

# Pawsitive Press

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[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P\\_m2aarCrKQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P_m2aarCrKQ)

**Funny Cat Video**

## Common Cat Questions

**By: Dr. Christen Woodley, DVM**

Common Cat Questions  
 “My cat never leaves the house, but he sure does love an afternoon nap in the sunshine on the lanai. He seems fine. Does he really need a vet visit every year? Does he need shots? Why does he need a fecal or flea/heartworm prevention if he is an indoor cat?” We at The Animal Hospital of Dunedin are here to help you answer these questions. Your cats are individuals and every case is unique.

### Does my indoor cat need flea and heartworm prevention?

There are some exposure risks you may not think about even if your cat is indoor only. Such as, many families have cats and dogs. In this instance it is important to have both pets on flea preventative. The same fleas that can jump on the dog while it is using the bathroom outside can easily come inside the house and jump onto the cat. We as owners can even bring fleas in on our clothing. Not to mention the increased exposure of those cats that enjoy time on a lanai, pool deck, etc. In Florida, with our propensity for flea infestations, I advise flea prevention for all pets unless deemed not medically advised by a vet. I also advise heartworm prevention in cats. Mosquitoes are the vectors



that transmit heartworms and they can get into our porches and houses. A cat’s worm burden with heartworm disease is much less than that of an infected canine; however, we do not have treatment methods to kill heartworms in cats like we do in dogs. Heartworm disease in cats is every bit as dangerous as it is for dogs even though they have fewer worms. We do thankfully have heartworm prevention products for cats. Most of the feline heartworm products available also have some de-worming properties for intestinal parasites, infections which can be acquired through eating feces, soils, lizards, etc. I advise an annual fecal check for all cats, even more so for those that do have access to the outdoors, soils, potted plants, lizards, etc. Even if your cat’s stool looks fine to you at home, that does not rule out the possibility of having parasites. We can do a fecal flotation and look for parasite eggs. This is advised for every pet at least once a year, and more frequent if there are concerns or higher exposure risks.

### Why does my cat need an annual exam if no vaccines are due?

As our kitties age there are certain health conditions that become more prevalent. The most common conditions are dental disease, hyperthyroidism, kidney failure, diabetes mellitus, and cancer. So even if your pet isn’t due for vaccines every year, or if vaccines aren’t medically advised at that time, it is still very important to get your cat examined annually. For our senior cats, those over the age of seven, I highly advise an exam twice a year. This way we can keep an eye on your pet’s weight/body condition, gum/tartar condition, heart sounds, organ palpation, etc. Lab work screening, which looks at the liver, kidney, thyroid and other organs, should be done annually even if your cat is doing well. Getting baselines when your pet isn’t sick gives us something to compare to if something does arise. Many diseases reveal changes in laboratory values before your pet is sick so that treatment can be instituted earlier often improving results. And though many pets tend to be very stoic with dental disease, the bacteria in tartar can cause gingivitis and travel to areas such as heart valves, kidneys, etc. Therefore routine dental exams are advised to screen for when a dental cleaning is needed. Many times dental disease extends below the gum line, and cannot be fully

**Questions Continued**

addressed unless a full dental cleaning is done. Proper dental care can help prolong your pet's overall well being, not just oral health.

**Does my indoor cat need vaccines?**

The majority of our cats, even if indoor only, do need vaccines to help protect them against certain viruses. At the Animal Hospital of Dunedin we offer one or three year rabies vaccines. We also follow a schedule of every three year feline distemper vaccination in healthy adults. Studies have shown that some vaccines can offer protection for more than one year, so we don't want to over vaccinate. For cats that have any other close contact or exposure to any outside cats, I do advise the feline leukemia vaccine (FeLV) annually. Exposure risk that can subject your cat to FELV can be grooming, fights, sneezing, etc. in close contact of an outdoor cat. If your cat is at risk I advise getting a FeLV test first, and if the test is negative, then getting a proper vaccine protocol initiated.

