a bottle of hand sanitizer near your foster animals.

If you can't always take the time to thoroughly wash your hands, you can minimize the chances of spreading something infectious to your foster animals, your family, and your own pets by using the sanitizer before and after handling your foster animals.

There are steps you can take to make sure supervised interaction with foster animals is a rewarding experience for the child and beneficial to the animal. Before you allow a child to hold any animal, have him or her sit on the floor. Never allow a child to carry a kitten or puppy or put it in a box, basket, wagon, toy stroller, etc. Often children will not hold the animal properly or will squeeze it too hard in an effort to not drop it. Dropping a young animal or allowing it to fall out of something in which it is being carried may lead to very serious internal injuries and could cause permanent damage or death. **The animals are not toys** and should not be treated as such. Children should learn and accept this before being allowed to interact with them.



However, when supervised properly, children should be encouraged to interact with the foster animals after you are confident the animal is child-safe. Supervised interactions teach the child how to treat animals and lets the foster animals become comfortable around children, which will be very beneficial when they move to permanent homes!

Finally, be sure everyone who handles a foster animal washes their hands when they are done. Some diseases that are carried by animals are zoonotic. This means that the animal can give the disease to humans, i.e. Ringworm. See Medical Information for more info.

CLEANING & DISENFECTING PROCEDURES

No matter what type of animals you foster, it is important to develop a good routine for cleaning and disinfecting the area around the animals. You also must do an especially thorough job between animals or litters so there is no carryover of disease.

Regular household chlorine bleach works fine for disinfecting. The key to using bleach is to mix it carefully so it is not too strong and to leave it on the surface being cleaned for at least ten minutes before washing it off.

Cleaning routine:

1. Remove newspaper and change food, water bowls, and bedding twice daily.
2. Clean up any fecal matter that may be stuck on the cage.
3. Pre-wash the area to remove surface dirt and large deposits.
4. Disinfect the cage and litter box (unless you are using disposable cardboard litter boxes) once each day by spraying with a bleach solution (or a disinfectant recommended by medical staff). Bleach solution is made by adding $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of chlorine bleach to one gallon of water. NOTE: While it may seem a good idea to make enough solution to last several days, this solution remains effective for only a very short time (no longer than 24 hours).
5. Spray the bleach solution on, allow it to sit for 5–10 minutes, rinse with water, and dry. There should be no strong bleach odor when you're done. If there is, the bleach solution is too strong.
6. Clean the floor around the cage.

SAYING GOODBYE

It may seem odd to mention saying goodbye to your foster animals when it's possible you haven't even met them yet! However, it is the sadness of returning a foster animal to the shelter that prevents many foster parents from opening their homes and hearts to another foster animal.

Foster care is as challenging as it is rewarding. It is emotionally demanding and can be very difficult to send your fosters back to the shelter to find their forever families. It is the most trying part you will go through on your journey as a foster parent. You must keep in mind this is a necessary and required step in being a foster parent. You will get attached and it is that attachment which will make it difficult for you. Unfortunately, many wonderful foster parents drop out of foster programs after only one foster care experience because of the sorrow involved in returning a foster animal.



Butterball



As sad as you and your family may be when you return your foster pet, you must consider the positive aspects of being a foster family, especially if the thought of dropping out of the program crosses your mind. Each animal you take home is being given a second chance by you. You have provided a sick animal or possibly even a whole litter a terrific start on life. It is due to your nurturing those animals are able to find their forever family. Your home was the only place they could have gone to have a chance at life.

Don't dwell on sad feelings of separation, but instead focus on the fact that those animals needed your help to survive. The sad fact is that there is really no alternative for them other than foster homes. They cannot be kept at the shelter as very young babies, and the flow of animals coming into the shelter in need of foster care is not about to decrease. You have a choice to drop out of foster care, the animals don't.

Think about the weeks of fun and education you've had watching your foster pet's health improve or the individuals in the litter develop. Don't try to ignore or minimize your feelings. Your sadness comes from your love of the animals with which you've spent so much time. Allow yourself time and the freedom to be sad. Do something to commemorate your foster animals: photograph them, write stories about them, or perhaps plant something in your garden for each one. Channel your feelings into a positive experience and look forward to getting the next animals or next litter. These things overwhelm the trauma of separation and give you a reason to continue with the program. The animals need your help.

KITTENS WITH OR WITHOUT MOTHERS

Every year, many young kittens and pregnant cats are brought to the shelter. It is beneficial to them to be placed into foster care until they are old enough and healthy enough to be adoptable. Kittens are adoptable when they weigh at least two pounds and are at least eight weeks old. Some may need to be treated for upper respiratory infections or other conditions that can more readily be controlled in a home environment. Again, make sure that your own animals are current on all vaccinations and that your veterinarian knows that you are providing foster care.



Dallas

Each litter you bring home will be unique, and you may have questions regardless of how much training you've received. To save time for the medical staff, please direct questions to the e-mail addresses provided in the phone section when possible and use the phone for questions you need answered right away. The staff wants you to be as knowledgeable as possible and feel comfortable with your fostering experience.

You will not be asked to foster motherless kittens less than 4–5 weeks of age unless they are eating canned food. Younger kittens will need bottle feeding, and a special training class will be necessary before you will be asked to foster them. If you are interested in taking “Bottle Babies” and have the time and resources, please contact the Program Coordinator for more information. If you are fostering motherless kittens over 4 weeks of age, the same basic care guidelines will need to be followed with extra attention to individual cleaning, grooming, and feeding

BRINGING A NEW LITTER HOME

Put the animals in their cage and give them some time alone to adjust. Some mother cats get very nervous when their babies are handled, while others don't seem to mind at all. Watch for the mother's reaction when you handle her kittens and try not to stress her more than is absolutely necessary.

Weigh each kitten and keep a record on the growth chart. Make a note of identifying marks, since kittens sometimes look very much alike!

Examine each kitten. Healthy kittens have moist gums, elastic skin, and clear, colorless urine when normally hydrated. Dry gums, loss of skin elasticity, or any yellow color or odor to the urine indicates dehydration.

Check for parasites. Fleas can quickly cause anemia and death in very young kittens. If you find fleas, obtain flea treatment from the shelter as soon as possible. Apply treatment as directed. Check for ear mites as well. While the mite is too small to see without magnification, a cat with ear mites will produce a dark brown, crumbly ear wax that resembles coffee grounds.



STAGES OF KITTEN DEVELOPMENT

NEWBORN

At this stage, the mother will take complete care of the kittens, letting them nurse every 1–2 hours and stimulating urination and defecation after each feeding by licking their stomachs, genital and anal areas. Mom should be getting dry kitten food at this time for the extra calories. The average weight for newborn kittens is 90 to 100 grams, and they should gain about 10 grams per day.



