

# INTRODUCING NEW KITTY TO YOUR HOME

## What to Expect of Your New Pet in the Next Week

**The first 24-48 hours your new cat spends in your home are very crucial. Please follow these guidelines to reduce the change of adjustment problems.** Please remember you are placing your pet in new surroundings with unfamiliar sights and smells. Different furniture and eating places will add to its confusion. Your cat may be disoriented, frightened by sudden movements, loud noises, and even the threat of another animal. If you have other pets this is especially important.

### ISOLATION

**DO NOT PUT COLLARS ON KITTENS UNDER 5 LBS!**

We strongly recommend isolating a new cat in a room with minimal hiding places (such as a bathroom) for the first 1-2 days. Provide the cat with its very own toys, bed, litterbox and bowls of food and water in that room (bathrooms are ideal because there are no hiding places you can't reach). One more suggestion—put clothing that has been worn by the family members in there with the kitty—get them use to the smells.

### HEALTH WATCH

Vomiting, diarrhea and eye/nose discharge can occur during a cat's transition to a new home due to the stress of a change in environment and/or change in diet. If these symptoms persist beyond 48 hours, however, please contact us or a veterinarian.

#### WARNING SIGNS

- Blood in the stool
- Excessive diarrhea
- Excessive nose discharge and sneezing
- Loss of appetite
- Lethargy
- Fever
- Difficulty breathing
- Excessive vomiting

### SPEAK SOFTLY... MOVE SLOWLY... STROKE GENTLY!

- Visiting the cat often will help him/her bond to you without being overwhelmed by a new environment right away. Introduce family members and friends slowly and one-at-a-time. Your cat will not hate you and is not being deprived by being closed in a single room. It's vital that you give your new family member some time in an enclosed area to develop a sense of security and to appreciate you. You're the best thing that happens in your cat's day—don't feel guilty! After the isolation period allow the cat access to more and more of your home. Hiding, skittishness and meowing is normal during the adjustment period. It usually takes a few weeks or more for a cat to feel settled in a new home.

Animals respond to threatening situations by “shutting down” for a period of time. It may not eat, miss the litterbox, or even have diarrhea. Let your new cat or kitten sleep a lot. However, if this behavior continues for more than a few days, call the foster parent from whom you adopted.

Feed her/him familiar food in frequent, small doses. This teaches the pet that you'll love and care for it. Only feed a high quality food. REASSURE! While feeding your cat, talk softly and gently—repeating the pet's new name. If the cat is comfortable with it, try soft stroking or scratching on the back of the neck.

When you think your pet is ready, for instance it tries to follow you out the door (not to get away but to be with you). Then allow it to explore new surroundings by opening the door and allowing it to investigate nearby rooms. The original room will be his/her source of safety and comfort so keep it accessible.

It is EXTREMELY IMPORTANT to introduce other pets gradually. **Read the article, *Introducing Your New Cat to Your Pets*.** Your new cat should NOT interact with your existing pets for at least 24 hours or longer.

If your cat is shy, it may be because of former neglect or abuse. They need time to learn who you are and what sounds and smells are normal in your house. Sounds you take for granted such as key chains, your neighbor's dog barking, the flushing of a toilet, your children watching TV, or sirens on a nearby street will take time for him/her to adjust to. It takes 3 to 6 months for a cat to *really* settle in.

Please be patient... the love you will receive is a wonderful reward!