

## WHEN IS A CAT READY TO MATE?

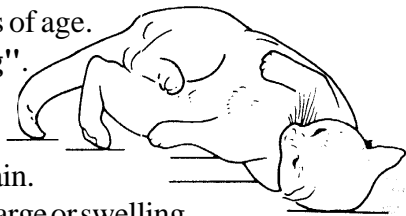
A female cat has her first season at 5 - 8 months of age.

**This is oestrus, often referred to as "calling".**

When she is ready to mate she will become very vocal, rolling, treading her hind legs and sometimes looking and sounding as if she is in pain.

Unlike a bitch there is no noticeable vaginal discharge or swelling.

This lasts 1 -2 days. If she mates she ovulates automatically and in most cases becomes pregnant. If she doesn't mate she will come into oestrus again every 21 days throughout the breeding season (normally Jan.-May and July-September).



## HOW LONG IS PREGNANCY IN A CAT?

Pregnancy can vary from 58 to 70 days. Average is 63 - 65 days. If nothing has happened by the 65th day, bring your cat to us for a check-up.

## WHAT IF A MOTHER CAT REJECTS HER KITTENS?

If the queen rejects her litter. Keep the kittens warm at about 30°C with heated pads, beds, heat lamps etc.

Feed Cimicat – warm to 37°C - use a Catac foster feeding bottle.

Interval between feeds should be every 2 hours for the 1<sup>st</sup> week during the day and every 4 hours during the night.

Then feed every 4 hours during day and every 6 hours at night.

By the fourth week feeds should be at 8 hourly intervals.

After feeding clean around face with warm damp cotton wool and stimulate defecation/urination by wiping genital area and around anus.

## WEANING

Start weaning at 3 weeks of age.

The young take less milk from the mother as weaning progresses and she gradually loses interest in the litter and her milk supply dries up.

If the kittens are still suckling feed them 3 meals a day

When 5-6 weeks old feed 4-5 meals a day.

Kittens tend to be slower to wean than puppies.



## *Pregnancy and Kittening in the Cat*

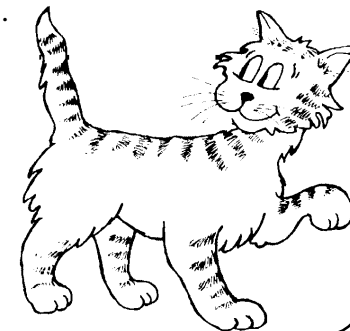
**A litter of kittens can bring a load of happiness into your own home!  
Your children will learn all about birth and treasure the memory lifelong.  
Share in the magic of birth ..... but first be sure you can cope!**

### **Before you mate your cat - ask yourself :-**

1. Have I the time to look after the litter?
2. Do I accept that there is a small risk to my cat - pregnancy can occasionally go wrong (caesarian, eclampsia etc)?
4. Can I (and my family) cope with possible kitten deaths, and parting with them as they go to new homes.
5. Have I the money to pay for possible caesarean or medical treatment? (A caesarean can cost £600 - £850, more in the middle of the night). Plan to have credit available.
6. Can I find suitable homes for all the kittens?

*If you decide to breed with your cat  
we're always here to help you.*

- **Any Questions?** We are happy to answer your questions and discuss your concerns.
- **When should you bring your cat to see the vet?**  
- see inside for a simple healthcare guide to pin on the wall.
- **Emergency Service?** - there is a vet on duty 24 hours a day, all year round. Don't hesitate to phone for advice at any time if you are worried about your cat.



### **Daisy Street Veterinary Centre**

**Daisy St. Blackburn (01254) 53622**

**John Davies MRCVS Sam Purcell MRCVS David Higginson MRCVS**

**[www.vet-healthcentre.co.uk](http://www.vet-healthcentre.co.uk)**

**TOTAL HEALTH CARE THROUGHOUT LIFE**

## WHEN TO SEE THE VET >>>□

### >>>□ BEFORE MATING

- **Health Examination by the vet -**

-if necessary including internal examination to check the passage for size or abnormality + check for possible inherited diseases.

