



Feline Forum

Courtesy of:

Ear Care Basics

Always check your cat's ears each time you groom your cat. Healthy ears should be clean and free of any debris and any abnormal lumps or discolorations.

If you see ear debris, check with your veterinarian. He/she may suggest that you clean your cat's ears with a cotton ball moistened with warm water or a few drops of mineral oil or baby oil. (Never use a cotton swab because the tip could break off in the ear and become lodged lower in the ear canal, possibly puncturing the ear drum.) Gently hold the ear flap with one hand, and swab the ear flap with your free hand. The color of the exudate can indicate the type of problem your cat is having: dark, dry and granular buildup are most likely to occur with ear mites; bacterial infections usually result in a yellow, odoriferous exudate; yeast infections cause a brown, waxy exudate; and a yellow, waxy to oily discharge points to keratinization disorders.

To dispense ear medications, gently pull the ear flap up and insert the applicator tip in the uppermost part of the ear canal. After dispensing the recommended dosage, gently massage the ear or follow the directions on the instruction label.

Helping Your Cat Survive Holiday Stress

The holidays are a festive, but hectic time of the year. We know how stressed we are by the holiday season, but how do cats react to this surge of household activity?

Cats rely on routine schedules. Any disruption in their daily routine causes stress. Physiological reactions to stress include increased heart rate and changes in the mo-

tility of the digestive tract, causing problems such as diarrhea or constipation.

Behavioral responses to stress can vary from withdrawal or aggression to house soiling. We consider these responses to be misbehavior, when in reality they are natural responses of a cat when it is stressed.

Helping your cat survive the holidays requires additional care and consideration. Taking the time to pet or play with your cat may be just what both of you need to relieve stress.

The information for *Feline Forum* has been prepared by the Cornell Feline Health Center, Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine, Ithaca, NY. Copyright 1996.



Seasonal Hazard: Antifreeze Poisoning

Antifreeze poisoning of animals is most common during the autumn months when automobile radiator fluid is changed, but also occurs frequently in the spring, while cars are being repaired. Cats may be attracted to the semi-sweet taste of antifreeze, and are the most susceptible of all animals to antifreeze poisoning.

Cats that have been poisoned with antifreeze appear to walk with an odd gait, vomit, and lose their balance. Eventually symptoms progress to depression, weakness, diarrhea, coma and death within 24 to 48 hours due to the build-up of acids in the cat's blood. Cats that survive the first one to two days enter a state of kidney failure and will die in two to four days without treatment.

Treatment for antifreeze poisoning must be started as early as possible. A delay of greater than four to 12 hours can prove fatal.

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