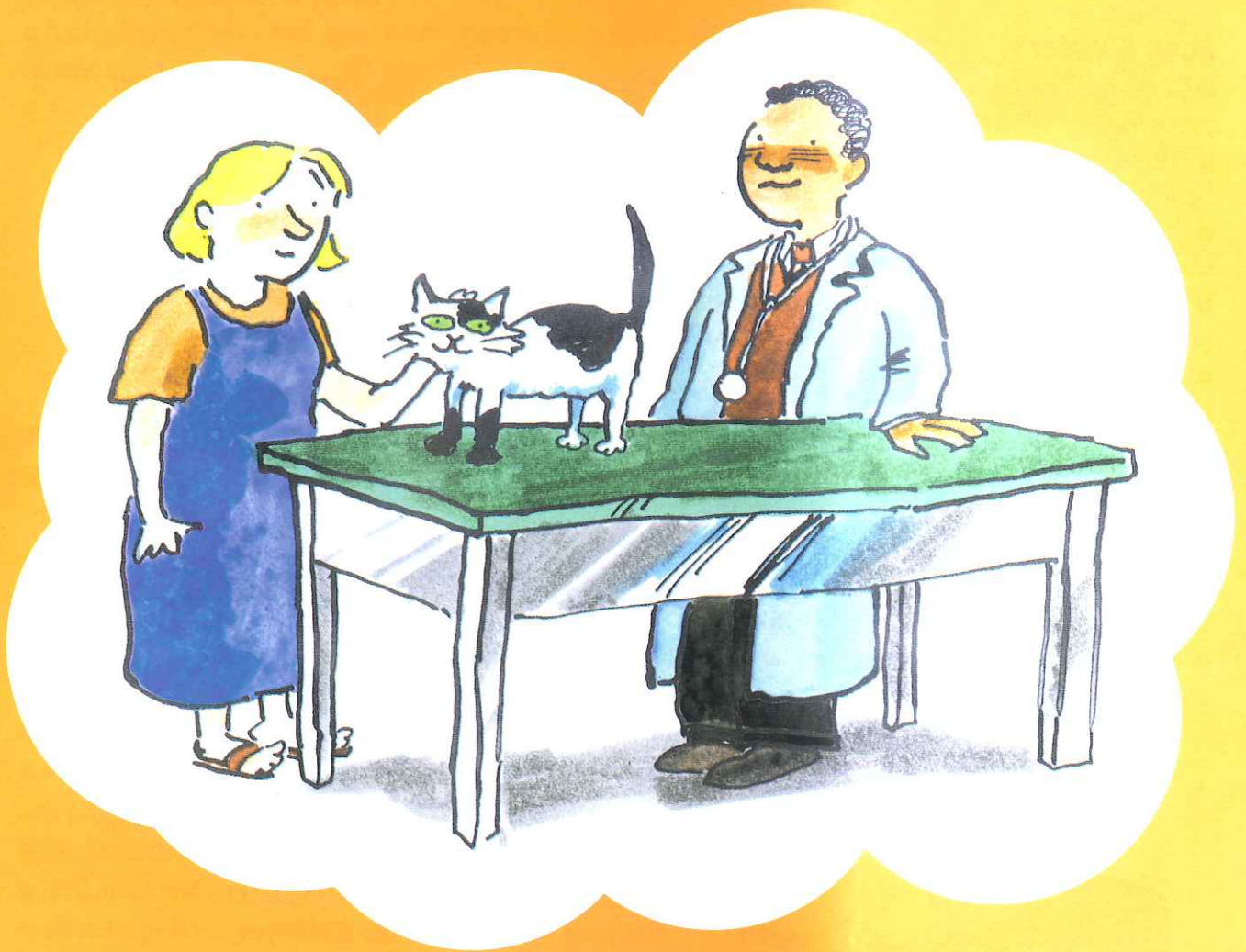


# Caring For Your Cat



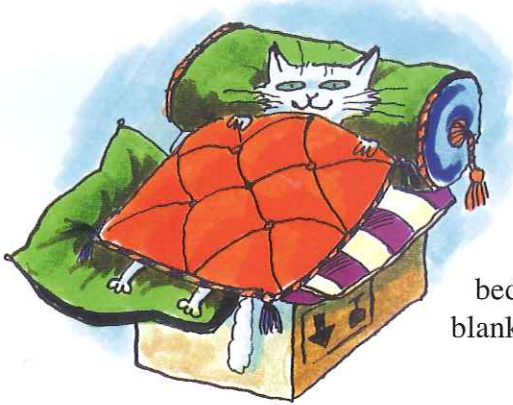
Cats were domesticated some 6,000 years after dogs, yet today there are nearly as many pet cats in the world as pet dogs. In many countries they were considered sacred and worshipped. Although generally considered more independent than dogs, cats still need care and attention.

