

## Easing Your Cat's Stress at the Vet

Choose a carrier with an entry from the top. A zippered, canvas carrier or a cardboard carrier work best. Provide a familiar toy and blanket in the carrier so your cat has a calming scent from home with him/her.

Before you need to get your cat into the carrier, place the carrier in a small room that has a door (such as a bathroom) where there is nothing to hide under if he/she gets away from you. Shut the door when you enter the room so he/she is contained to one room.

Try to remain calm when placing your pet in the carrier as your cat will sense any tension you have. Talk softly and calmly to your cat during the entire veterinary experience - from getting into the carrier, to the drive to the vet, and even the return drive home. Your calmness will go a long way in helping your cat develop an acceptance to his carrier and, ultimately, his lifetime healthcare at the veterinary clinic!

Elevate the carrier in the waiting room and exam room - place it on a counter, not the floor. Cats feel more secure when they are up high.

Once in the exam room, transfer the toy and blanket from the carrier to the exam table with your cat. Allow your cat to exit the carrier on its own, don't dump or pull your cat out of the carrier. You may need to take the top off the carrier. The veterinary technician can help you with this if needed!

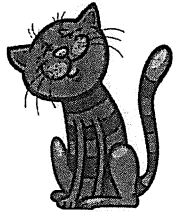
Allow your cat to go back into the carrier as soon as the veterinarian is done. Place the blanket and toy back in the carrier for added security.

Bring food and litter from home when your cat is spending the night at the vet.

Ask to be checked out in the exam room to minimize exposure to other animals and unfamiliar signs or sounds that may cause stress.

### Tips to reintroduce your cat to other cats in the household upon returning home:

- Be passive, don't encourage or force cat interaction
- Leave the returning cat in the carrier. If there are no problems after ten minutes, it is okay to let the returning cat out. If there is aggression, distract the cats to separate them. Don't get between them or pick them up! If prior homecomings have led to aggression or if there is a negative reaction to the cat in the carrier, put the returning cat in a different room for at least 24 hours (until the cats consistently respond to food and toy play from both sides of the door).
- Try bringing cats to the vet together in the future!



The following website provides general feline health information: [vet.cornell.edu/fhc/health](http://vet.cornell.edu/fhc/health)