



## THE “KITTEN PROGRAM”

Kittens, because of the immaturity of their immune system, need to receive a series of inoculations against infectious diseases. The veterinarians at Olney-Sandy Spring Veterinary Hospital recommend that all kittens and cats be vaccinated against Feline Distemper or Panleukopenia (P), Rhinotracheitis (R), and Calicivirus (C) beginning at 9 weeks of age. The RCP vaccine is repeated in 4 weeks, then a booster vaccine is given three years later. We recommend that all kittens be vaccinated against Feline Leukemia Virus (FELV). This vaccine is given when the kitten is at least 9 weeks old; a second dose is given 4 weeks later. Future frequency of this vaccine is determined by a risk assessment at the annual wellness visit. Kittens also need to be vaccinated against Rabies when they reach 4-5 months of age and a booster given annually using the Purevax one year rabies vaccine.

All kittens should be blood tested at their first visit to make sure they are not carrying Feline Leukemia Virus (FELV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV). These are viruses that kittens may have caught from their mother or from other cats. If the kitten tests positive for this disease, the veterinarian will discuss its importance with you. Most kittens are cooperative enough to let us draw blood for the test. If not, the kitten can be sedated. Because early infections may cause a false negative result, all kittens should be retested for FELV/FIV when they are 6 months of age (at the time of surgical neutering).

A complete physical examination is performed with each kitten visit. Also, nutritional and behavioral consultation will be a part of that visit. Any questions, problems or concerns regarding the raising of your kitten will be addressed.

Kittens also need to have their feces checked for the presence of intestinal parasites. We look for the eggs under the microscope. Some of these parasites are passed to the kitten before birth, across the placenta. Other parasites are passed through the mother's milk. There are many other parasites in the environment that the kitten can catch. The parasite eggs are microscopic and may not be passed in every bowel movement. Therefore, the veterinarians at Olney-Sandy Spring Veterinary Hospital recommend that at least two microscopic fecal examinations be performed in order to address intestinal parasites. Some of the parasites are potentially transmitted to people; therefore, there is a public health concern, as well.

Olney-Sandy Spring Veterinary Hospital offers its “Kitten Program” as an alternative to the pay- as-you-go, “a la carte” charges for service. The Kitten Program includes the wellness examinations, fecal exams, the first FELV/FIV blood test, and the vaccines. It **does not** include any medications dispensed (for parasites or problems that develop), diagnostic tests for other problems (such as skin scrapings or ear swab exams), or office visits/examinations for sick visits. The Kitten Package offers approximately a 20% savings over the individual charges. In order to qualify for the Kitten Package discount, the entire package must be paid for in advance. **The Kitten Package also offers a 20% price reduction on the spay/castration and any bloodwork** (repeat FELV/FIV test, preanesthetic testing) done at the time of surgery.

We thank you for choosing Olney-Sandy Spring Veterinary Hospital for your kitten's care.