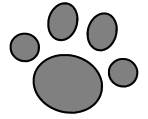


# LIBERTY VETERINARY HOSPITAL

## Paw Prints Monthly



October 2011

### OUR MISSION STATEMENT:

Liberty Veterinary Hospital strives to create a state-of-the-art pet care facility that meets all of our clients' & pets' needs from nutritional supplies, boarding and grooming to the highest level of medical and surgical care. Because our team can only be as good as the sum of its parts, we nurture and educate our staff so that we may all provide uncompromising service, compassion, kindness and caring for each patient as a member

## OCTOBER IS CAT HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

What greater gift than the love of a cat? ~Charles Dickens



According to the 2011-2012 APPA National Pet Owners Survey, there are 78.2 million dogs and 86.4 million cats owned throughout the US.<sup>1</sup> Even though cats currently outnumber dogs as family pets, the AVMA reports a decline in veterinary visits.<sup>2</sup>

The Doctor's and staff of Liberty Veterinary Hospital feel strongly that focusing on **wellness** rather than *illness* is key to a long and healthy life. We recommend semi-annual exams for *all* pets, including cats. Cats are especially good at hiding their pain. Waiting until a problem arises can mean the underlying disease or illness may have progressed to the point where treatment may be difficult, lengthy, & expensive. Possibly even impossible. Indoor only cats are often the most overlooked. While they may not always need vaccines, they do still benefit from preventative care.

Cherish the gift you have in your cat and offer the wellness care that will keep him or her happy, healthy and by your side for many years to come.

Amy Johnstone, DVM

Robyn Collins DVM

<sup>1</sup> Ownership statistics are gathered from APPA's 2011-2012 National Pet Owners Survey

<sup>2</sup> AVMA 2007 U.S. Pet Ownership & Demographics Sourcebook

### Some tips on Getting your Cat to the Veterinarian from [healthycatsforlife.com](http://healthycatsforlife.com)

#### Carriers

- Be sure it is convenient for you, your cat and your veterinarian.
- Top-loading carriers are much easier for placing your cat inside. Your cat can easily go into and out of an opening on the side.
- Other options include carriers in which the top half is removable, so the cat can remain in the carrier during the examination.
- Keeping the carrier out in your home and putting favorite treats or toys inside helps train your cat to see the carrier as a safe place.
- Never dump the cat out of the carrier.
- Either let your cat walk out or gently remove your cat from the carrier.

#### Adjusting to car rides

When traveling with your cat in the car, always put the cat in a carrier or other protected container. Rather than allowing the cat to roam freely, this is safer for both of you.

To make your cat comfortable when riding in the car, take the cat to places other than the veterinarian's office.

Start with short rides at first, then gradually extend the length of the drive.

Because cats travel best on an empty stomach, do not feed your cat for several hours before traveling.

After each successful car trip, reward your pet with positive attention and treats.

#### Pleasant Veterinary visits

To make your cat feel at home in the veterinarian's office, bring the cat's favorite treats and toys with you.

When at home, practice regular care routines such as grooming, nail trimming and teeth brushing. Pretend to do routine veterinary procedures with your cat. You can do this by touching the cat's face, ears, feet and tail. This should help your cat adjust to the veterinary hospital and any needed home care.

Make trips to the veterinary hospital for visits that don't involve examinations or procedures, such as checking the cat's weight. It sets your cat up for positive experiences at the veterinary hospital, and lets your cat be more comfortable with the clinic and staff.



#### OUR HOURS:

Mon, Tues, Thurs, Fri. 7:30am - 7pm

Wed 7:30am - 6pm

Sat 8:00am - 2pm

Sun Closed

#### Did You Know ...

We offer dog obedience class referrals

We offer full grooming, boarding and surgical services

We offer massage and rehabilitation therapy referrals

We offer *free* educational seminars

We really look forward to visiting with you and your pet!

