



BRINGING YOUR CAT TO OUR HOSPITAL

Research has shown that every single step of the basic 7-step process of “going to the vet” can cause fear and behavioral issues for some cats. Our goal is to make sure your pet is both happy and healthy after coming to Intermountain Pet Hospital and Clinic. Please take a few minutes to help your pet make this visit the best ever!

CARRIERS

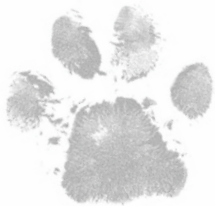
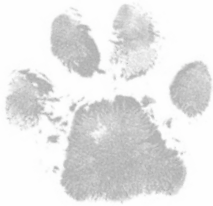
- The optimal crate for cats is a top-removal model with two exits – one at the front and one on top.
- Make sure you have comfortable bedding in the crate to make your cat feel safe and relaxed.
- Keep your crate available at all times as part of your cat’s furniture, perhaps with the top off so they will use it as a bed at times.
- Give treats & provide meals in the crate to make it more comfortable. You may have to start their feeding near the crate, and gradually work their way into the crate itself.
- Take the door off so it does not encumber your kitty from accessing the crate – make this crate irresistible for your feline.
- Here are some helpful video links for carriers and cats:
<http://veterinarymedicine.dvm360.com/video-take-scary-out-cat-carriers>
http://www.catalystcouncil.org/resources/health_welfare/cat_carrier_video/
- Remember cats need time to adjust to the unfamiliar. Stay calm, stay positive.
- Cats do not learn from punishment or force. Give rewards to encourage positive behavior.

PRIOR TO THE VISIT

- Do not feed your cat a big meal before coming. If your cat is hungry they will be more apt to take our treats, which helps reduce stress.
- If your kitty has food issues, bring their favorite treats for us to use, plus a favorite toy. Familiarity can be soothing.
- If we are doing an annual exam or your pet has GI issues, bring a fresh stool sample. (equaling at least 1 teaspoon) in a baggie or collection container. We can provide one if needed.
- If your cat has had previous anxiety or fear issues in going to the vet, contact our office a few days prior to your scheduled visit and inquire if anxiety medication would help your feline to be calm and relaxed.

GOING FOR A RIDE

- Distract the pet with calming music. We have Pet Acoustic Cubes that play music that have proven to be calming to cats. You can also select some soft, classical music during the drive that offers calming qualities. This will drown out road noise that can be nerve-racking to your pet.
- Calming pheromone spray or wipes applied to the bedding will help your kitty handle the ride.
- Try to have the cat-carrier sit level on the seat. Add a light towel draped over the sides of the crate to eliminate distractions and stress.
- Use a seat belt to hold the crate in place so it does not slide around on corners or sudden stops.
- It is good to condition your kitty by taking him/her for short rides, then giving treats so they are accustomed to the car and crate.



CARRYING THE CRATE

- Carry the crate with both hands, keeping it level (do not allow it to swing.)
- When setting the crate down, do not use the floor. Rather, use counter tops or chairs instead. Cats like to be on perches.
- Do not permit dogs that are in our reception area to come up and sniff the crate, as that is very scary for some cats.

MANAGING THE CHECK-IN, WEIGHING AND GOING INTO THE EXAM ROOM

- Our weigh-in scales for kitties are in the exam room and we will catch their weight as part of the exam.
- Once in the exam room, let your cat roam and “own” the room. Use treats to calm them. We will also have calming music playing to help with their comfort.
- We use pheromone diffusers in our exam rooms to help felines settle in. If your pet has a favorite toy bring it and let them play with it in the exam room.

THE EXAM

- Most times a doctor and technician will enter the room together. The doctor will sit for a short period to permit your cat time to get to know him or her, and use treats to build a relationship.
- We will collect history during this time. The technician will write up the information provided on the Pet Report Card and enter it into the computer for future reference.
- We will perform the exam where the cat is most comfortable. This can be on the bench or on the exam table. The goal is to make this as easy for your pet as possible. For added comfort, our tables have a non-slip mat that is not cold to the touch.
- If your cat gets too stressed, then a sedative or other anxiety medication, or even rescheduling the appointment is sometimes best. Repeated, negative experiences can cause undue stress and make the cat more reactive on the next visit. We want these to be fun and happy times.
- When we have completed the exam, we will go over our findings with you. We will also use that time to reward your pet with treats or a toy so they have lasting, great memories.

X-RAYS, LAB SAMPLE COLLECTION, ANAL SACS, NAIL TRIM AND OTHER MINOR PROCEDURES

- If you can teach your cat to roll over and allow their tummy to be scratched, that often helps us, not only with the exam, but also the collection of samples (or an x-ray or ultrasound if needed.)
- We use a local anesthetic cream when collecting samples to make the process more “pain and fear free.”
- The use of pheromone sprays can also help reduce stress during this portion of the examination.
- Some cats get extremely anxious when having minor procedures. Anxiety medication or a stronger sedative may be indicated to avoid undue mental and physical stress. We will consult with you about this step. We will not use force to accomplish these tasks as that produces major problems for cats.

Working together we can ensure positive, fear-free experiences with every visit.

