

*Catawba Animal Clinic*  
*2241 India Hook Road    Rock Hill, SC 29732*

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CAT OWNERS**

Pet ownership carries with it the responsibility of being proactive in health care. There are certain steps that you should take to prevent health problems. We recommend the following:

1. Annual life stage exams.
2. Keep vaccinations current.
3. Brush frequently to keep hair from matting. Many cats do not groom themselves well.
4. Clip toe nails as needed to prevent overgrowth.
5. Keep plenty of fresh water available and monitor its consumption.
6. Monitor for any changes in urine output.
7. Monitor social hierarchy to assure all cats have equal access to food and water.
8. Keep pet dry and warm in the winter and cool in the summer by providing proper shelter.
9. Monitor your cat's weight by weighing every few months on the same scale and tracking the results.
10. Ten to fifteen minutes of moderate intensity playtime for indoor cats. (Toy time)
11. Be aware of environmental hazards such as car engines, automatic garage doors, dog attacks, territorial attacks, and swallowed foreign bodies such as needles, buttons, thread, yarn and dental floss.

**EARLY SIGNS OF DISEASE**

1. Sustained, significant increase in water consumption.
2. Sustained, significant increase in urination.
3. Weight loss.
4. Significant decrease in appetite or failure to eat for more than two consecutive days.
5. Significant increase in appetite.
6. Repeated vomiting.
7. Diarrhea that lasts over 3 days.
8. Difficulty in passing stool or urine or prolonged sitting or lying in the litter box.
9. Change in litter box habits, especially if urination or defecation occurs out of the litter box.
10. Lameness that lasts more than 5 days, or lameness in more than one leg.
11. Noticeable decrease in vision, especially if sudden in onset or pupils that do not constrict in bright light.
12. Masses, ulcerations (open sores), multiple scabs on the skin that persist more than 1 week.
13. Foul mouth odor or drooling that lasts over 2 days.
14. Increasing size of the abdomen.
15. Increasing inactivity or amount of time spent sleeping.
16. Hair loss, especially if accompanied by scratching or if in specific areas (as opposed to generalized).
17. Breathing heavily or rapid at rest.
18. Inability to chew or eat dry food.
19. Coughing or sneezing.
20. Changes in behavior such as hiding or irritability.