- **Booster Vaccination** so your cat will pass on vaccine protection to her kittens.

- **Worming** with MILBEMAX.

- **High Quality Food -**

Use **HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN ADULT** to prepare a cat for breeding. Using this food there is no need to give any vitamin or mineral supplements. Don't feed fresh meat, chicken or fish (they are all too low in Calcium).



### >>>□ 3 - 4 WEEKS AFTER MATING

- **Health Examination by the vet & Pregnancy Diagnosis -**

In a relaxed cat, the vet can often feel the kittens at 21 to 28 days.

(Later they can't be felt as the uterus becomes softer).

- **Feed the mother High Quality KITTEN Food**

- Change to **HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN KITTEN**. Gradually increase the amount of food offered, and feed 3 - 4 times a day.

### >>>□ 7 - 8 WEEKS AFTER MATING

- **Health Examination by the vet.**

- **Worming** with MILBEMAX.

- **Prepare a cosy kitting area :-** A strong cardboard box 15" - 18" square lined with a comfortable blanket, jumper, or, ideally, Vetbed. Place the box in a secure, dry, dark and (ideally) warm place. Your cat may decide herself where she wants to have her kittens! In your bed, back of a cupboard etc.

- **Prepare for the birth :-** Get a supply of CIMICAT kitten milk, and a CATA FEEDER so you can feed the kittens if the mother has problems.

### >>>□ KITTENING - The Birth

- **1st STAGE LABOUR** - normally 6 - 12 hours (up to 36 hours).

If prolonged, contact the surgery. The cat may be restless, crying, licking her flanks or purring. Usually stops eating during the last 24 hours before labour.

- **2nd STAGE LABOUR** - Birth of the kittens. The cat will be straining with each contraction. A brownish discharge may be seen. Normal delivery of a kitten may take

between 5 to 30 minutes. Cats can sometime rest for 12 - 24 hours between kittens. If nothing has happened one hour after the beginning of straining, contact the surgery. There is a 2nd Stage Labour and a 3rd Stage Labour for each kitten.

- **3rd STAGE LABOUR** - the afterbirth. This stage is short normally 5 - 15 minutes. There should be a placenta after each kitten. If the placentae are not all passed then infection of the uterus can follow. See the vet within 24 hours of birth for a hormone injection to ensure that all the placentae have been passed.

### >>>□ IF YOU ARE IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT PROGRESS

**PHONE THE SURGERY ON BLACKBURN 01254 53622**

**Should your cat need attention be prepared to take her to the vet. If possible, have a car and driver "on call" to help you. Plan to have finance available just in case a caesarean is required.**

### >>>□ 12HRS - 24HRS AFTER KITTENING

- **Bring your cat and her kittens to the vet for a check-up -**

- 1) The vet will check that she has finished kitting,

- 2) give her an injection to contract the uterus and return it to normal,

- 3) give a routine antibiotic injection to prevent infection of the uterus, and

- 4) check over the kittens to detect any birth abnormalities or health problems.

### >>>□ KITTENS - 3 WKS OLD

- **Worm** the mother with MILBEMAX.

- **Worm** the kittens from 3wks, every 3wks up to 12wks old.

Use **PANACUR LIQUID** up to 6wks, then **MILBEMAX**.

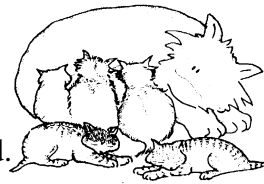
- **Weaning:** start offering the kittens **HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN KITTEN**.

Crumble the dry food at first to make it easier for the kittens.

- **Eclampsia risk for the mother!** Typically 3 weeks after kitting.

Watch out for twitching or rapid breathing as early signs of convulsions.

The risk is highest for mothers with more than 4 kittens or on a poor diet.



### >>>□ KITTENS - 9 WEEKS OLD

- **Vaccination** - start protection against Flu, Enteritis and Feline Leukaemia.

Ask about discounts for vaccinating a litter

- **Plan neutering if you don't intend to breed again.**

- **Food** - Return the mother cat to **HILL'S SCIENCE PLAN ADULT**.