



Taking your Cat to the Vets

All cats should have at least an annual veterinary check, but some will require more frequent visits, and most are likely to need at least one operation in during their lives. However, for most cats, a veterinary visit is a stressful experience.

By nature, cats are independent, territorial, need to be in control of their surroundings, and sensitive to different smells – all these things make veterinary visits stressful, for both you and your cat. Simple things can make a big difference though:

Transporting your cat to the clinic

Make sure you use a good cat carrier:

- Never travel with the cat loose in the car – always use a robust carrier
- Choose carefully – cardboard, for example, is no match for a determined cat!
- The carrier should be easy to clean (preferably plastic or plastic-coated)
- The carrier should not be so large that the cat can fall about in it.
- A carrier that opens at the top is much easier to use as the cat can be gently lifted in or out
- Cover the carrier with a cloth or towel during the journey to keep the cat calm.
- Secure the carrier in the car in a footwell or on a seat (with a seatbelt) so it cannot move.
- Place the carrier on a towel/padding to keep it level in the car and to absorb any ‘accidents’.
- Drive carefully and gently to avoid the cat being thrown around.
- Stay calm so the cat doesn’t pick up stress from you. Be reassuring and avoid loud noises.
- On arrival at the clinic, avoid rushing. Keep your cat in the carrier and hold it carefully – avoid swinging the carrier or banging it against objects or your legs.

Make sure there are familiar smells for the cat – use some or all of these tips:

- The cat will be less alarmed if the carrier smells familiar and reassuring.
- Ideally the carrier should be ‘part of the furniture’ and somewhere the cat chooses to sleep or is fed, so it does not only appear when a visit to the vet is imminent!
- Put bedding in the carrier that the cat normally sleeps on or curls up on at home.
- Also place an article of clothing belonging to the cat’s favourite person in the carrier.
- Wipe a soft cloth around the cat’s face to pick up its scent and rub this around the carrier, especially in the corners, and then leave it in the basket.
- Spray the carrier with [Feliway®](#) (a calming synthetic cat scent or pheromone, which may be available from your vet), at least 30 minutes before putting your cat in it.
- If your cat panics at the sight of the carrier, keep calm. Keep the basket close, but out of sight. Wrap the cat in a thick towel/blanket that smells familiar. Put the cat and the towel into the carrier quickly but gently. A top-opening carrier makes this much easier.
- Take some spare bedding (smelling of home) in case the cat is sick or soils the carrier.
- Taken from icatcare website: <http://www.icatcare.org/advice-centre/cat-care/bringing-your-cat-vet>