



# The Scoop

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Happy New Year!

January 2014

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**News and Events**

**New Options for Kitties Facing End-of-Life**

When cats get old or become ill, families want to make sure their cat is comfortable and enjoys good quality of life. [The Cat Practice Hospice & End-of-Life Care](#) provides new options for providing comfort care as kitties age or experience serious illness. If you have such a kitty, contact our **hospice nurse, Laura Kramek**, for a consultation at 248-540-3390.

**Winter Sneezes & Sniffles Can Signal Winter Colds**

Just like in humans, winter can make your cat's nose run and eyes water. Kitties get colds too, but the main thing is making sure that a common cold doesn't turn into something much more serious.



Be on the lookout for: sneezing, coughing, runny eyes and/or nose, congestion and lack of appetite.

**Time to Call the Vet if:**

- Kitty is congested with yellow or green eye or nose discharge.
- Not acting or eating normally.

**Remember:**

Kitty might have a secondary bacterial infection that could require antibiotics and other supportive care.

**Monitor Kitty at Home if:**

- Kitty is eating and acting normally.
- Discharge from eyes or nose is clear.

**Remember:**

Colds are viruses and have to run their course, just like human colds.

**New Nurse Hotline**

The Cat Practice has a new email "hotline" to answer your questions about your kitty's health. Email [NurseHotline@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto:NurseHotline@thecatpracticepc.com) If your cat has symptoms of illness, it's still best to make an appointment with your veterinarian.

**Dry Air Can Mean Dry Skin**

As you run the heat, the air in your home dries out. For cats, dry air can cause everything from dry skin to anal gland problems. Just as our skin gets dry and flakey in the winter months, cats can have similar issues, especially cats who love to sit on heat vents!



**Potential problems:**

- Even mild dehydration can contribute to constipation, especially in older cats.
- Dry, itchy cracked skin can be prone to infection.
- For cats who sit on vents, their anal gland material can become thick and won't express like it should, which can lead to infection or abscess.

**How to avoid the dryness:**

- Encourage extra fluid intake by putting extra water bowls around the house; offer fresh water frequently.
- Add water to canned food.
- Run a humidifier or vaporizer in your home.
- Consider giving your cat a fish oil supplement (available in liquid or capsules).
- Offer a heated pet bed to discourage sitting on heat vents.

**More Cat Lover News: Read Cat Chat**

Oakland Press blogger Caren Gittleman brings you all kinds of cat lover news, cool cat stories, new products and more. Go to: <http://opcatchat.blogspot.com>

**Winter Can Cause Arthritis Flare-ups in Older Cats**

Cold weather can make joints stiff and tender so be gentle with older cats who may be showing signs of arthritis. Look for ways to make getting around easier while taking precautions to prevent injury.

- Wait below arthritic cats when they are climbing stairs or jumping onto furniture to make sure they don't fall or struggle.
- Consider modifying the home environment to make it easier for cats with arthritis get around. This includes adding steps to make it easier to access furniture and putting litter boxes on the same floor as kitty to avoid stairs.
- Make sure kitty has a thick, soft bed to cuddle up in on chilly nights.
- If you allow your cat outside be mindful of snow and ice. A slip or slide on the ice could be painful and cause serious injury.

**Signs Your Kitty May Have Arthritis**

If your kitty has any one of the following, he/she could have arthritis.

- Difficulty going up and down stairs.
- Difficulty jumping up onto surfaces.
- Stiff or stilted gait, especially after long periods of rest or sleeping.
- Constipation. Cats with arthritis have difficulty squatting, so they often "hold it" and get backed up.

**Save on Wellness Exams for Senior Cats!**



Save 10% off senior wellness exams and get free blood pressure checks, free nail trims and more! AARC is open to cats 15 years and older. [thecatpracticepc.com/aarc.htm](http://thecatpracticepc.com/aarc.htm)

**Kitty Camp**



Cats staying in our Kitty Camp enjoy frequent attention and plenty of play and exercise in our Kitty Playroom. Consider boarding your cat while you're away, have guests or are having work done at home. For information – or to register – go to [thecatpracticepc.com/boarding.html](http://thecatpracticepc.com/boarding.html) or call 248-540-3390.

**Share Your Favorite Feline Valentine**



Do you have a kissy kitty? Or maybe a very affectionate feline? However your kitty shows the love, we would like to share it with our readers. Please email us your favorite kitty Valentine photo and we will run the best ones in the next issue of The Scoop! Our three favorites will win free catnip which should really bring out the love in your feline!

Email photos to [Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto:Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com) **NO LATER THAN JAN 31.**

## Dental Disease Biggest Reason for Serious Feline Illness

Feline kidney disease, liver disease and heart disease are all on the rise. What is making cats sick? Probably the biggest cause: bad teeth. Periodontal disease is a leading cause of serious illness in cats. **The good news is that it's totally preventable, but spotting it early is key.**

**Brushing is the gold standard in dental care.** Just like with human teeth, if we didn't brush at least daily, we would eventually have major oral health issues. Brushing removes soft plaque (a mixture of food, bacteria and saliva) which, if allowed to sit, hardens into tartar. Tartar build-up causes gum recession leading to periodontal disease and tooth loss.

