



Cat Preventative Care Program

Part 1: Physical Exam

Part 2: Vaccinations

Part 3: The Internal Exam: Lab Tests

Part 4: Parasite Control



PREVENTATIVE CARE PROGRAM FOR YOUR CAT

Since our inception in April 2016, Longleaf Animal Hospital has strived to provide the best medical care for your cat. In alignment with this goal, we would like to turn our focus now and for years to come to our preventative health program that keeps your family member happy, active, and vital! Our preventative program can be broken down into four (4) but equally important parts:

1. Physical exam
2. Vaccinations
3. The Internal Exam: Lab tests
4. Parasite Control

Vaccinations and parasite control prevent disease from ever hurting our pets. Physical exams and Lab tests can help us to detect any problems early before symptoms are noticed. This can allow us the potential to make simple changes that can prevent severe conditions or emergency visits in the future.

This handout is meant for quick resource. Websites have been included if you are interested in more in-depth information about the recommendations.

1. **Physical exam** is the first step.
 - a. Veterinarians use all their senses to detect any abnormalities in your family member by examining your cat from nose to tail (eyes, nose, ears, teeth, heart, lungs, abdomen, muscle, bones, lymph nodes, haircoat/skin etc.).
 - i. Sight
 1. Example:
 - a. General attitude?
 - b. How do they carry themselves? Ear position? Body Language? Tail position?
 - c. How do they interaction with everyone in the room?
 - d. Fat or thin?
 - ii. Hearing
 1. Example:
 - a. Can you hear the cat breath? What does cough sound like? How many times did they sneeze or cough?
 - b. Use of stethoscope to hear heart, lungs, and gut sounds
 - c. Does their purr or meow sound normal?
 - iii. Touch
 1. Abdomen feels normal? Sensitive to touch?
 2. Any lumps or bumps?

3. Any swelling or wounds?
 4. Haircoat texture and skin feel normal? Feel scabs?
 5. Fat or thin?
 - iv. Smell
 1. Bad breath? Diabetes, kidney disease, and dental disease have a distinct smell
 2. Bad body odor? Ears and skin diseases can be suspected as soon as you walk in an exam room by the smell
 - b. Any abnormalities detected on physical exam can help us develop an individual plan which may include more specific diagnostic tests to identify the disease or injury
 - c. Annual examination is the minimum recommended frequency. Depending on your cat's health status, we may recommend more frequent visits to detect changes in health status quicker
2. Lifestyle Appropriate **Vaccine Protocol**
- a. 2013 Association of Feline Practitioners Guidelines
<https://catvets.com/guidelines/practice-guidelines/feline-vaccination-guidelines>
 - b. Vaccination for Panleukopenia and Rabies have greatly reduced the occurrence of these fatal diseases. Vaccinations continue to be important, but research continues to support that some of these vaccinations have longer lasting immunity than we originally thought. We are instituting a revised vaccination protocol which is included in this handout **** SEE APPENDIX**
 - c. **Core** vaccines are recommended for every cat
 - i. Rabies is **REQUIRED BY LAW!**
 - d. **Non-Core** vaccines are recommended for do at risk for contracting a specific disease based on your cat's age, lifestyle, and where you live
3. "The internal exam: **Laboratory testing for deadly viruses, parasites, and general health**"
- a. Not all diseases can be detected with a physical exam. These are silent, but deadly diseases. Your cat may be acting completely normal at home.
 - b. Feline Leukemia Virus (**FeLV**) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (**FIV**) testing
 - i. Once contracted these viruses are a "life sentence" for a cat. They remain infected for their lifetime and will continually deal with the effects of these diseases
 - ii. Both viruses cause suppression of the immune system which can mean a lifetime of poor health and even death
 - iii. These are cat only diseases that are transmitted from their mother, bites, mating, and close living quarters
 - iv. Who should be tested?
 1. Any cats about to be adopted or introduced into a new household
 2. Any cats 30 days after recent exposure such as bite wound or abscess
 3. Any cats about to be vaccinated for FeLV
 4. Any sick cats with signs consistent of these diseases, regardless age, previous negative status and vaccination status

