



Feline Forum

Courtesy of:

Are you a good client?

Pet ownership is rewarding, but with it comes the responsibility to provide quality care for your cat. Establishing a good relationship with your veterinarian is invaluable in fulfilling this responsibility. Good communication is the basis of a good relationship.

Great Balls of Hair!

'Tis shedding season, and hairballs are on the rise. A hairball is an accumulation of ingested hair that forms into a ball within the digestive tract. Usually, these are excreted in the feces or regurgitated by the cat. However, gastrointestinal impactions can occur from hairballs, especially in older cats, or in cats in which their gastric motility is reduced.

Fortunately, you can control hairballs. Brushing your cat daily will remove loose, dead hairs before they can be ingested by your cat. If you cannot groom your cat daily, especially during the shedding seasons, then consider using a specially formulated laxative treatment for hairballs. Prevention is cost effective and can keep your cat healthy.

The information for *Feline Forum* has been prepared by the Cornell Feline Health Center, Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine, Ithaca, NY. Copyright 1995.



No one knows your cat's behavior better than you. Your veterinarian depends on you to be your cat's interpreter. He relies on your observations to establish the history of your cat's problem. Likewise, you must be willing to ask the veterinarian to explain in basic terms your cat's condition; if there are alternative treatments; why certain medications are being prescribed, and what are the possible side effects of the medication.

If you have never administered medications, then you should ask the veterinarian to demonstrate the

proper procedure; and if possible to practice under his/her supervision. Some people are too afraid to administer medications and this fear may prevent them from medicating their cat.

Remember to pay your bill on time. Veterinarians are small business owners and they have to pay overhead expenses and taxes.

Be punctual for appointments and keep your cat properly restrained, preferably in a cat carrier. When you arrive, check in with the receptionist.

Feline Gum Disease

Have you looked at your cat's gums recently?

If not, you should. Cats are as susceptible as you are to gum disease. Red gums indicate inflammation, a condition known as gingivitis.

The most common cause of the inflammation is a buildup of tartar on the teeth. Gingivitis caused by tartar buildup will resolve after a thorough, professional dental cleaning by your veterinarian, followed by regular dental care provided by you. However, if tartar buildup is not the cause, other factors such as retained roots from broken teeth or systemic diseases (e.g., kidney disease or diabetes) may be the cause. Treatment of primary and secondary causes of gingivitis is important. Without treatment, the gums become painful, making it difficult for the cat to eat. Eventually it will lead to tooth loss as the gums begin to recede.



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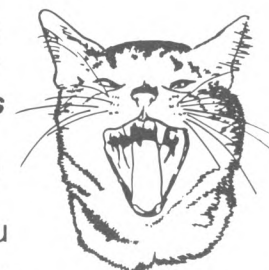
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