Five Steps to a Longer Life



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It’s likely your cat will live for around 13-17 years. To help her enjoy a long and happy life, try putting this five-step home health check in place. By doing these checks once a month, you may be able to detect a health problem early on, and do something about it.

Important Health Checks for Increased Cat Lifespan

Being cat parents is no less than a full-time job, and parenting a feline munchkin often involves being responsible for their general health, making sure they are able to keep up their everyday fun-filled adventures. Although cats are extremely enduring and resilient to most diseases, they are often exposed to certain cat-specific diseases. So, as a responsible parent to an adorable kitty, it is important to conduct frequent health checks to ensure they have a longer, healthy life.

It is easy for cat parents to constantly worry about the health of their furry munchkin. So, this article discusses some of the important health checks that can be carried out at home to establish general well-being and increase your cat’s lifespan. In addition to the weight check, this article lets you look for warning signs based on the cat tail body language, adult cat teeth, coat and skin quality, and eye in cats.

Cat's Weight
What Should the Average Cat's Weight Be?

The ideal weight in cats is dependent on factors such as their age and breed. However, adult housecats should generally maintain an average cat weight ranging between 4 to 5 kgs instead of being underweight cats. Larger breeds, such as the Maine Coon can have an average cat weight reaching up to 8 kgs!

How Is a Cat's Weight Determined?

If you are trying to figure out if your cat has an ideal cat weight or are obese cats, you can easily tell by a manual examination. Obese cats and overweight cats do not have visible ribs, which cannot be felt under the layer of fat. The ribs in cats with an ideal healthy cat weight are distinctly visible and can be felt easily.

Does The Healthy Cat's Weight Vary Among Breeds?

Yes, breed is a major determining factor when it comes to the average cat weight in healthy felines. While smaller cats can have lower average cat weights, larger cat breeds, such as the Maine Coon, Savannah, and Norwegian Forest Cat can have a much higher adult cat weight instead of being underweight cats.

How Does Your Cat's Age Affect Their Weight?

Age is also a crucial factor when determining ideal cat weights. Since the fat ratio in cats is largely dependent on their lifestyle and metabolic rates, the ideal cat weights can also change depending on their age.

Tips to Keep Your Cat at a Healthy Weight

Here are a few tips to maintain a healthy cat weight.

1. **Don't Free-Feed**

   Free-feeding encourages cats to overeat, resulting in weight gain and obese cats.

2. **Keep Your Cat Moving**

   Cats are usually energetic and playful. However, overeating can cause cats to gain cat weight, making them lethargic. Encouraging your cat to move and play allows them to burn excess calories.

3. **Be Mindful of Treats**

   Be mindful of the amount of threat your cats are consuming. This is because cat treats have a high caloric content and can cause overweight cats and feline obesity if not given in controlled portions.

Cat's Coat and Skin
Different types of Cat hair coats

Cats have different types of cat coat depending on their specific breeds. Based on the type of their cat fur, cats are mostly -

1. **Long haired**

   Breeds such as the Norwegian Forest Cat, Ragdoll, Maine Coon, and Persian Cats have an exquisite long haired cat fur coat.

2. **Short haired**

   Short haired cat breeds are notable for their short, dense cat fur. Short haired cat breeds include British Shorthair, Bengal cats, Abyssinian cats, Siamese cats, and Scottish Folds.

3. **Curly haired**

   Although considerably rare, curly haired cats, such as the Devon Rex, American Wirehair, LaPerm, Skookum, and the German Rex have been winning our hearts for a long time.

Important Nutrition for a healthy Cat's coat and skin?

Nutrients such as Biotin, Vitamin C and E and Riboflavin are important for maintaining skin elasticity and pristine cat fur and coat health.

How important is regular grooming play in the appearance of my cat's coat and skin?

Cats are excellent groomers and spend a considerable amount of time grooming their cat fur. Not only is grooming a crucial part of feline interaction, it helps in getting rid of loose fur and matted hair, ticks, worms and pests, and also exfoliating dead skin cells that would otherwise attract bacterial infestation.

How often should a cat bathe?

It is important to get your cat to take a bath at least once a month with cat-specific shampoos to get rid of accumulated dirt, grime, and skin oils, as well as remove matted and tangled cat fur, ticks, fleas, and worms.

Types of Feline Skin Diseases

Some common types of cat's skin diseases include:

1. Bacterial infestations on open wounds and lesions that lead to infections, scabs, and miliary dermatitis.
2. Infection caused by fleas, ticks, and mites, as well as rashes, red spots, and dry, flaky

skin.
3. Allergic reaction to flea bites and food substances.
4. Environmental pollutants such as pollens, dirt, and grime can cause feline acne, sporotrichosis, excessive shedding, and hair loss, making you wonder why the cat has dry skin.

Cat's Eyes
Different Cat's Eye Language

You might be surprised to know that in addition to their trademarked 'meow,' cats are able to express themselves through several other modes of communication, such as the cat eye language.

Learning about the various cat eye languages mentioned below can help you to have a deeper understanding and appreciation for your fabulous feline friend.