CARE AT NEWBORN STAGE

- **Weighing.** Weigh the kittens daily to record their weights, and do this at about the same time every day. If any kittens are not gaining weight daily, let the shelter staff know right away. Lack of weight gain is an indication of either a problem with the kitten or inadequate milk production by the mom. In either case, supplemental feedings of KMR will need to be provided. This is a very time-consuming job, so notify the Foster Coordinator if this is more than you have time for.
- **Bedding.** Make sure the mom and kittens have a quiet, clean, warm, dry place to sleep. Provide a heating pad but make sure there is enough room for the kittens to scoot off the pad if they get too warm. There should be enough room for Mom to feed the kittens without being on the pad. Heating pads for humans can get very hot even on low settings and can be chewed upon by animals, so plastic heating pads made just for animals are preferable.
- **Feeding.** Mom should have a supply of dry food and fresh water at all times. You may need to give her canned food up to twice a day in order to keep her nourished and hydrated.
- **Cleaning.** Change newspaper, bedding, food and water bowls and clean and disinfect the cage as instructed in the *Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures*.
- **Monitoring.** Things to watch for:
 - Are all the kittens eating and gaining weight?
 - Is Mom keeping herself and all the kittens clean?
 - Is Mom eating?
 - Are there any signs of an upper respiratory infection, discharge from the eyes or nose, loss of appetite, etc.? *Cats who cannot breathe freely cannot smell their food and will stop eating.*

Also monitor the litter box and take in fecal samples as directed, or if you notice any change

WEEKS 1–2

Kittens will be moving around a bit more but still scooting or dragging themselves along. Their eyes will open as early as 5 days or as late as 14 days, (the average is 7 to 10 days.) Their ears will open a day or two later, and most will have started to purr.

- **Grooming.** Check the kitten's nails and trim them as necessary. Their nails are very sharp, so keeping them trimmed will make Mom's life easier. **If you have not trimmed kitten nails before, ask the Rescue Coordinator for a demonstration.**
- **Socialization.** Spend time socializing the kittens, holding each one and stroking it gently and talking to it softly. These sessions should be very short (1–2 minutes). Rub their coat, ears, and muzzle gently, and finger the webbing between their toes. Invert the kitten so it is facing the ceiling and gently rock it back and forth and up and down. Give Mom attention too - she will let you know how much petting and interaction she would like. If you need to use the vacuum cleaner, let Mom and kittens get used to it as gradually as possible. For example, turn on the vacuum when it is outside the room a few times to allow them to get used to the sound, and never turn it on when it is right next to the cage.

WEEK 3

The kittens will be up, walking around, and able to see and notice their surroundings. They will begin playing and tumbling with each other, and it is now time to give them toys - ping pong balls or small plastic balls with bells inside are fine. Since their teeth start to come in at 2 to 3 weeks of age, you should never use your hands or fingers as toys lest they learn it is okay to bite. Biting is a very difficult habit to break and can make the kittens un-adoptable.

Kittens will be grooming themselves, but Mom will still be checking for spots they've missed. By the end of the third week, some kittens may begin using the litter box and may show interest in the food bowl by watching Mom when she eats. As the kittens begin to eat from the bowl, Mom may start moving away from them when they try to nurse and she may hiss at them. However, most likely she will let them nurse until they are eating on their own and no longer interested in nursing.

- **Feeding.** As the kittens show more interest in eating food, add a little more canned food at feeding time.
- **Socialization.** Try to handle each kitten for 5 minutes daily. During these handling sessions, roll the kitten over on its back for 5 to 10 seconds, and then draw it close to you, stroking and cuddling it.

*Provide safe, simple toys.



If supervised closely, children can begin interacting with the kittens. Have them sit on the floor and hold them or roll a ball in front of them. Having the child on the floor will eliminate the possibility of a kitten being accidentally stepped on or kicked during play. Initially, limit the interaction to about 5 minutes.

- **Ongoing.** Monitor and record the kittens' weight to ensure they are getting to get the nourishment they need, whether from Mom or from the food bowl. Continue to watch for signs of illness and parasites and follow the cleaning and disinfection procedures discussed earlier.

■ WEEKS 4–5

By this point, the kittens will be much steadier on their feet, much more active, cleaning themselves, and using the litter box (even if their aim is sometimes off). Most will be eating canned food; some may be eating dry food. They should be very aware of when you enter the room and will climb the side of the cage to “greet” you. If they are loose in the room, they will run to meet you and climb up your legs.

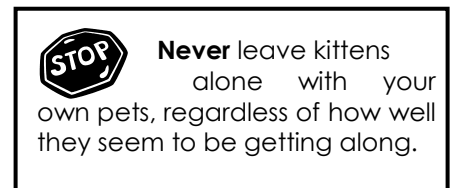
If you have kittens without a mother, you should provide the same basic care for weeks 4 through 8. Pay extra attention to weight gain and to whether they are eating and cleaning themselves.

- **Feeding.** Start offering food three times a day (morning, noon, and evening if you are home during the day, or morning, after work, and just before you go to bed). If not all are eating canned food, provide **gruel**: a mixture of canned food, a couple of teaspoons of KMR, and enough water to make a thick soupy stew.

Kittens may have more wet food or gruel on them than they actually eat, so you will need to make sure they are staying clean - check their faces daily. Food can stick to their noses and chins and cause hair loss. Also, kittens will not eat if they have food-covered faces. Wipe them off with a damp washcloth or paper towel. Finally, be sure they (or Mom) are cleaning all fecal matter out of their fur, which can be a problem especially for medium or long-hair kittens. A build-up of fecal matter can actually prevent elimination.

- **Weighing.** If all of the kittens are eating and have been gaining weight consistently, you can begin weighing them every other day.

- **Socialization.** If any of the kittens are hanging back or hiding, make sure they get a little extra attention, since friendlier kittens have a better chance of adoption. They will be learning bite inhibition from each other by trial and error: one will bite until the bitten yells or bites back. When you handle them, pet them calmly. If one should bite you, react with a loud “ouch” or a hissing noise and put him or her down or back in the cage until he or she calms down. If you’re having a problem with one biting, spend a little more time with him or her during play sessions.



- **Ongoing.** Continue to check for illness and fleas and to keep nails trimmed. Also check the litter box regularly for signs of loose stool or parasites; kitten stool should resemble a tiny Tootsie Roll. Continue the cleaning and disinfecting procedures as before.

■ WEEKS 6–8

Kittens at this age will be very active and playful. Their teeth are in and their eyes will have changed to their permanent color. They will keep themselves and each other clean and should be eating on their own.

Barring any health problems, these last two weeks should simply be time to eat, play, and grow to an adoptable size.

■ **Vaccinations.** If they are healthy, the kittens are ready for vaccinations. If you have not been contacted, call, or e-mail for an appointment to have this done.

■ **Feeding.** They should be eating canned food, and if not all are eating dry food, start adding dry food to the canned food. Be sure to mix the two thoroughly so they can't choose one or the other. **They really should be eating dry food by the time they return to the shelter. If they aren't, be sure the shelter staff is aware so they will provide a little extra canned food.**

Socialization. The kittens should be used to household noises. If you have a dog that gets along well with cats, **highly supervised interaction** with the dog can benefit the kittens should they be adopted into a multiple animal household. However, do not let the mother cat near this kitten-dog interaction, since it is almost certain the outcome will be negative. If possible, introduce the kittens to as many different people as possible; people of all different shapes, sizes, colors, sexes, and ages, and encourage them to become comfortable being touched and handled by these people. Also, expose the kittens to different areas and surfaces, allowing them to investigate.

■ **Ongoing.** Continue to clean and disinfect as before, check for signs of illness, make sure they are keeping themselves clean, and keep socializing the kittens.



