

# ASK OUR VETERINARIANS

## Keeping your indoor kitty healthy

It used to be thought that cats are easy. All you need is a litter box, food dish, water dish and they will be fine. We are coming to discover that this is NOT adequate. Indoor cats require JUST as much care as dogs and their problems can be a little more complex or destructive. The consequences of just doing the bare minimum can be little in some cases or quite severe in others.

Cats are typically solitary animals. In general, they do not enjoy close company with other cats. Studies show that some wild or feral cats will occupy one to two square miles of territory ALONE, coming together for mating only. This all changes when cats must come together because we force them to live in a house together or come together outside to share food/water sources. So if you are deciding on whether to take one or two kittens at a time, one is probably better. Of course there are cats that are exceptions to the rule and LOVE the other kitties they cohabitate with.

Litter box rules are essential in maintaining a happy, healthy kitty. The rule of thumb is one box per cat plus an additional box. If you have three cats, you should have at least four boxes. You should use unscented scoopable litter – SCOOP DAILY. The entire box should be changed and cleaned once every month.

Keeping their minds and bodies active are also equally important. Take 15 mins every day to play with your kitty. Laser pointers, feather dusters, mice toys, catnip- find which is your cat's favorite and use this. There are toys which hide food to allow cats to "work" or simulate foraging for their food.

These are just a few tips to avoid the dreadful "my cat peed on the bed" or "my cat's claws destroyed my furniture" or any of the other creative behavior problems they can come up with.

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