- v. American Association of Feline Practitioner Retrovirus Guidelines
<https://catvets.com/public/PDFs/PracticeGuidelines/RetrovirusGLS-Summary.pdf>
- c. **Fecal exam** is recommended annually to check stool for intestinal parasites
 - i. Parasites will cause disease in your cat but certain parasites such as roundworms and hookworms can cause serious diseases such as blindness and skin conditions in us too!
 - ii. Companion Animal Parasite Council <https://capcvet.org/guidelines/general-guidelines/>
- d. Age appropriate **bloodwork and urine tests**
 - i. The physical exam is very useful for determining many abnormalities, but it will not detect subtle, internal changes.
 - ii. Early detection can give us more time to intervene and change outcomes and it can also prevent emergencies.
 - iii. These tests are helpful in identifying common diseases early like kidney disease, diabetes, and thyroid conditions as well evaluate the condition of the circulatory and immune system
 - iv. These tests are very helpful in completing the picture of your beloved family member's health status.
 - v. Longleaf Animal Hospital offers a special discount on these preventative diagnostics.
- 4. **Parasite control** is another important part of a preventative care because parasites can cause serious diseases themselves as well as transmit disease
 - a. Flea, tick, intestinal parasite, ear mite, and heartworm medications
 - i. Deciding what products are right for your cat is a discussion needed with your veterinarian based on your cat's health status and lifestyle.
 - b. Companion Animal Parasite Council <https://capcvet.org/>

General resources:

1. For all your after-hour questions and emergencies, call Small Animal Emergency Services
 - a. "When we are closed, they are open!"
 - b. Phone: 910-246-0405
 - c. 5901 US Highway 1 North, Vass, NC
 - d. Website: <http://www.saesnc.org/>
2. ASPCA pet poison control
 - a. Great resource to quickly answer: "Is this poisonous or not?"
 - b. Staffed 24 hours a day/7 day a week by toxicologists
 - c. <https://www.aspca.org/pet-care/animal-poison-control>
 - d. 1-888-426-4435
 - e. One time \$65 consultation fee unless you have Home Again Microchip then it is FREE!
3. Veterinary Partner Website is a great general resource on everything to do with veterinary medicine written for owners <https://veterinarypartner.vin.com/> that is trusted by veterinarians
4. On our website, www.longleafanimalhospital.com, you can find links to:
 - a. Our on-line pharmacy, Vetsource, through the Home Delivery button at the bottom left of our home page
 - b. Here under client center, you will find ways to connect with us electronically by signing up for Petly where you can request appointments and prescriptions on line, send a message, and view your pet's medical history yourself.
5. Two great websites for everything cat including health and behavior!
 - a. Ohio State Indoor Cat Initiative <https://indoorpet.osu.edu/cats>
 - b. American Association of Feline Practitioners <https://catfriendly.com/keep-your-cat-healthy/cat-friendly-practice/>



Adult Feline Vaccination Protocol

Name of Core Vaccine	Disease	Booster interval
FVRCP combo	Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis-Calicivirus-Panleukopenia	Every 3 years after initial series
Rabies	Rabies	Every 3 years after initial 1-year vaccination

Name of Non-Core Vaccine	Disease	Booster interval
FeLV Vaccine***	Feline Leukemia	Annually: initial series is 2 boosters separated by 3-4 weeks

Who needs to be vaccinated for Feline Leukemia

- cats that go outdoors
- cats that have direct contact with cats of unknown status or in high turnover situations such as foster homes or other group housing
- cats that live with FeLV-positive cats
- all kittens because the lifestyles of kittens frequently change after acquisition and they may subsequently become at risk for FeLV exposure