Mastitis

Mastitis is an inflammation of one or more of the mother's mammary glands and can negatively influence baby health. It usually occurs within 6 weeks after giving birth, if at all.

Symptoms include fever, listlessness, loss of appetite and neglect of the puppies. Affected teats usually are swollen, painful and hot to the touch. You can feel firm nodules within the teat.

Mastitis is treated with antibiotics, although severe cases can require surgical intervention.

If you suspect mastitis, have the mother looked at by medical staff immediately. In such a case, the babies may need to be hand fed.



RETURNING KITTENS TO THE SHELTER

If you have not already been contacted by the Rescue Coordinator, call or e-mail them to schedule a day and time to bring your foster animals back to the shelter. When bringing the animals back, bring the following:

- Any medical records you've kept so shelter staff can make a copy
- A list with the name and description of each of your animals (along with any additional information that potential adopters may find useful)
- Unused medication and any equipment you might have borrowed

You and your family have worked very hard toward this goal, but still, this is one of the most difficult parts of the fostering process. No matter how much work these animals have been, there will be sadness when they leave the safety of your home and your care. Anyone experienced in foster care has experienced these same emotions, and we'll provide the support you need to enable you to continue to foster. Your foster animals may be adopted within days or it may take a little longer, but there are others who desperately need you just as these did at the beginning.



PUPPIES



The shelter requires all puppies be at least 8 weeks old and have a clean bill of health before being placed for adoption. If a mother comes to the shelter with a litter of puppies, the family is kept together until the puppies are at least 4 weeks old. Foster homes are needed to provide nursing mothers a safe, warm environment in which they can raise their young, as well as to provide a place for the puppies to stay together until they are old enough to be placed for adoption. The foster home is responsible for monitoring the health and development of the litter, providing care for the mother and socializing the puppies so they will make good companion animals when they are adopted.

This manual assumes you have the puppies *and* their mother and that the puppies are newborns. An eight-week care plan follows. If the puppies you are caring for are older than one week old, pick up the plan at the appropriate point. Read the entire plan before starting your first foster project, as some of the information in earlier steps may be very useful to you.



BRINGING A NEW LITTER HOME

No matter how old the animals are when you bring them home, put them in their kennel or room with food and water and leave them alone for a few hours to adjust to the new surroundings. Do not allow any visitors for the first couple of days. The mother has just gone through the traumatic experience of being brought to the shelter, and with a new family to care for, she needs time to get herself together. Although it is very rare that a mother will be so protective of her young that she will not allow visitors, she may be very nervous until she settles into your home, and it is best to allow her time to calm down.



STAGES OF PUPPY DEVELOPMENT


WEEK 1 - Slug stage

During this stage, the puppies will do little more than eat and sleep. Their eyes are not yet developed, and their lids will remain closed. The ears also are closed; the puppies are deaf.

Whining noises and jerky movements while they sleep are not uncommon. For the first few days after birth, your main job will be to ensure that Mom is okay and is taking care of the puppies.

CARE DURING WEEK 1

- **Bedding.** Put the puppies in a whelping box (X pen or room), which is a sturdy box with low sides (6"–8" tall) that will keep the puppies from straying too far from the group. Cover the bottom of the box with newspapers. Do not use towels or rags in the box because the puppies may become tangled in them or suffocate by crawling underneath the bedding. Change the



Do not use a fabric or vinyl-covered heating pad such as the type found at a drugstore. These are very dangerous when they get wet and get too hot for the puppies. Check with the shelter for the proper type of heating pad or to see if one is available for loan. If you foster a few litters and decide you want to continue doing it, the proper heating pad should be your next investment.

newspapers every day or if they become wet. The puppies must be kept clean, dry, and warm.

Since puppies at this age cannot regulate their body temperature, they must be kept warm. Place a constant temperature, waterproof heating pad inside the whelping box with the puppies. There should be enough room in the box for the mother to lie down without lying on the heating pad and for the puppies to get off the pad if they get too warm. The puppies will regulate their temperature by crawling on and off the pad. Also, they will form into “piles” with each other to keep warm. If you have newborns in the summer, you must be sure they don’t get too hot. Very young puppies do not pant and can overheat very quickly. Never put puppies outside on a hot day.

- **Initial Examination.** As soon as you get the puppies home, look each one over and make note of any unique markings. You must be able to identify each individual, so carefully note facial, body, tail and feet markings. Some will change color as they mature, so it’s best to note easily identifiable markings and not shades of color. As you check them over, also make note of any obvious birth defects, such as a cleft palate or a sealed anus (it happens!). Contact the shelter medical staff immediately if you think one of the puppies has a defect.
- **Feeding: Mom.** It is not uncommon for the mother to have diarrhea for a few days after giving birth. You can give one Pepto-Bismol tablet twice a day and feed her a mixture of a half pound of boiled ground beef (to remove the fat) and 2 cups of cooked white rice twice a day. (Should you need to use this mixture, only buy ground beef that is at least 95% lean, since it would be a waste of money to buy cheaper ground beef and then pour part of it down the drain when you boil the fat off!) If the diarrhea does not clear up within two days, contact the shelter medical staff.

If mom’s digestive system can handle it, feed her two cups of puppy food three times a day (for a 40–60 pound dog) and provide all the water she wants to drink. It’s going to take a lot of food and water for her body to keep up with the growing litter. Needless to say, her “output” will increase, so be sure to take her outside frequently.

- **Mom’s health.** Mom may have a bloody discharge for a few weeks after giving birth, so watch your carpets and furniture! The discharge is normal as long as it decreases in quantity and frequency. Let the medical staff know immediately if the quantity seems excessive, increases or if there is a foul odor.



Bea & pups

- **Feeding: Puppies.** The mother dog has eight nipples. A large drop of milk should form, indicating there is an adequate milk supply. Assuming mom has a good supply of milk and there are eight or fewer puppies in the litter, nature should take its course and she should allow all of the puppies to feed. If this is your situation, consider yourself lucky!

If you’ve got more than eight puppies, mom isn’t producing enough milk, or mom loses interest in taking care of the babies after a couple of days, you must take action immediately! All puppies must be fed a milk replacement formula or sit with mom and be sure she allows all of the puppies to nurse. You may have to manually move the puppies on and off mom to be sure each has a chance to get enough milk. It is essential that each puppy get enough food every day. Contact the shelter immediately if you need

help. We understand that not everyone has the time and resources necessary for this type of intensive care.

Mom should stimulate each puppy to eliminate within a half hour after feeding time. She does this by licking their stomach and anal area. If she does not do this, use a soft cloth or cotton ball dipped in warm water to stimulate each puppy to urinate and defecate after each feeding. Mom also should clean each puppy by licking it from nose to tail. Should she not do this, use a warm, damp washcloth to carefully clean any debris from the puppy's fur. Do not bathe the puppies, and be sure they are warm and dry by holding them in a towel after cleaning them.

■ **Socialization.** Even at this early age, you should begin socialization. Each puppy should be picked up and held for a few minutes each day. They are very delicate, so be sure to provide proper back and neck support. Each pup should be turned on its back at least once a day for a couple of minutes. Rub the ears, feet, mouth, stomach, and tail. This procedure gets the puppy used to human touch and begins to lay the foundation of a great easy-to-manage companion animal.