**WSPA**

World Society for the Protection of Animals



# How To Care For Your Cat



## Where Your Cat Lives

- A cat that lives outside needs a shelter to give protection from the heat or cold weather.
- Your cat should be provided with a bed of its own such as an old box with a blanket.



## Food & Water

- A cat needs a varied and nutritional diet and will not thrive on scraps. Cats require a greater proportion of meat than dogs and need a higher level of protein and fat in their food.
- There are many types of cat food available which provide a well-balanced diet, including tinned or dried food.
- Your cat should be provided fresh drinking water at all times, especially if you choose to feed dried products.
- Feed adult cats twice a day; kittens, elderly cats and pregnant cats will need several smaller meals daily.
- Cats do not have to be hungry to hunt, it is something they do naturally.



## Human Company

- A cat is less demanding than a dog, for example they do not need to be taken for a walk.
- A kindly word and stroking your cat will show him that you care.

## Health

- A free ranging cat or a cat kept in dirty conditions can become infested with worms, ticks, fleas or lice.
- Sleeping and living areas should be kept clean.
- Healthy cats have glossy coats and clear eyes
  - Ears and noses should be free from discharge, dirt and infection.
  - Teeth should be strong, white and not discoloured. If infected gums are left untreated, teeth may fall out which will result in eating problems.
- Ask your vet for advice.





## Vaccinations

- Cats are vulnerable to many diseases which can be dangerous and costly to treat.
- Vaccination helps prevent illness and reduces the risk of infection to other cats.



## Grooming

- All cats, long or short haired, benefit from regular grooming, and it provides an

opportunity to check for parasites.

- Long-haired cats need special attention to keep their coats free of tangles.
- Grooming helps to get your cat used to being handled.



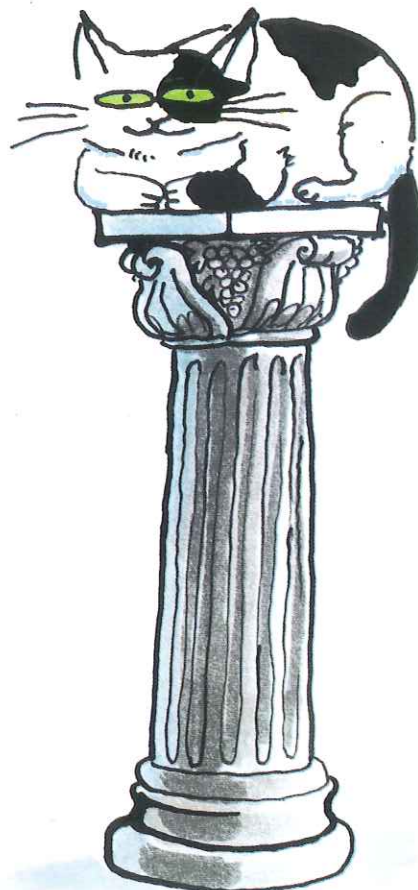
## Breeding

- Every year hundreds of thousands of cats are destroyed because there are not enough suitable homes available for them.
- Female cats can produce many kittens every year. In six years a pair of cats and their offspring can produce 420,000 cats.
- By constantly producing and rearing kittens, the health of a female cat can suffer.
- Pregnant and lactating female cats need extra food.
- Kittens generally suckle from their mothers for about three weeks, gradually starting to eat additional food.
- Female cats are naturally protective of their young and so a quiet place should be provided for them.
- **To prevent unwanted kittens have your cat spayed / neutered – an operation performed by a vet**



## Spaying / Neutering

- Modern veterinary equipment and drugs make surgery safe, painless and recovery quick.
- Ask your vet when to have your cat spayed / neutered.
- Your cat does not need to have a litter before she is spayed.
- Early age neutering from eight weeks of age is now accepted as a positive action.
- Once a female cat has been neutered she will never come into season again and unwanted male cats will keep away.
- Spaying females can reduce the risk of mammary tumours.
- Unneutered male cats have a habit of spraying an unpleasant smelling scent to mark their territory, which attracts females. Neutering reduces this behaviour.
- Neutering also reduces rival fighting amongst cats.
- Neutered cats are likely to be more loyal and affectionate and their ability to hunt is not affected.
- In stray and feral cats, ear tipping, cutting off the tip of the left ear whilst the cat is still anaesthetised, is the universal way of identifying cats which have been spayed / neutered.



Few diseases can be passed on from cats to humans, and most can be prevented by vaccinating cats and attention to human hygiene, for example: washing hands after handling cats, before eating, and after cleaning up cat litter. Pregnant and immunosuppressed individuals need to take extra care with hygiene. In the event of a cat bite or scratch – immediately wash wounds with soap and water, and seek medical attention if serious.

The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) is an international organisation working in over 150 countries with a network of more than 900 member societies. WSPA has representation at United Nations (UN), Council of Europe (CoE) and works in co-operation with the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the Federation of European Companion Animal Veterinary Associations (FECAVA).



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