

How to help YOUR CAT have pleasant **Veterinary** Visits

From the American Association of Feline Practitioners

Fear is the primary cause of misbehavior.

Knowing this can help prevent problematic veterinary visits.

GETTING THE CAT INTO THE CARRIER

- Keep the carrier out in the home. Put treats inside. Train cats to view the carrier as a safe haven and “home away from home.” A quick response is crucial in case of disaster or emergency.
- Carriers that have both a top and a front opening are best. Top-loading carriers allow for stress-free placement and removal of the cat. A removable carrier top enables cats to be examined while remaining in the bottom half of the carrier. Do not “dump” a cat out of the carrier.

ADJUSTING TO CAR RIDES

- Always put the cat in a carrier or other safe container.
- Take the cat for regular car rides, beginning with very short ones, to places other than the veterinary hospital.
- To prevent car sickness, do not feed before traveling.
- Reward verbally, with positive attention, and with treats.

PLEASANT VETERINARY VISITS

- Bring along the cat’s favorite treats, toys, and blanket.
- Perform regular home maintenance procedures, including grooming, nail trimming, teeth brushing.
- “Play vet” procedures that mimic temperature taking, ear cleaning, and pilling can help cats better adjust to the veterinary hospital and to future home care when necessary.
- Regular trips to the veterinary hospital for “fun” visits involving no examinations or procedures provide owners and staff with the opportunity to reward the cat with praise and food treats.