Most mothers will tolerate visitors and will allow you free access to the puppies. She probably will be very interested in what you're doing with them, though, especially if they start to cry. Speak softly and quietly to her to reassure her. You may also notice her constantly going from baby to baby when they are not in the whelping box as if to keep track of where they are.

If you allow anyone else to see the puppies, ask them to be quiet and not make any fast movements. Children especially must be supervised. A lot of people think it's cute to let very young toddlers interact with puppies, but be sure the puppies do not get stepped on, dropped or squeezed! Have children sit down when visiting the pups, and do not allow them to walk or run near the whelping box. Limit the number of visitors and do not allow too many people to handle the pups.

The puppies are extremely susceptible to diseases at this age. Do not allow any other animals, including your own pets, to interact with the babies.

■ **Monitoring.** Things to watch for:

- Are all the puppies eating and gaining weight?
- Is Mom taking care of herself and the puppies?
- Is Mom eating?
- Are there any signs of an upper respiratory infection, discharge from the eyes or nose, loss of appetite, etc.?

■ Week 2 - Some movement & eyes opening

By now you'll know if mom's going to take care of the babies. Like last week, if you have a good mother, there won't be much for you to do. The puppies still need a source of heat, so the heating pad should remain in the whelping box.

Toward the end of the second week, the puppies' eyes will begin to open. When they first open, the eyes are usually dark blue and do not have the clear, crystalline appearance of an adult dog's eyes. The color and appearance will change gradually over the next couple of weeks. Make a note on the chart when the eyes have opened.

The babies also will begin to crawl easier and will begin to lift their front ends off the floor when moving around the whelping box.

■ **Socialization.** Continue the socialization sessions. Hold each puppy several times a day. Turn each on its back for a few minutes. Sometimes you'll get a puppy who will not like this, but hold it gently in position until it relaxes. When you get any sign of relaxation, let the pup turn over. Gradually increase the amount of time the pup must relax before you turn it over. While it's hard to imagine a two-week old puppy exhibiting "dominant" behavior that is exactly what is occurring when the puppy will not settle down while being turned over. Since our goal is to shape these animals into great companions, they must learn at an early age to allow humans to handle them. Usually they will quiet down after just a couple of minutes, and you can return them to the litter. Once in a while, you'll get a very defiant pup who will scream for as long as half an hour when turned on its back. Don't give in, but don't get angry or use any type of punishment. Just hold it gently but firmly, and talk to it in a quiet, soothing voice. Allow it to turn right side up as soon as it quiets, even for just a few seconds.



■ **Ongoing.** Continue to monitor the mom's and puppies' health. As before, each pup should gain weight each day. You'll notice the day-to-day changes start to increase toward the end of the second week.

As before, the papers in the whelping box (X pen or room) need to be changed at least every day or more often if they become soiled. You'll notice that you have to change the papers more frequently. Clean up urine and feces by wiping the area down with a dilute bleach solution (refer to *Cleaning and Disinfecting Procedures*).

■ WEEK 3 - Ears open, teeth start coming in & babies take their first steps

Beginning with the third week, you're going to notice some very drastic changes, both in the puppies' development and in the amount of work you'll have to do to keep up with them.

During the third week, the ear flaps will drop and the ears will begin to open. You'll notice the puppies will start reacting to sounds. Make notes on the weight chart when you notice a puppy's ears open.

You'll also begin to see some attempts at walking. It's shaky at the start, and the puppies stagger and fall over a lot, but they improve very rapidly. Within another week, they're going to be walking and running.

During your socialization sessions, start feeling the puppies' gums. Late in the week, you'll begin to feel bumps where the canine teeth will break through. Unlike when the adult teeth come in, the puppies do not seem to be in any discomfort when their first teeth break through the gums. These little teeth are sharp!

■ **Bedding.** As the puppies become mobile, it will be time to remove the whelping box (X pen). If you notice that some of the pups are climbing over the top of the whelping box, you should prepare a "pallet" using a thick blanket or towel and remove the whelping box. This will allow the puppies to easily return to the litter to stay together in their little "piles." If you leave them in the whelping box, a pup


that gets out of the box will not be able to get back in. Be sure there are no holes in the material used for the pallet, since even a small hole can be deadly to a puppy if its head gets caught.

- **Feeding.** If the litter is a normal size (10 puppies or fewer) and mom is still feeding everyone, you don't need to provide any extra food.

If you have a litter of 11 or more puppies or the mother has completely lost interest in feeding the puppies, start providing soupy gruel after the puppies' teeth begin to come in. Make the gruel by soaking a cup of puppy food in hot water until it becomes very soft. Use a blender or food processor to make it into a thin "soup" by adding hot water and a small amount of canine milk replacer. Take mom into another room and offer warm gruel to the pups. You probably will have to help them start eating by putting a small amount in their mouths with your finger. If they are ready, they will lap at the gruel. If they won't take it on their own, try again the next day. It is not unusual for only part of the litter to eat the gruel on its first offering.

- **Toys.** As the puppies become mobile, you can begin providing them with toys, but remember how sharp their little teeth are! Tough rubber balls and bones are good, as are tennis balls (despite their size, the puppies will enjoy pushing them around). Avoid very small toys or toys the puppies might chew into pieces, since they could choke on them. If you're not sure about a particular toy, then make that toy available only when you're there to supervise.

- **Bite inhibition.** As the puppies' teeth come in, they will naturally start to use them. This is a critical time in the life of the puppies. The single most important thing they must learn during the first eight weeks is *bite inhibition*. The reason we keep puppies together in a litter until they are eight weeks old is that they learn from each other to limit the use of their teeth. Puppies not kept with their litters for this amount of time have a much higher chance of becoming biters as adults. As the puppies become mobile, they will play and "fight" with each other. Do not intervene in a puppy fight. You'll notice that one of the involved pups will yelp loudly, and the play will stop. It's this interaction that teaches the aggressor that it's no fun to use teeth because the other puppy stops playing.




Do not allow any puppy to chew" or bite anyone. While some people will allow it, saying "It doesn't hurt" or "I don't mind," what is cute and "harmless" in a less-than-eight-week-old pup is a major behavior problem in an older puppy or adult dog.

A major job on your part is to extend the bite inhibition to humans. *Everyone* in the family and *all visitors* must participate in this activity! Tell everyone to use the *OUCH! Technique*:

Whenever you are with the puppies, you must take action immediately if you so much as feel teeth on your skin. Say "OUCH!" loudly, as though you've been mortally wounded. Say it with meaning! You're saying it correctly if other people in the room think you've been hurt. The idea is to startle the pup. Then pull away and stop playing. The pup will think it has hurt you, and since you stopped playing, that's not much fun. Wait for a few seconds and begin playing again. After just a couple of days, you will notice that the puppies will stop trying to bite or chew on your fingers. Continue using this technique from now on.

Do not hit or slap a pup for biting behavior, nor should you thump it on the nose. Using the *OUCH! Technique* will get an immediate response, and the biting will stop.



We have a reputation at the shelter for adopting out fostered puppies that are not mouthy and it is essential that you continue the tradition. The *OUCH! technique* is easy, nonviolent, and has worked with hundreds of puppies. Further, the technique can be used with mom, or with any other dog, for that matter.

