



Fear Free Transport of Your Cat to the Vet Hospital

You can help set your cat up for a low-stress, successful veterinary visit before you even arrive at the clinic! Stress can begin prior to even leaving the home based on changes in routines of their owners and appearance of the carrier. Below are some suggestions on what you can do to create a “fear free” travel experience for your cat.

Safety

- Always bring your cat to the veterinarian in a carrier whether walking or driving
- It is important to be safe during travel. When driving secure your pet appropriately and use crash tested equipment. For information on crash tested crates and seatbelts visit:
<https://www.centerforpetsafety.org/>

In Advance

- If you have time to prepare for your veterinary visit a couple days to a week in advance try the following:
 - Leave the carrier out with the door open so your cat can become accustomed to it.
 - Place some treats in the carrier and/or try feeding a small amount of food inside with the door open to create a positive association
- Here is a great video for cats on teaching them to love their crate / carrier
 - [Cats and Carriers](#)

Just Before Travel

- Spray a towel with Feliway spray or wipe the carrier inside with Feliway wipes 20 minutes before travel
- When your cat is inside the carrier place a towel over the carrier, which will help to calm him or her
- Bring some of your cats’ favorite treats with you to reward your cat at the appointment
- If Driving
 - Place the carrier on the car floor behind the passenger seat
 - Keep the inside of the car quiet
 - Play soft, calming music such as classical or “Through a Cat’s Ear”
 - Avoid loud noises, hard stops and sharp turns that may startle your cat
- If Walking
 - Do not hold the carrier by the handle as this may cause it to tilt and make your cat feel unsafe. Instead hold the carrier under the bottom with both hands

Arrival at the Clinic

- Keep the carrier covered so your cat feels safe
- Again, avoid carrying the carrier by the handle as this creates instability and can cause your cat to slip, therefore increasing stress
- In the waiting room keep the carrier up high on a counter or chair so your cat is not at eye level with other animals which may frighten them
- If you can tell that your cat is particularly stressed already upon arrival let us know so that we can develop a plan to keep them feeling as calm and safe as possible.

- Please make staff aware of any food allergies or sensitivities your cat has. We will continue to offer them treats to make their experience as positive as possible

Back at Home

- When animals get home from the vet they may smell, look, and/or act differently which may be upsetting to other pets in the house.
- Closely monitor pets' interactions together when they arrive home from the clinic.
- In some cases, pets may need to be kept separate for a short period of time while they re-adjust
- If your pet was sedated or anesthetized please keep them isolated until they are back to their normal behavior
- If your pets are having stressful interactions after a visit please call us to get more advice