1. **Arousal**

   Cats rely on eye language to express strong emotions, such as excitement, fear, anger, and pleasure. Any sudden dilation of the pupil of the eye can indicate an arousal or triggering of strong emotions, where the pupil grows large, appearing black.

2. **Trust**

   A submissive body posture accompanied with open, relaxed eyes is an expression of trust within the feline community.

   Additionally, cats often tend to gently head-butt or rub their cheeks against their favourite humans, expressing trust, confidence, and love. Gentle blinking is also a sign of trust, where your kitty allows itself to be vulnerable around you.

3. **Dominance**

   Dominance is usually expressed through intense, unblinking stares. Although cats rarely feel the need to assert dominance over their human parents, the unblinking stare is still a commonly used mode of communication in multi-cat households to indicate control, dominance, and aggression.

   Cats also use the unblinking stare as a possible form of warning to ward away competition from food bowls, litter boxes, and personal territories.

4. **Aggression**

   Locking eyes without blinking is not just a strong warning in the feline community, but it also indicates aggression. Triggers of aggression or fear in cats can also result in a slit-eye or an instinctive reaction to protect the eyes from incoming attacks from the opponent.

5. **Kitty Kisses**

   Not all cat eye or cat's body language is an indication of aggression or fear. Droopy, or

sleepy eyelids in cats can indicate that your kitty feels comfortable and relaxed in your presence.

Relaxed gaze, followed by slow, gentle blinking is an obvious indication of love and is the feline equivalent of kisses.

Cat's Teeth
How Many Teeth Do Cats Have?

As a kitten during cat teething, cats usually start with 26 milk teeth, which are later replaced by a set of permanent teeth.

Do Cats Lose Teeth?

The milk teeth generally fall out when kittens are about 11 weeks of age and stop cat teething. The permanent teeth usually last till their seniority, making brushing cats teeth regularly an absolute necessity.

Different teeth have different jobs

Whether deciduous or permanent, a cat's teeth consist of 12 incisors, 4 canine teeth, 10 pre-molar, and 2 molar teeth.

1. **Incisors** - the small incisor teeth are responsible for cutting or snipping food.
2. **Canines** - the canine teeth in cats take the shape of longer cat fangs and the cat fangs are used for biting and holding on to prey.
3. **Pre-molars** - The pre-molar teeth in cats are responsible for biting down into the prey and breaking down harder food particles.
4. **Molars** - The molar teeth serve the purpose of breaking down and grinding harder food particles.

Toothless cats can still eat

Cats can still eat solid food if it loses teeth and cat fangs due cat gum diseases since they break down the food into pieces small enough to swallow.

Why Cats don't get cavities in teeth

Unlike humans, cats do not have any horizontal surface on their teeth. Hence, sugar-eating bacteria are unable to stick to a cat's teeth, which prevents cat gum diseases like cavities.

Other Cat's Teeth diseases

Some dental diseases in cats are as follows:

1. **Gingivitis**

   Gingivitis is caused by a build-up of plaque or tartar and results in swollen, inflamed cat gums, and bleeding cat gums.

2. **Periodontitis**

   Periodontitis has limited treatment options and in severe conditions the bones and gum tissues under the cat's teeth are weakened.

3. **Tooth resorption**

   Tooth resorption breaks the tooth structure and can cause pain and discomfort. Tooth resorption usually starts on the inside of cat's teeth.

Tips to take care of Cat's teeth

Did you know? Oral hygiene plays an important role in increasing your cat’s lifespan. Hence, it’s important to take care of your cat's teeth, which will also lead to healthy gums.

1. Brush your cat's teeth using feline toothpaste for healthy cat gums. Always use toothpase for feline use when brushing cats teeth.
2. In addition to brushing cats teeth, avoid offering sugary treats to your precious furry.
3. Feed your cat kibble to prevent plaque and tartar on the cat's teeth, and can be an effective way of ensuring good dental health other than brushing cats teeth.

Cat's Body
Common Signs of Cat Body Language

Cats also express a lot through different cat body languages, such as:

1. Slow blinking expresses trust and confidence.
2. Tail held up high is saying hello.
3. Headbutting or rubbing cheeks is expressing love and affection.
4. Arched back, flicking tail, and raised whiskers is a warning sign.
5. Tail tucked and ears pulled back expresses stress.

Signs when cat is happy and relaxed:

1. **Cat's Tail**

   Tails held high or twisted in a little curve towards the end indicated happiness.

2. **Cat's Eyes**

   Relaxed and sleepy gaze express comfort and trust.

3. **Cat's slow blinking**

   Slow blinking is an expression of love and affection through cat's body language.

4. **Cat's rolling onto their back**

   Rolling on their back means your kitty feels secure and safe with you.

5. **Cat's hop-up**

   Hop-up to rub their cheeks or gentle nudges show affection. The hop gesture also expressed happiness and excitement.

Signs your cat is anxious or stressed

1. **Staying close to the ground**

   It is a defensive stance adopted by cats when they feel danger and prepare for an incoming attack.

2. **Flat ears**

   Flattened ears indicate anxiety and stress.

3. **Wide eyes**

   Wide eyes and unblinking stares mean arousal of anger and aggression.