Most cats will tolerate quick brushing and even a few swipes across the teeth is enough to remove a good portion of plaque. It's best to introduce brushing when cats are young, but older cats can be amenable to brushing if it's introduced in a fun and positive way. [Click to view our Meow Tube video brushing your cat's teeth.](#) For cats who won't tolerate brushing, use one of the oral gels that kill bacteria and help reduce inflammation.

Periodic dental cleanings are still needed. (Us humans go to the dentist twice a year!) Even with brushing and the best home care, cats can still develop dental problems including resorptive lesions and broken and loose teeth. X-rays during dental cleanings spot potentially painful problems early. Cats should have their first dental cleaning by age 5.



## Thank You for Your Contributions to the Rufus Memorial Feline Fund

The Rufus Memorial Feline Fund helps offset the cost of veterinary care for rescued cats that were homeless or abandoned. Some of them have come in with severe injuries. Others experience the results of years of neglect. We want to thank all of you who made contributions to the Rufus Memorial Feline Fund in 2013. We couldn't have done it without you! -- *The Cat Practice*

The Rufus Memorial Feline Fund was established in honor of our clinic cat Rufus who greeted many of you at The Cat Practice over the years. Funds go to help abandoned and homeless kitties. To make a donation go to [thecatpracticepc.com/rufusmemorial.htm](http://thecatpracticepc.com/rufusmemorial.htm).

### A Cat's Not Just a Cat!

#### Breed Profile: Exotic Shorthair



Last month, we profiled the Persian. The Exotic Shorthair has all the looks and personality of the Persian without all the hair!

American Shorthair breeders bred their cats with Persians to obtain their lovely silver color and green eyes. The kittens were pretty to look at but did not meet

the true American Shorthair breed standards.

The new cats looked just like Persians, but with a short, dense plush coat. Grooming is easy with simple combing to remove loose hair. Dust can irritate their large eyes, so they should be gently wiped.

The easy-going Exotic Shorthair is an affectionate, gentle cat with the quiet manners of the Persian.

[See our comprehensive list of cat breeds and related health conditions.](#)

### Cat Trivia

**True or false:** Normal cat body temperature is the same as humans, 98.6.

Be FIRST to email us with the RIGHT answer at [Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto:Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com) and win a free bag of organic catnip! See next month's issue for the answer!

#### Last month's trivia answer:

True! Age spots are black spots on the skin that are often seen around the lips, eyes, and nose; and usually start when the cat is three to five years of age.

Congrats to **Sue Gerrity** who was first to reply with the correct answer and claim the free bag of catnip!

## Cat's Meow Tip: One Way to Encourage Finicky Eaters

I have noticed that oftentimes WHERE my cats eat is just as important as what they eat. If you have a picky eater, BEFORE you change foods, try moving his/her food bowl around. One of my cats will only eat away from the other cats, preferring the floor in the half bathroom. Another likes it if the food bowl is placed on the back of the sofa where she likes to lounge. So before you throw out that expensive food, move that bowl. A little ambience goes a long way! -- **Contributed by Linda Wasche of Sylvan Lake.**

**Do you have a cat care tip that is just the Cat's Meow? Email [Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto:Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com). If we run it, you get a FREE bag of organic catnip. Limit to 75 words.**



## Looking for Homes / Official Cat Adoption Site

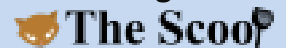
See the adoptable cats and kittens in our lobby and on [our Facebook page](#). Also, we are now an [official adoption outreach center of Oakland Pet Adoption Center](#) in Auburn Hills so we are getting new kitties as often as we can adopt them out!

## Follow Us in the News!

Check our website regularly for updates on our recent news coverage.

[thecatpracticepc.com/press.htm](http://thecatpracticepc.com/press.htm).

## Are You Getting The Scoop?



To sign up, send us an email at

[meowmail@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto:meowmail@thecatpracticepc.com)

or call 248.540.3390

## Contact Us:

If you have story ideas for The Scoop or would like more information, please contact Tabitha at [Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto:Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com).

## Our Hours:

Monday - Thursday: 8 am – 9 pm

Friday: 8 am – 8 pm

Saturday & Sunday: 8 am – 6 pm

*I have studied many philosophers and many cats. The wisdom of cats is infinitely superior.*  
- Hippolyte Taine



Follow us:

Wellness/early detection

Chronic conditions

Medical/surgical care

Geriatrics/hospice

Kitty camp boarding

### The Cat Practice commitment to cats and their people:

- o Spot health conditions early to avoid more costly care later.
- o Treat the whole patient looking out for physical and emotional wellbeing.
- o Respect each cat as an individual with his/her own distinct personality & heredity.
- o Avoid surgery at all cost. (The exception: all cats should be spayed or neutered!)
- o Provide alternatives for care whenever possible.
- o Partner with cat families through knowledge sharing.
- o Make oral hygiene and preventive dental care a priority.

The Scoop is published monthly by The Cat Practice.



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