Health status and risk assessment /lifestyle helps to guide us in what choices are best for your cat's health and protection. Please visit us today so that we can tailor a treatment plan for you and your feline family members.



## Other Common Cat Health Problems

Cats are good at self-maintenance. But even your fastidious feline can't prevent some of these more common cat diseases and health issues.

### **Vomiting**

Vomiting is a very common problem with cats with a multitude of causes. They range from eating something poisonous or inedible (like string), to infection, urinary tract disease, or diabetes to hairballs.

Symptoms are usually obvious, and include drooling and abdominal heaving. Vomiting can quickly leave your cat dehydrated, so if kitty continues vomiting or acts ill, call your vet right away. It may help to collect a sample of your cat's vomit and take it with you to the vet.

### **Feline Lower Urinary Tract Diseases (FLUTD)**

Some estimates say as many as 3% of cats seen by vets have feline lower urinary tract disease ([FLUTD](#)), which is actually a group of feline diseases with multiple causes.

Female and male cats can get FLUTD, and it often occurs in cats that are overweight or unfit or who eat dry food. Stress, a multi-cat household, and sudden changes can all raise a cat's risk of FLUTD, and treatment depends on the type of FLUTD your cat has. FLUTD symptoms include:

- Straining to urinate
- Bloody urine
- Urinating in unusual places
- Crying when urinating
- Licking around the urinary area (often because of pain)
- Depression
- Dehydration
- Lack of appetite
- Vomiting

It's *always* an emergency if your cat can't urinate. Call your vet immediately if you suspect your cat has a urinary tract problem.

### **Diarrhea**

Many things can cause diarrhea in cats, including spoiled food, allergies, infection, liver disease, cancer, and more. Symptoms of diarrhea are loose, watery, or liquid stool. Depending on its cause, diarrhea can last for a day, a week, or months.

We recommend that you call your veterinarian if your cat has diarrhea. Also, call your veterinarian immediately if you notice vomiting, dark, or bloody stools, fever, lethargy, or loss of appetite or if your cat is straining to defecate.

### **Eye Problems**

Eye problems in cats can be caused by a number of things, including conjunctivitis, cataracts, glaucoma, trauma, viruses, inflammation, and retinal disease.

A few symptoms that may mean your cat has eye problems include watery eyes, tear-stained fur, cloudiness, red or white eyelid linings, gunk in the corners of the eye, squinting, pawing at the eye, or a visible third eyelid.

Unless you know what's causing your cat's eye problems, there isn't much you can do other than wipe away any gunk with a damp cotton ball. After that, call your vet.





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**\$1**

## First Exam - New Patient

(\$49-\$80 Savings)

Includes comprehensive physical exam and one vaccine. Does not include 3yr Rabies vaccine. Must be presented at the time of purchase. Coupon may not be combined with any other offer. NL



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**-10%**

## 10% Off Dental Cleaning

( Call for an appointment today 727-733-9351)

Discount applies to anesthesia, prophylaxis, and any other dental radiographs or extractions that might be needed. Offer excludes required pre-dental labwork. May not be combined with any other coupons or discounts. Must be presented at the time of purchase.

**Expires 6/30/16 NL**



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**\$50**

## Feleuk/FIV Combo Test

(\$24.16 savings)

Present this coupon to receive this combination test done in the office while you wait. Call the office today to schedule your cat! (727) 733-9351 May not be combined with any other special offers or coupons.

**Expires 6/30/16 NL**



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**Appointment required!**

## Urinalysis \$36

Schedule an appointment with the Doctor of your choice today. Bring a fresh urine sample or we can obtain one while you are here. Results may be given at the time of the appointment. A urinalysis is used to detect and assess a wide range of disorders such as a UTI, Kidney Disease, and Diabetes. A urinalysis involves examining the appearance, concentration, and content of urine.

**Expires 6/30/16 NL**

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