



The Scoop

Published by The Cat Practice, Birmingham, Michigan. Open 7 days a week and evenings.

Happy Holidays!

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Make your Holidays Kitty Safe!

During Thanksgiving and Christmas, there are lots of things for your cat to get into. Some of them can be life-threatening. Make some easy changes in your festivities this year to keep kitty safe during the holidays. Follow these **holiday decorating Do's and Don'ts**:

Do:

- **Keep electrical cords, including strands of lights, taped down** or inaccessible. Chewing can lead to serious electrical shock or burns.
- **Anchor the Christmas tree** by securing the top to the nearest wall with fishing line. Cats love to climb and can easily tip trees over.
- **Decorate with Poinsettias** instead of toxic plants like mistletoe or lilies. While Poinsettia plants can cause mild vomiting and GI upset, they are much safer than other holiday plants.

Don't:

- **Don't use tinsel** which is possibly the most dangerous holiday decoration. Even a few strands, if ingested, can cause potentially deadly intestinal obstruction.
- **Don't use imitation snow**, also called flocking. It can be very hazardous to pets if ingested.
- **Don't use chemical tree preservatives** which get into the bowl poisoning the water that pets will often drink. Or, use a tree skirt, towel, aluminum foil or plastic wrap to tightly cover the water bowl.



November is Senior Pet Month

Senior Cats Can Live Longer – and Better -- With Good Basic Care

Cats are “senior” at age 10 when they start to have a lot of the same health issues as aging people. Keep your senior cat happy and healthy with these tips.

Feed your senior a good diet.

Experts recommend mimicking a cat's nature-intended meal as closely as possible – high protein, high fat and high moisture. Long-term feeding of an all dry food diet is suspected to be a factor in chronic renal failure, [pancreatitis](#) and intestinal lymphoma. Cats eating dry cat food take in only half the amount of water as cats on a canned diet. The resulting chronic dehydration can cause stress on the kidneys as well as chronic inflammation of the digestive tract.



Maintain regular dental care.

Bacteria living within your cat's mouth can pose a serious threat to overall health and can affect a cat's kidneys, heart and liver. The number one thing you can do to keep your senior cat healthy is to keep up with dental care including regular dental cleaning at the vet.

Consider using dietary supplements.

Choose supplements carefully; not all are safe for cats, but here are some that could benefit your aging feline.

- **Glucosamine chondroitin** for joint discomfort. It thickens the joint fluid, making it a better lubricant, and stimulates cartilage to lay down over the diseased bone acting like a cushion.
- **Omega-3 fatty acids**, such as that in salmon oil, has anti-inflammatory properties, enhances the immune system, helps the heart and can reduce hypertension.
- **Probiotics** (beneficial bacteria) for healthy gut flora and digestion, supports a healthy immune system and can help protect your cat against E. Coli, Salmonella and other harmful bacteria moving through the digestive tract.

Spot and relieve pain.

Spot any changes in your cat's movement and disposition which could be signs of arthritis or other medical issues. Left untreated, pain can cause stress leading to other health issues. Options for treating pain include medication prescribed by your vet as well as acupuncture. **NEVER give your pet human medications which can be fatal.**

[Read more about senior and geriatric cat care on our website.](#)

Hospice is a philosophy of care

November is National Hospice Month. Our Hospice and End-of-Life Care program is an approach to veterinary care that provides alternatives to euthanasia. Its emphasis on comfort care means that seriously ill kitties can still enjoy quality of life. Talk to our hospice nurse, Laura Kramek, for more information, or [visit our website.](#)

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News and Events:

See Our New Archive of Cat's Meow Tips

Each issue of The Scoop brings you creative and thoughtful ideas to help you best care for your kitty. See ALL of these tips archived at <http://thecatpracticepc.com/catsmeowtips.html>

Kitty Camp

Cats staying in our Kitty Camp get 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. Go to thecatpracticepc.com/boarding.html or call 248-540-3390.



Important

Contact information:

The Cat Practice Hospice and End of Life Care. Contact hospice nurse Laura Kramek for a consultation at 248-540-3390.