■ **Ongoing.** Continue to weigh each puppy every day and record the weight.

■ WEEK 4. Weaning

The fourth week is a major milestone in the life of the puppies. By now, the eyes are open, some teeth have come in, and the pups are walking. This week you'll begin the weaning process and keep up all the socialization and bite inhibition procedures from the previous weeks.

■ **Feeding.** The major event for the week will be to begin weaning the pups off the mother and onto commercial food. Make a thick **gruel** by soaking a cup of puppy food in hot water then use a food processor or blender to make it into a thin paste. The easiest way to introduce the puppies to the gruel is to put a few spoonfuls around the outside of a paper plate. Always feed the gruel warm - do not feed the puppies cold gruel. Test it on your wrist to be sure it's the correct temperature.

Show each pup the food and move them close enough so their noses touch the gruel. Some will immediately begin to lap at the gruel. For those that don't lap the gruel put a little on your finger and place it into the pup's mouth. You can do this easily by "wiping it" on the roof of the mouth, right behind the front teeth. If they're ready, they'll eat it, but if not, don't try to force them. Just try again the next day. When they're ready, you'll have no problem getting them to eat.



Every now and then, you'll see a puppy with the "shakes" after eating gruel for the first time. This is normal and will go away on its own. Be sure a pup with the shakes is kept warm.

Even after you start feeding them, the puppies will continue to nurse from mom for as long as she'll allow it. This is fine for the next couple of weeks and is, in fact, necessary for another week or so until they get used to eating solid food. However, mom may stop cleaning up after the pups, so it's going to require a lot more newspapers and a lot more mopping to keep the puppies on a clean floor. Change their papers twice a day or more often if there are so many droppings or urine puddles that the pups are walking in waste all the time.



When you begin feeding them solid food, the puppies will spend as much time walking in the food as they do eating it. Special "flying saucer" pans with a raised center section help to keep the food toward the outside of the bowl and prevent the pups from walking through the food. If you don't have a special feeding pan, it's better to use a few small paper plates rather than one large one. Some of the pups will still get in the bowl with their food, though. If mom doesn't clean the babies, use a warm, damp washcloth to clean the pups after they've eaten.

If you have the time and are available during the day, feed the puppies four times a day: morning, around noon, again at 5:00 or 6:00, and once more at 9:00 or 9:30 before bed. If you aren't available during the day, feed them three times a day (morning, evening, and night). You also can provide a shallow water bowl and introduce the puppies to water. If the puppies don't seem to be able to see the water, a drop of food coloring can be added for the first couple of days. Change the water and clean the bowl at least once a day or more often if they pups walk in the water and track food and feces into it.

Pay special attention to any puppy that seems to stay in the background more than others in the litter. Make a special effort to handle the puppy and reassure it so it will overcome its fear. This is an important step in developing a dog that is comfortable in groups and will not be fearful when their future owners take them out in public.

- **Ongoing.** Continue to monitor the puppies' development and weigh them if possible, and continue the bite inhibition and socialization procedures.

■ WEEK 5 - Swarming

- Monitor puppies' development
- Continue socialization and bite inhibition
- Change to solid food

During the fifth week, the puppies are very playful, and individual personalities will begin to emerge. At this stage, you can begin weighing every other day. As they become more active, it's very important to continue the socialization and bite inhibition programs. If you've had the pups for at least two weeks, you should be able to turn them on their backs without them fussing, and they should not be biting or chewing on people. They also should not be fearful. If you've come this far, you've done more to make a great companion dog than 95% of the professional breeders in the country. You should be proud!

At this time, the whole litter of puppies will start to "swarm" to anyone who enters their room. This is a good sign that they're not afraid of meeting new people. Each person who comes to play with the pups probably will be met with a swarm.

- **Feeding.** Gradually decrease the amount of water you add to the dry food and increase the quantity of food slowly. At five weeks, each pup should get about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup three times a day (for "normal" size breeds). If the puppies have loose stools, you may be feeding them too much; in this instance, reduce the amount of food slightly. The puppies should be eating three or four times a day, depending on your schedule.

Gradually start putting a few whole chunks of dry food in the food mixture. As the pups' teeth develop, slowly change over to a completely dry mix. By the end of the week, you can be using dry food without making it into gruel. Be sure the pups always have fresh, clean water available. Since they'll walk through it a lot, you'll have to change the water and clean the bowl a couple of times a day. Their "output" also will increase as they move to eating more dry food. Change the newspapers and mop the floor in their kennel area to keep them clean and dry.

- **Bite inhibition.** At five weeks, the puppies will begin playing more roughly with each other. Allow them to interact with one another without interfering. In other words, don't break up a "puppy fight." For the

next few weeks, the puppies will be learning the rules of canine etiquette, especially bite inhibition, from each other and from mom. As discussed before, they'll learn that if they bite their littermates or play too roughly, the playful activities will stop.

Now that the puppies have teeth and are more demanding, give mom some time on her own. Some mothers will want to leave their litters altogether, and if you have space in your home and don't mind, it's okay to remove her from the group as long as all of the pups are eating on their own. If she has to remain with the puppies, provide her with a "safe haven" to which to retreat from the pups. Removing the top of a plastic airline-style dog crate will allow her to stay with the group but get away from the reach of the pups if she wants.

- **Socialization.** Your socialization efforts should now be expanded to familiarize the pups with the routine and noises in a normal household. If practical, expose the pups to noises such as vacuum cleaners, garbage disposals, dishwashers, washing machine, radios, TVs, etc., and allow them to play on different types of surfaces (concrete, grass, wood floors, tile, carpet, etc.). If you allow them to explore rooms in your house, be sure you've "puppy proofed" them to avoid any accidents. All electrical cords or wires should be off-limits, and be sure there are no small toys or other items puppies could choke on. Block access to stairs so they can't go up or down, and never leave them unattended - they will get into *everything* and could get hurt if you don't keep an eye on them.

One week after the puppies have been vaccinated, they can meet your own pets **if your pets are trustworthy around puppies. Some adult dogs do not like puppies and will not be tolerant of them, so be very cautious when introducing the puppies to your pets.** If your pets are puppy-tolerant, though, the puppies will learn important social skills by interacting with the dogs and cats in your family.

■ WEEKS 6, 7, & 8. Maximum fun

- Monitor puppies' development
- Continue socialization and bite inhibition technique
- PLA, play, play!



The puppies' personalities are now apparent, and all they want to do is play!

- **Weighing.** Keep an eye on their weight, but you can now weigh them once every three days. Continue to record their weights if possible so you'll notice right away if there are any problems.
- **Weaning.** If you have the mother and puppies still are trying to nurse, you'll have to force separation between the mom and pups. By the end of the sixth week, mom should be completely away from the pups. This separation is important so that mom's body will stop producing milk. She'll begin to dry up a few days after the babies stop nursing.
- **Feeding.** During this time, the pups should completely transition to eating dry food. Feed them three times a day, and as before, keep fresh, clean water available for them at all times. If the puppies are large, you'll have to use two water bowls and two or three feed bowls so no one will be crowded out of the feeding frenzy. If you notice a timid pup getting pushed away or not making its way to the food, provide some private feeding time so everyone has enough to eat.

