



**Maricopa County**  
*Animal Care and Control*

# THINKING OF ADOPTING A CAT?



**Cats are loveable, charming pets that offer endless fun and entertainment. If you're thinking of adopting a cat, keep in mind these tips on how to keep her healthy and happy.**

## BEFORE YOU BRING KITTY HOME

Your cat will need:

- Food and water bowl
- Cat litter box and cat litter
- Toys for exercise and play: balls; mice; dangling toys to chase; spring-mounted toys; scratching posts
- Collar, ID tag, leash

## CARING FOR YOUR CAT

- Feed them quality, nutritious food, at least once a day, or keep dry kibble out.
- Cats need plenty of cool, clean water.
- Adult cats DO NOT need milk.
- Do NOT automatically have your cat declawed. Trim her claws regularly and provide her with a scratching post.
- Cats do NOT need to be bathed. A healthy cat keeps herself clean and well groomed. An occasional brushing may be needed.
- Cats do NOT need to go outside. Cats will use a litter box even at an early age.
- Make sure your cat wears identification. Provide her with a comfortable, expandable collar and an attached ID tag with your name, address and phone number.
- Microchip your cat. It is inserted under your cat's skin and has your information on it. All lost pets are scanned for microchips. Microchips can be obtained at MCACC or from any veterinarian.
- Give your cat plenty of love and affection. Though cats are more independent than dogs, they thrive on your companionship.

## HEALTH

Your cat should visit a veterinarian at least once a year for an examination and annual vaccinations, and immediately if she is sick or injured.

- Fleas and ticks are a problem that should be taken very seriously. They feed off of your pet, transmit tapeworms and irritate the skin. Carefully check your cat once a week for fleas or ticks.
- It is very important to spay or neuter your cat. They should be spayed/neutered before they become sexually mature. Spaying a female helps prevent breast cancer and pyometra (uterus infections.) **It also prevents unwanted animals from being born.** Neutering a male can prevent spraying, decrease the urge to roam to look for a mate and reduce aggression.

## VACCINATIONS

It is extremely important to protect your cat against disease. Check with your veterinarian to see how often your kitten and grown cat needs vaccinations. Some important diseases to get vaccinated against are:

- **Feline Panleukopenia** (formally known as distemper) is among the most widespread of all cat diseases, and is extremely contagious. Characterized by fever, loss of appetite, vomiting and diarrhea, feline panleukopenia is often fatal. It is in the same family of viruses as Parvovirus in dogs.
- **Feline Viral Rhinotracheitis** (FVR) is a highly contagious respiratory disease characterized by sneezing, loss of appetite, fever, and eye inflammation. Once infected, the cat will remain a carrier for life and often will become sick under stressful situations.
- **Feline Calicivirus** (FCV) is another serious feline respiratory infection, often occurring simultaneously with feline viral rhinotracheitis. Infections are similar to FVR, (fever, loss of appetite, nasal discharge), but calicivirus infected cats may also have ulcers on the tongue and soreness of the limbs.