**Visit Our Website**  
[www.libvethosp.com](http://www.libvethosp.com)

### How to Give Your Cat a Pill (by Peggy Althoff)

1. Grasp cat firmly in your arms. Cradle its head on your elbow, just as if you were giving a baby a bottle. Coo confidently, "That's a nice kitty." Drop the pill in its mouth.
2. Retrieve cat from the top of the lamp and the pill from under the sofa.
3. Follow Step 1 procedure, but hold the cat's front paws down with your left hand and back paws with elbow of right arm. Poke pill into mouth with right forefinger.
4. Retrieve cat from under the bed. Get new pill from bottle (resist impulse to get new cat).
5. Again proceed as in Step 1, except when you have cat firmly cradled in bottle-feeding position, sit on edge of chair, fold your torso over cat, bring your right hand over your left elbow, open cat's mouth by lifting the upper jaw and pop pill in -- quickly. As your head is down by your knees, you won't be able to see what you are doing. That's just as well.
6. Leave cat hanging on drapes. Leave pill in your hair.
7. If you're a woman, have a good cry. If you're a man, have a good cry.
8. Now pull yourself together. Who's the boss here anyway? Retrieve cat and pill. Assuming the position outlined in Step 1, say sternly, "Who's the boss here anyway?" Open cat's mouth, take pill and...oops!
9. This isn't working, is it? Collapse and think. Aha! Those flashing claws are causing chaos.
10. Crawl to the linen closet. Drag back a large beach towel. Spread towel on floor.
11. Retrieve cat from kitchen counter and pill from potted plant.
12. Spread cat on towel near one end with its head over long edge.
13. Flatten cat's front and back legs over its stomach (resist impulse to flatten cat).
14. Roll cat in towel. work fast; time and tabbies wait for no man--or woman!
15. Resume position specified in Step 1. Rotate your left hand to cat's head. Press its mouth at the jaw hinges like opening the pets of a snapdragon.
16. Drop pill into cat's mouth and poke gently. Voila! It's done.
17. Vacuum up loose fur (cat's). Apply bandages to wounds (yours).
18. Take two aspirin and lie down.

## Subtle Signs of Sickness

from AAFP, Boehringer Ingelheim and [healthycatsforlife.com](http://healthycatsforlife.com)

1. **INAPPROPRIATE ELIMINATION BEHAVIOR** – Often misattributed as an attempt to “get back at the owner,” inappropriate urination and defecation many times accompany an underlying medical condition ranging from kidney disease to arthritis.

2. **CHANGES IN INTERACTION** – Cats are social animals. Changes in their interaction could signal pain, fear or anxiety. Underlying medical conditions can also cause cats to become aggressive toward those who cause them pain, even if caregivers don't realize they are doing so.

3. **CHANGES IN ACTIVITY** – A decrease or increase in activity can be a sign of sickness in cats. Medical conditions such as arthritis can produce a decrease in activity while an increase can signal a condition such as hyperthyroidism.

4. **CHANGES IN SLEEPING HABITS** – Cats sleep 16 to 18 hours a day, but most of the time in a “catnapping” state where they are quick to respond to stimuli like someone walking into a room. More or less sleep, or discomfort laying down and getting up, can be signs of illness in a cat.

5. **CHANGES IN FOOD AND WATER CONSUMPTION** – Eating or drinking less can be signs of a range of underlying medical conditions. For an accurate picture, caregivers can measure the food or drink they give to their cats and then measure again in 24 hours to calculate their cat's consumption.

6. **UNEXPLAINED WEIGHT LOSS OR GAIN** – Weight changes in cats often go unnoticed because of their thick coats. You can assess body condition by feeling along the ribs; they should be easily felt but not prominent. (actual weight can be taken by holding cat when you weigh yourself, then deducting your actual weight—or stop by LVH for a check on your cats weight)

7. **CHANGES IN GROOMING** – Note whether your cat's coat is clean and free of mats. Less grooming can signal a range of medical conditions, while more grooming can be a sign of a skin problem.

8. **SIGNS OF STRESS** – Sudden lifestyle changes can cause stress in cats, resulting in a range of symptoms from decreased grooming to eating more frequently. These are also signs of illness, so cats should be examined to rule out sickness before stress issues are addressed.

9. **CHANGES IN VOCALIZATION** – An increase in vocalization or howling is often seen with older cats and can be caused by high blood pressure, stress or pain. Caregivers who note a change in vocalization should visit their veterinarians to rule out sickness.

10. **BAD BREATH** – Studies show 70 percent of cats have gum disease as early as age 3. One of the early indicators of an oral problem is bad breath, so it is important to have your cat's teeth checked every six months to help prevent dental disease or begin early treatment of problems.