Your job now is to keep up with the cleaning of the kennel and to play with the pups. If your pups are healthy and thriving, your most important function for the next two weeks is to be sure the pups are properly socialized.



EMERGENCY CONDITIONS/SYMPTOMS
An animal with any of these symptoms needs immediate medical care!

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| Blue, purple, or white gums | Labored breathing or gasping |
| Fainting spells, paralysis, or seizures | Animal is cold, unresponsive |
| Electrocution or electric shock | Open-mouth breathing in a cat |
| Animal eats something potentially dangerous (toxic) | |
| Severe vomiting and diarrhea, especially if it is very watery or bloody | |
| Any diarrhea in puppies and kittens | |
| White stools | |
| Dehydration to the extent that the skin goes down very slowly or remains tented up | |

In most cases, shelter staff will have examined the animals that go home with you, will have noted existing symptoms, and will have given you instructions and/or medications to treat these symptoms and their causes. However, it is very important that you monitor your foster pets' condition and report new or worsening symptoms! The chart below summarizes some of the more common symptoms seen among foster animals.

OVERALL CONDITION

Of concern:

TEMPERATURE

Fever or low body temperature

Normal temperature for Cats & kittens: 100.5–102.5
Dogs & puppies: 101–102.5

ENERGY LEVEL/OVERALL Demeanor

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| Lethargy/drowsiness that lasts for more than a few hours | Increased or excessive vocalization |
| Changes in behavior that last for more than a day | Lameness/pain |
| Sudden changes in coordination, stumbling, circling | |

APPETITE/THIRST

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Increase/decrease in appetite | Increased appetite with loss of weight |
| Increase/decrease in drinking | Appears to have trouble eating or drinking |

AWARENESS OF SURROUNDINGS


Indifferent to sound, sight, smell, & touch stimuli

Common Symptoms And Conditions

TAKE NOTE OF...

BODY PART/FUNCTION
Symptom

BODY PART/FUNCTION Symptom	TAKE NOTE OF...
EARS	
Debris or discharge in ears	Color? Consistency? One ear or both? Is there an odor?
Scratching/pawing at ears	
Head shaking	
EYES	

Discharge	Color? Consistency? One eye or both?
Swollen and/or red eyelid(s)	
Cloudiness	
Pupils of uneven size	
Any other type of change or any injury to the eye	
NOSE	
Discharge	Color? Consistency?
Bleeding	
MOUTH/TEETH	
Pale gums	
Drooling	
Unusual breath odor	
SKIN/FUR	
Hair loss	
Fleas	
"Dirt" near skin	
Continual scratching	
Rash	
Pustules	
Changes in skin pigmentation	
Scabs or scaly areas	
Excessive dandruff	
Fur appears unkempt, dirty	
DIGESTIVE/URINARY SYSTEM	
Vomiting	Color? Consistency? Composition? Frequency?
Diarrhea	Color? Consistency? Frequency?
Foreign materials in feces	
Straining to urinate or defecate or an inability to urinate or defecate	
Increased urination	
Unusual colored feces (e.g., orange, yellow)	
Unusual colored urine (e.g., dark yellow, brown)	
Blood in feces	
Blood in urine	
Abdominal enlargement not associated with weight gain	
Not using the litter box or accidents with a housetrained animal.	
RESPIRATORY SYSTEM	
Sneezing: more than once & for longer than one day	
Coughing: more than once & for longer than one day	
Excessive panting	
REPRODUCTIVE SYSTEM	
Vaginal discharge	
Swollen mammary glands	

DISEASE TRANSMISSION FROM ANIMALS TO HUMANS

Zoonotic diseases are those that can be transmitted from animals to humans (and sometimes vice versa). As a foster parent, the likelihood of you contracting a serious illness because of contact with your foster animals is very small. However, the potential does exist, and of most concern is the potential of disease transmission to certain vulnerable populations, including infants and young children, the elderly, and those with other health conditions.

Bacteria in the mouths of cats can cause infection of a bite wound and result in painful swelling and even abscessation. Bite wounds should be washed carefully and immediate advice sought if swelling, pain, or obvious infection occurs. Routine protection against tetanus is also an important consideration, and advice should be sought from your doctor.

The table on the following pages provides information on some illnesses and diseases with which you may come into contact as a foster provider. It also indicates the species affected by each: cat, dog, and human.

COMMON DISEASES AND ILLNESSES

Tip: Minimize the likelihood of disease transmission from animal to animal or to yourself or other family members:



Maintain sanitary conditions—follow the cleaning and disinfecting procedures discussed on page X.






Wash your hands after you finish the cleaning & disinfecting procedures. Do the same any time you might come into contact with animal feces or urine.





Keep sick animals separate from other animals.




While tending to or spending time with sick animals, keep your hands away from your face.



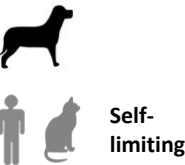

Wash your hands after handling your foster animals, and be sure any visitors do the same.





	Description	Common Symptoms/Diagnosis	Treatment	Prevention
	<p>Campylobacter is one of the most common bacterial causes of diarrhea illness in the U.S.</p>	<p>Often, dogs & cats are carriers but show no clinical signs. When clinical signs are present in dogs & cats, it is usually in young animals, which may experience diarrhea.</p> <p>In humans, can cause diarrhea, cramping, fever, nausea, headache, & abdominal pain.</p>	<p>Antibiotics Supportive care</p>	<p>Isolate animals with diarrhea Practice good hygiene</p>
	<p>Highly contagious viral disease most often transmitted through contact with respiratory secretions. Contact with the urine & fecal material of infected dogs also can result in infection.</p>	<p>Fever Loss of appetite Eye & nose discharge</p> <p>Other symptoms vary but can include Gastrointestinal & respiratory symptoms: diarrhea, vomiting, runny nose, pneumonia Neurological symptoms: muscle twitching, paralysis, seizures Eye symptoms: inflammation, eye lesions</p>	<p>Since there is no cure, treatment is supportive: Anti-nausea & anti-vomiting drugs for vomiting. Antidiarrheals for diarrhea. IV fluids for dehydration Antibiotics or bronchodilators for pneumonia Anticonvulsants for seizures</p>	<p>Dogs surviving a natural infection usually develop sufficient immunity to protect them the rest of their lives. Many dogs (particularly pups) don't survive a naturally-acquired infection. The safest protection is vaccination. Puppies born to dogs that are immune acquire some natural immunity from nursing. The degree of protection varies according to the amount of the mother's antibody, but the protection diminishes rapidly.</p>