Signs your cat us feeling very threatened

1. **Arched back**

   Arched back is a defensive stance that helps create the appearance of cats being physically bigger and more powerful.

2. **Tense tail**

   A tense tail, tucked between hind legs, is a sign of being afraid.

3. **Big fur and whiskers**

   Fluffed up whiskers and fur also create the appearance of cats being physically bigger and more intimidating.

How to Communicate with cat through body language?

Mentioned below are some ways to understand your cat's body languages better:

1. Avoid directly staring into your cat's eyes when they are stressed or feeling threatened.
2. Avoid hissing at your cat as it can make them feel uneasy or threatened.
3. If your cat is expressing happiness or affection by headbutting or rubbing its cheeks against you, return the affection by cuddling or offering it a treat.

FAQs

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1. **What is the lifespan of an indoor cat?**

   Generally, an indoor cat’s lifespan can go from 10 - 15 years, however some also live up to the age of 20.

2. **Do cats have fluffy fur?**

   Cats can have different fur depending on their breed. Cats like Maine Coon and Norwegian forest cat have longhaired cat coats and fluffier fur, shorthair cats have shorter, more dense fur, while the Sphynx cat is covered in a layer of fuzz.

3. **Is cat fur used for coats?**

   Although the fur lining in cats is known as a cat coat because of its primary responsibility of regulating the body temperature and insulating against cold climates, cat fur is not really used for coats meant for humans.

4. **Do cats have fur or hair?**

   Cats generally have two coats covering their cat's skin. The inner layer, known as the undercoat is comprised of fur, the outer layer, or the topcoat has long, visible hair. The length of the topcoat varies depending on the breed.

5. **What is cat fur called?**

   Cats have a lining of fur over their cat's skin which not only helps protect their delicate skin, but also for insulation and protection against cold and harsh climates, and other environmental hazards. The fur lining in cat is known as a coat.

6. **What is the body language of a cat?**

   In addition to vocal communication, cats are also reliant on cat body languages for expressing strong emotions, and a vast other range of expressions. The cat body language includes their posture, movement of tail, ears, and eyes.

7. **What is a cat's positive body language?**

   The cat body language can be used to express a vast network of meaning, ranging from positive to negative. The positive cat body language includes relaxed and comfortable postures, slow blinking, tail held up high, hop-ups, rolling onto their back, and more.

8. **How do you tell if a cat likes you?**

   Cats are extremely affectionate and loving, and rarely do they shy away from

expressing their affection for their loved humans. Gentle headbutting, rubbing their cheeks against you, and slow blinking are telltale signs that a cat likes you.

9. **How long does a cat live with hyperthyroidism?**

   Hyperthyroidism in cats is a worrisome health concern that usually develop in senior years and result in hormonal imbalances. Unless they are treated with cat thyroid medication or other hyperthyroidism in cats treatment, thyroid problem in cats can prove fatal.

10. **What food is good for cats hearts health?**

    Cat parents often worry about cat heart health, especially in older cats. Food rich in protein and minerals are good for cats for maintaining adequate heart health and for getting rid of cat heart worms and other heart disease in cat.

11. **What are the signs of heart problems in cats?**

    Most cats do not experience cat heart diseases until late in their life. In their old age, cat heart problems develop cat heart disease symptoms such as breathlessness, difficulty in physical activities, lethargy, and continuously elevated cat heart rate.

12. **What are the warning signs in older cats?**

    Cats might show the tell-tale signs of old age in their twilight years, such as tooth decay and signs of tartar build-up, inability to jump as well as they did previously, lethargy, matted and tangled fur, and loss of appetite

13. **Do elderly pets still require yearly vaccinations?**

    Yes, senior cats need to keep up with their annual vaccination as well, especially for heart worm prevention for cats. Yearly vaccinations can also help in eliminating the risks of fleas and ticks in addition to heart worms in cats that poses various risks to the cat heart.

14. **Should I change my cat's diet as they age?**

    Depending on their age and breed, cats require changes in their diet as is necessitated by the cat’s age. Your furry’s diet must also be changed to include less glucose for cats, high-quality protein and minerals, or diabetic cat food that avoid the use of glucose for cats.

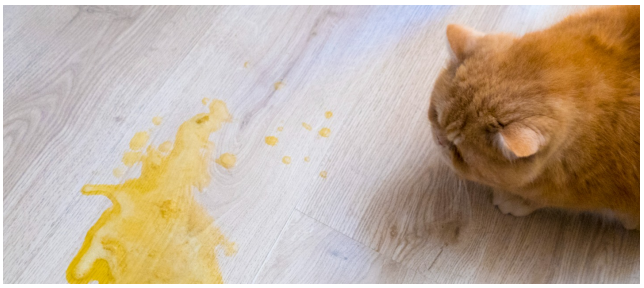
15. **What are the most common medical problems in older cats?**

    Older cats are often prone to the risks of common diseases in older cats such as arthritis in cats, failing vision and hearing loss, periodontal diseases, diabetes in cats, cat heart worm, heart disease in cat, kidney failures, and even cancer.

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