Nurse hotline. Get answers to questions about your kitty's health. Email: Nursehotline@Thecatpracticepc.com

AARC wellness exam savings for senior cats. Go to thecatpracticepc.com/aarc.htm

Adoptable cats and kittens. Visit our lobby and [Facebook page.](#)

Story ideas for The Scoop. Contact Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com

New Early Detection Test for Feline Kidney Disease

In their lifetime, one in three cats will develop kidney disease, which is a leading cause of feline death. A new test – called SDMA (symmetric dimethylarginine) – is a new kidney function test introduced in June of 2015. It enables veterinarians to diagnose kidney disease months or even years earlier than traditional methods.

We have always looked at two main kidney values: BUN and creatinine. The creatinine does not start to elevate until a cat has lost up to 75% of kidney function. The new SDMA test detects kidney disease much earlier -- on average, at only 40% loss of kidney function and, in some cases, as little as 25% loss, and on average, 17 months sooner than other tests.

SDMA is excreted almost exclusively by the kidneys, making it a good marker for estimating kidney function. In addition, unlike creatinine, SDMA is not impacted by muscle mass, thereby making it a better tool for diagnosing and monitoring kidney disease in underweight geriatric pets, especially cats with other diseases that cause muscle wasting.

Early detection of kidney disease, while a pet is still clinically healthy, improves wellbeing and can add months or even years to a pet's life. [Read more about kidney disease on our website.](#)

November is National Pet Diabetes Awareness Month

Preventing & Detecting Feline Diabetes

Feline diabetes is becoming more prevalent. Some cats have a genetic predisposition for the disease, but it's also attributable to obesity and poor diet. Diabetes is easily diagnosed with basic lab work, and can be managed long term. When caught and treated early, cats can go into remission and not require long-term insulin injections. However it's important to take any symptoms seriously since untreated diabetes can cause serious illness requiring intensive hospitalization.

Common symptoms of diabetes:

- Excessive thirst / drinking more water.
- Urinating greater amounts of urine, or more frequently.
- Increased appetite.
- Weight loss.
- Vomiting and / or diarrhea.

Reducing the risk of diabetes:

- Maintain a health weight. Overweight pets are far more likely to develop this disease.
- Feed a low-carb diet. This means NO dry food, and just canned food.
- Screen blood and urine panels yearly for cats over age 10

Diabetes is more common in overweight and obese cats. Weight management and exercise are essential to your feline's health. [Read more on our website.](#)

A Cat's Not Just a Cat!

Breed Profile: Burmese



The Burmese originated in America in the 1930s from a single cat: Wong Mau. The breed is sweet-natured, people-oriented and loves to play or curl up on your lap. Burmese are an ideal family pet, but if a busy home means long periods of alone time, consider two for company.

Burmese are medium-sized and compact with a strong, well-muscled body making it surprisingly heavy for its size. They come in a range of solid and tortoiseshell colors that grow deeper with age.

Burmese are generally healthy, but may have cranial deformities, glaucoma or feline hyperesthesia syndrome. They may also be prone to calcium oxalate stones in the urinary tract.

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

Cat Trivia

True or false: Poinsettia plants are highly toxic to cats.

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

Last month's trivia answer:

False! FIV affects all cats, even large wild cats such as tigers and lions.

Congrats to Lynn Wolan of Birmingham who was first to reply with the correct answer and claim the free bag of catnip!

Wi-Fi available 
Ask at our front desk

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thecatpracticepc.com/press.htm

Our Hours:

Monday - Thursday: 8 am – 9 pm
Friday: 8 am – 8 pm
Saturday & Sunday: 8 am – 6 pm

By associating with the cat, one only risks becoming richer.

– Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette

Cat's Meow Tip: Shop the Kids' Aisle for Cute Kitty Furniture

Kid-size chairs and sofas are perfect for kitty lounging. Plus they are typically kid-proof meaning sturdy construction with washable fabrics. We found a cute kids' chair and ottoman (pictured at right with our Emma) at Home Goods. We have also seen some cute kids' furniture on Amazon.com. Plus the prices for kids' furniture are less than what you might spend at a specialty pet store!

-- Contributed by: Linda Wasche, Sylvan Lake

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



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The Cat Practice commitment to cats and their people:

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

The Scoop is published monthly by The Cat Practice.



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