	Description	Common Symptoms/Diagnosis	Treatment	Prevention
<p>Cat Scratch Disease (feline bartonellosis)</p> 	<p>Cat-scratch disease (CSD) is an infection in humans that most often occurs after prolonged contact with a young cat. Kittens under one year of age, kittens or cats infested with fleas, & feral cats or former strays are more likely to have the bartonella bacteria in their bloodstream. Fleas are believed to play a major role in cat-to-cat & possibly cat-to-human transmission.</p>	<p>Cats can be infected for months or years & show no signs.</p> <p>Signs of human disease include raised red or purple skin lesions & swollen lymph nodes. If the disease spreads internally, it can cause fever, weight loss, & vomiting, & the liver & spleen may become enlarged.</p>	<p>Cats do not require treatment. In humans, the disease is treated with antibiotics.</p>	<p>Preventive care is based on maintaining good hygiene. Wash your hands after handling pets & wash scratches or bites thoroughly. Never let a cat lick an open wound, & maintain meticulous flea control.</p>
<p>Coccidia</p> 	<p>Coccidia are common microscopic parasites that infect the intestine. The infection can be a life-threatening problem to an especially young or small pet. Infection is especially common in young animals housed in groups (in shelters, rescue areas, kennels, etc.). The species seen in cats & dogs does not infect humans.</p>	<p>Yellowish-green watery diarrhea (may be bloody)</p> <p>Diagnosis: fecal exam</p>	<p>No medication will kill coccidia, but certain medicines inhibit coccidia reproduction, allowing the immune system to wipe the infection out. Treatment time depends on the infection's severity & the strength of the patient's immune system. Treatment continues until the diarrhea resolves & could last from a week to a month.</p>	<p>Animals new to the home should be isolated from other animals in the household until it is certain they do not have coccidia.</p>
<p>Conjunctivitis</p> 	<p>An inflammation of the tissue coating the eye & lining the eyelids that can result from allergies, environmental irritants, eye trauma, or a number of diseases.</p>	<p>Redness of the eyes Eye discharge Swelling of the tissues Squinting/excessive blinking</p>	<p>Treated with topical eye ointments Most cases improve within 24–48 hours</p>	
<p>Ear mites</p> 	<p>Ear mites are tiny infectious organisms resembling microscopic ticks that readily transmit from host to host by physical contact.</p> <p>Humans can get ear mites after very close contact with a heavily infested animal, but the condition usually clears up without treatment.</p>	<p>Dry black ear discharge resembling coffee grounds</p> <p>Diagnosis: microscopic examination of ear wax</p> <p>In humans, the signs are intense itching & a sound similar to paper being crumpled in the infected ear.</p>	<p>Topical ear treatment (e.g., Tresaderm) One-use products (e.g., Revolution, Interceptor)</p>	<p>Keep animals & environment treated for fleas</p>
<p>Feline Calicivirus (FCV)</p> 	<p>Common, usually mild disease but can occur suddenly, often with mouth sores appearing & few or no other symptoms. It is spread by direct contact with body secretion or items an infected cat has touched or been near.</p>	<p>Sneezing Lameness Loss of appetite Difficulty breathing Eye & nose discharge Mouth, nose, or feet sores</p>	<p>Usually recovery is swift, & the prognosis is excellent. Treatment is usually centered on treating the symptoms. A recovered cat can be a carrier of the disease for years.</p>	<p>Vaccine</p>

	Description	Common Symptoms/Diagnosis	Treatment	Prevention
<p>Feline Infection Peritonitis (FIP)</p> 	<p>Caused by a coronavirus that can infect any cat, but very young & old cats are most susceptible. The virus (FIPV) is very similar to the virus that causes a usually mild, self-limiting diarrhea (Feline Enteric Corona Virus, FECV). FECV can mutate to FIPV in some individuals; this mutation is the most probable means of acquiring FIP. In the Effusive Form, there is accumulation of fluid in body cavities. The Dry Form does not present this way.</p>	<p>Most common signs include fluctuating fever, appetite loss, lethargy, & weight loss. Sometimes neurological abnormalities are apparent.</p> <p>Diagnosis: Tests exist that identify the presence of the coronavirus, but none can specify FIPV. The only way currently to definitively determine the presence of FIP is through necropsy.</p>	<p>Only the symptoms of FIP can be treated. FIP is always fatal.</p>	<p>While a vaccine exists, it does not appear to be effective.</p>
<p>Feline Panleukopenia (feline distemper)</p> 	<p>Serious, highly contagious viral disease passed from cat to cat by direct contact through bodily secretions. Anything an infected cat has touched may carry the virus. The virus is resilient & can survive for a year. Kittens, old cats, cats with a weakened immune system, & cats that have not been properly immunized for the disease are most vulnerable.</p>	<p>Depression Fever Lethargy Vomiting Loss of appetite Dehydration</p> <p>As the disease progresses, there may also be diarrhea & anemia. In some cases, especially with kittens, the disease can cause death within hours.</p>	<p>There is no treatment for panleukopenia, only for the symptoms. Providing fluids & supportive nutrients will allow the cat's own immune system to fight the disease, & other infections can be prevented with antibiotics. The prognosis for young kittens is poor.</p>	<p>vaccine</p>
<p>Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV)</p> 	<p>Virus that causes a breakdown in cat's immune system. Transmitted by bodily secretions (e.g., saliva, mucus, urine, feces, blood), so an infected cat can transmit the disease to a healthy cat through common activities (e.g., grooming, fighting, sharing bowls or litter boxes). It is often fatal.</p>	<p>Anemia Mild fever Bloody stool Weight loss General malaise Swollen lymph nodes Diarrhea or constipation Decreased appetite</p>	<p>No one set course for treatment. FeLV takes different courses in different cats & can lay dormant and/or progress on different time schedules. Some cats that test positive for FeLV live seemingly healthy lives for years. If/or when a cat does fall ill, the prognosis is usually poor.</p>	<p>vaccine</p>
<p>Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV)</p> 	<p>An infectious disease that attacks & weakens a cat's immune system. Transmitted primarily by bite wounds from an infected cat. It also can be passed by blood transfusions or from a mother to her kittens during gestation, passage through the birth canal, or nursing, though some experts feel it is unlikely. It cannot be transmitted casually, such as through playing or sleeping, or through contact with food & water bowls, litter boxes, etc.</p>	<p>Common signs: oral cavity diseases, runny nose & coughing, diarrhea, & rough coat or skin ailments.</p> <p>Diagnosis: blood test</p>	<p>There is no cure for FIV, & eventually the disease is fatal. The virus develops slowly, though. An otherwise healthy cat can live a normal life for years, with no symptoms. Cats that develop symptoms or ailments because of the weakened immune system can often be successfully treated for that specific problem.</p>	<p>vaccine</p> <p>Cats with FIV should not be allowed outdoors. FIV-positive cats can share a household with other cats that do not have the disease as long as biting is not a problem.</p>

