



Feline Forum

Courtesy of:

Help 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 motility 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 mis-

behavior, 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 out to pet or play with your cat may be just what both of you need to relieve stress.

Holiday Treats

There is always a temptation to share holiday goodies with pets, and probably a greater temptation to feed table scraps to pets. However, a cat's digestive system is finely tuned to a carnivorous diet. Feeding high-caloric, low-protein, high-fat holiday foods to a cat can cause vomiting and diarrhea.

A healthier alternative to rich holiday foods from the table are cat treats that can be purchased from a pet or grocery store. However, these should be rationed since they do not provide a 100% nutritionally balanced diet.

The information for *Feline Forum* has been prepared by the Cornell Feline Health Center, Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine, Ithaca, NY. Copyright 1993.



The Well-Groomed Cat

Cats are fastidiously clean animals, grooming themselves several times a day. With such behavior, one may think that grooming a cat is unnecessary. Not true. Daily brushing and combing your cat will help remove loose and dead hairs before they can be swallowed by your cat when it grooms itself. This will reduce the formation of hair balls in the cat's digestive tract which can cause problems in the stomach and intestines.

Another added benefit is that brushing stimulates blood circulation and oil-gland secretions in the skin, creating a healthier skin and hair coat. While you are



grooming your cat, you can also look for unusual lumps, skin lesions, or external parasites (fleas, ticks). If you notice any unusual skin problems, take your cat to your veterinarian to be examined and treated for the problem.

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How to Use These Articles:

These articles are to be used as fillers in your client newsletter. They can be cut and pasted onto your master layout for the printer. Choose the style that matches your format best.

"Feline Forum" can be used as a flyer or as one page of your newsletter.

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