



Incoming Kitten Protocol

When Animal Control Officers or a citizen from the community brings in kittens, the Outreach Manager must be notified immediately (on Saturdays and Sundays, notify the manager on duty). **Before touching any kittens, hands must be washed and cleaned or gloves must be worn.** Kittens under 3 pounds **MAY NOT** go in to strays and **MUST** be set up in an office.

I. Any individual completing the intake exam for the kitten(s) must have gone through training with the Outreach Manager. Before an intake exam can even begin, it is important to complete the following steps:

1. Weigh the kitten in grams
2. Take a temperature
 - a. If the kitten is **Hypothermic** (Cold; temp below 98°F) the kitten should be placed on a heating source, such as the Snuggle Safe Stones or Heating Pad. **The kitten should not be left unsupervised during this time period.** If the kitten is immobile, you will need to rotate the kitten periodically to help the whole body warm up. Take the kittens temperature periodically to watch for overheating.
 - i. If using a heating pad, only place under half of the crate or location to ensure the animal has a place to go once they are feeling warmer.
 - ii. Fluids can be warmed up (to a temperature of no more than 98 degrees) and given in small increments.
 - b. If the kitten is **Hyperthermic** (Hot; temperature above 104°F), the kitten should be cooled by rubbing water on their feet, ears and abdomen. Ice packs wrapped in blankets can also be used but **DO NOT** leave the ice pack in one area for more than a few minutes. Take the kittens temperature periodically to watch for hypothermia (it is a good idea to stop cooling once the kitten has reached 103°F).
 - i. Fluids should be administered at room temperature.

II. When completing the intake exam, the individual must check the following items, therefore completing the “nose to toes” exam:

- Nose:
 - Are they sneezing upon intake? If so, how often? What color is the snot (clear, yellow, green?).
 - Any abnormalities? If so, take note on their intake paperwork.
 - Is an Upper Respiratory Infection present or a potential concern?
- Mouth:
 - Check mouth and development of teeth to help verify age.
 - How do the gums look? Are the pale and tacky or pink and wet? If gums are pale and tacky, administer Sub-Q fluids and, if neonatal, use a tiny dab



of Karo Syrup on their gums or tongue. It is best to put the dab on a q-tip then rub in those locations. Re-check in 10 minutes.

- Eyes:
 - Even if their eyes aren't open yet, it is important to wipe their eyes to help remove bacteria. This will help reduce the risk of conjunctivitis when the eyes open.
 - Eyes open? Take note if there is there any discharge? If so, what color is it (clear, yellow, green)? Texture of the discharge (watery, crusty)? Any inflammation?
- Ears:
 - If dirty, clean out with proper tools (q-tips and ear cleaner) and check for small white, sand-like specks. If seen, those are ear mites. Treat with 0.05cc of the pre-made Ivermectin solution per ear and note on intake form.
 - If clean, please make note on intake form. Follow up in 2 weeks.
- Fur:
 - Do you see live fleas? Flea dirt (black flecks on skin, will turn red if exposed to water)? If flea dirt is present, it is safe to assume fleas are around as well.
 - If the kitten is too small for flea treatment give a dawn dish bath **at the end of the exam process**. A small ring of dish soap can be placed around the kittens' neck to trap the fleas during the bath process as they try to go towards the head for safety. **Make sure the kitten is completely dry before returning to the litter or crate**. If the fleas are overwhelming, see the foster care coordinator for a safe way to remove them all.
 - If the kitten is at least 1.5lbs, administer a safe flea treatment after a bath has been completed.
 - What is their hydration status? Placing your hands at their shoulder blades, pinch the skin upwards to make a small tent. Does the skin stay up or does it fall back in to place? If it falls back, how quickly? If it snaps back, they are well hydrated. If it is a slow descent, fluids should be given.
- Chest:
 - When you listen to their heart, do you hear any swooshing sounds? If so, how loud is it? This is a heart murmur. Please make note on the intake sheet to ensure a recheck by a veterinarian is completed.
 - Kittens can fix their own heart murmurs. If the heart murmur is still present at 6 months, they will have the murmur for life. Most kittens fix their murmur by the time they are 2 months.
 - Check the lungs.
 - Do you hear any crackling? Do you notice the kitten having difficulty breathing?
- Abdomen:
 - Check umbilical cord location. Is it dry? Wet? Infected? Still intact?
 - Is the abdomen tender, bloated, hard or soft? To help check, hold the kitten up under their elbows. If their belly is pear-shaped, it's a good indicator they have just eaten and they are full.



- Gender:
 - Check gender. Does the feline's genital area look like a [;] (male) or [:] (female).

You can never note too much when it comes to our tiniest residents. All findings should be recorded on an incoming kitten exam sheet to be entered.

III. Once an overall check has been completed, we can now begin the vaccination and deworming process.

1. **Kittens can begin their deworming at 2 weeks of age.**
We administer two types of dewormers for kittens:
 - Pyrantel: Given to treat roundworms. Almost all kittens get them as the eggs can be passed through the mom's milk.
 - Dosage: Pyrantel is **0.1cc per pound** and is to be given every two weeks..
 - Ponazuril: Given to treat Coccidia.
 - Dosage: Ponazuril is **0.2cc per pound** and is administered for 3 consecutive days then one dose every two weeks.
2. **IF A KITTEN IS UNDER 4 WEEKS/1 POUND IT CANNOT BE VACCINATED!!!**
 - Vaccines are to continue every 2 weeks until the kitten is 20 weeks of age or has left the facility. Vaccines are to be administered in to the left thigh area, **not the hip**. Once drawn up, the full syringe should reach 1mL.
3. Kittens at least 6 weeks of age should receive a Praziquantel injection to treat tapeworms, even if they are not seen (if they have had fleas or flea dirt on intake). If there have been fleas, tapeworms will follow.

IV. The next step in the intake process is to take blood in order to complete a Feline Leukemia test. In most cases, we can get blood starting at 2 weeks of age comfortably out of their neck. **If you are not comfortable getting blood, do not stress over this step and move on to the next step.** The Outreach Manager will complete this step if not complete at the time of exam..

V. Finish the exam with a microchip. If you are uncomfortable administering a microchip due to the kittens size, let the foster care coordinator know. If a mom is present, do not chip the mom until they leave for foster care.