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<p>Feline upper respiratory infection (URI)</p> 	<p>Refers to nose, throat, & sinus area infections, much like the human common cold. In cats, these infections are common & very contagious. The primary viruses involved are feline herpesvirus-1 & feline calicivirus. Feline chlamydia, a bacterial infection, also can result in URIs.</p> <p>Recovered cats will shed the virus throughout their lives. It is uncommon for the cat to have a reoccurrence of the URI but will be a virus reservoir. The viruses don't live long in the environment & are easily killed by household cleaners, but humans can carry the virus from an ill or viral-shedding cat. This is a common way that URIs are transmitted.</p>	<p>Fever Sneezing Watery eyes Drooling Nasal discharge Lack of appetite Breathing problems Open mouth breathing</p> <p>Diagnosis: through symptoms</p>	<p>Because most URIs are caused by viruses, treatment usually focuses on treating the symptoms & maintaining the cat's overall health. Depending on the severity, treatment can involve administration of fluids, dietary supplements, & antibiotics & nebulization.</p> <p>Keep eyes & nose clear of discharge, & regular brushing can help stimulate the cat's appetite.</p>	<p>Ensure all animals are up-to-date on vaccinations.</p> <p>Separate ill cats from other animals.</p> <p>Maintain a clean, sanitary environment & wash hands often.</p>
<p>Giardia</p> 	<p>Giardia lives in the intestinal tract & infection may be asymptomatic or can result in gastrointestinal symptoms. It is transmitted from one animal to another through the ingestion of cysts in contaminated feed or drinking water.</p> <p>Most human cases arise from person-to-person contact or from contact with contaminated water, but animal-to-human transmission is theoretically possible.</p>	<p>Diarrhea (ranging from mild to acute & explosive) Weight loss Listlessness Poor appetite Excessive gas Blood in the stool Vomiting Mucous in the stool</p> <p>Diagnosis: fecal exam (usually multiple samples examined over a 7 to 10 day period)</p>	<p>Fenbendazole (Panacur) Metronidazole</p>	<p>Maintain a clean, sanitary environment</p> <p>There is a vaccine for cats & dogs but is not part of the recommended routine vaccination protocol for either animal.</p>
<p>Hookworms</p> 	<p>The most common canine intestinal parasite in the U.S.; rarer among cats. About ½ inch long & very thin, they attach to a host's intestinal lining with hooklike teeth & feed on its blood. A human infection (caused by the larva penetrating bare skin) usually causes itchy red bups.</p>	<p>Anemia Weakness Weight loss Bloody stools Black or tarry looking stools</p> <p>Diagnosis: fecal exam</p> <p>In humans, the symptoms depend on how people get the infection. The larvae can infect people & travel through different parts of the body. The most common route is through the feet in sand.</p> <p>People also can get painful & itchy skin infections when larvae move through the skin. If a person should ingest hookworm eggs, the hatched larvae can reach the intestine & cause bleeding, inflammation, & abdominal pain.</p>	<p>Pyrantel pamoate (Strongid) Fenbendazole (Panacur)</p>	<p>Keep infected animals separate from uninfected animals.</p>

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Ringworm 	<p>“Ringworm” is the common name for the skin infection caused by a special group of fungi that feed upon dead skin & hair cells. All it takes is skin contact with a spore to cause infection. Infected animals continuously drop spore-covered hairs as infected hairs break off. Some animals are carriers, who never show signs of skin irritation themselves but can infect others. The spores can live for years in the environment & are difficult to kill.</p>	<p>Dry, grey, scaly skin patches Hair loss</p> <p>Diagnosis: culture of hair & skin scales. Cultures are done monthly during treatment.</p> <p>In humans, it appears as one or more round, red lesions with a ring of scale around the edges & normal recovering skin in the center, sometimes very itchy.</p>	<p>Oral medications (e.g., Griseofulvin, itraconazole) Topical antifungal medication Baths with antifungal shampoo Lime sulfur dips</p>	<p>Bleach diluted 1:10 will kill 80% of spores with one application, & any surface that can be bleached should be. Vacuuming & steam cleaning will help remove spores (vacuum bags should be discarded after each vacuuming). Infected animals should be kept separate from noninfected animals.</p>
Roundworms 	<p>Infection occurs by consuming larva (usually through grooming), by nursing from an infected mother (how most kittens are infected), by consuming a prey animal that is carrying developing worms, or during embryonic development when an infected mother is pregnant (how most puppies are infected). These worms resemble spaghetti & can grow to several inches long. They consume the host’s food.</p> <p>Humans (usually children) can develop a serious condition called visceral larva migrans. They are infected by consuming eggs (typically by getting dirty fingers in their mouths). Though not in its correct host, the worm tries to complete its life cycle & gets lost in the body (classically in the eye), dies, & causes an inflammatory reaction. If the worm dies in the eye, blindness usually results.</p>	<p>Diarrhea Vomiting (sometimes the worms themselves are vomited up) Weight loss Decreased appetite “Pot-bellied” appearance</p> <p>Diagnosis: fecal exam</p>	<p>Two or three administrations of a dewormer such as Panacur, Strongid, Interceptor.</p> <p>These medications essentially anesthetize the worms so they “let go” & pass out of the animal in its stool. Afterward, they will be replaced with by new worms completing their migration; this is why multiple administrations are required.</p>	<p>Regular deworming Regular hand washing</p>
Sarcoptic mange  <p>Self-limiting</p>	<p>Caused by a microscopic mite that burrows into the host’s skin.</p> <p>This particular mite can infect humans & cats. However, these cases resolve on their own since the mite cannot complete its life cycle on these hosts.</p>	<p>Scratching Red, scaly skin, most often on the elbows, abdomen, & ear flaps</p> <p>Diagnosis: skin scraping</p> <p>In humans, causes severe itching, especially on skin that is warm.</p>	<p>Anti-bacterial or anti-itch shampoo followed by dip Ivermectin Revolution Interceptor or Sentinel</p> <p>All dogs in household must be treated.</p>	
Tapeworms 	<p>Tapeworms attach to the intestine with its teeth & absorb nutrients through their skin; they can grow to be a foot long or more. Infestation results from the swallowing of an infected flea.</p>	<p>Diagnosis: Worm segments, which resemble grains of rice, can be seen around the anus or in feces.</p>	<p>Praziquantel (Droncit) causes the worm to dissolve</p>	<p>Flea treatment</p>

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  Only one known case	Trichomonas foetus While well-known as a cause of disease in cattle, this protozoan has only recently been identified as a pathogen of cats. It often is misdiagnosed as Giardia. Infection is acquired orally through contact with the feces of infected cat (e.g., via grooming).	Chronic or recurring diarrhea that is foul-smelling & occasionally contains blood & mucous Anal inflammation & discomfort Fecal incontinence Diagnosis: examination of fresh & diarrheic feces.	There currently is no effective treatment. Cases generally resolve on their own, but it can take up to two years. (On average, it takes 9 months.)	
  Toxoplasmosis	This virus can be transmitted by a pregnant woman to her fetus, & the possible effects of infection on the fetus include epilepsy, mental retardation, paralysis, blindness, & spontaneous abortion. Because of this, toxoplasmosis is one of the best-known zoonotic diseases. While cat feces are usually assumed to be the culprit in human toxoplasmosis cases, most humans are infected by eating undercooked meat.	The signs of toxoplasmosis in pets are nonspecific. While most cats show no signs of infection, common signs may include fever, loss of appetite, & depression. Other signs may occur, depending on where the infection occurs—primarily the lungs, central nervous system, & eyes. Central nervous system signs: depression, head tilt, partial or total blindness, seizures Respiratory signs: fever, cough, increased respiratory rate & effort. Eyes: squinting & excessive blinking	Clindamycin is currently the drug of choice in both dogs & cats.	Feed cats only dry, canned, or cooked food, & never feed them uncooked meat, entrails, or bones. Pregnant women & immunocompromised individuals should not clean litter boxes & should avoid contact with cat feces & soil where cats may have defecated. If another family member cannot clean the litter box, the box should be emptied daily & cleaned with scalding water weekly.