



# Foster cat veterinary care – summary

It is important that all cats are treated consistently throughout the charity and that all receive the same level of veterinary care. The following summary will guide you through what to do.

## Veterinary discount schemes

Due to our charity status and the volume of products Cats Protection purchases across the UK, we have been able to arrange substantial discounts with the following providers:

- veterinary wholesaler
- diagnostic laboratory
- discounted FIV PCR testing
- microchip provider

The discount we receive on the product or test from the manufacturer and the wholesaler means that even with your usual mark-up added, we are still able to make a saving, allowing our funds to help as many cats as possible.

To find out more, see the [veterinary discount schemes](#) information on the Cats Protection website.

## Stray policy

A cat must stay in Cats Protection's care for 14 days while attempts are made to find an owner, before rehoming or non-urgent euthanasia is carried out. The 14-day stray period starts at the point the cat is signed over to Cats Protection.

Certain treatments may be carried out during the 14-day stray period in some circumstances. Please see Cats Protection's [Veterinary Guide](#) for details.

All treatments given to stray cats, including euthanasia, should be recorded. Where euthanasia has been undertaken, we ask the practice to retain the body for the 14-day stray period, should an owner come forward.

Microchipped cats are held in Cats Protection's care for 28 days while attempts are made to find the owner.

## Clinical examination

A full clinical examination should be undertaken as soon as possible after a cat's entry into Cats Protection care. If a cat cannot be adequately examined despite giving them time in care to settle, they should be sedated/ anaesthetised to examine at least once prior to homing.

All cats in Cats Protection's care should have individual records.

The examination should include:

- check for infectious diseases including ringworm, parvovirus, and cat flu.  
Note: Confirmation testing of cat flu is not necessary
- estimate the cat's age
- assess sex and neuter status
- LH testing for neuter status
- scan for a microchip
- assess teeth condition using the Bristol [dental grading chart](#)

Other important points to note:

- referral to specialists is discouraged
- only carry out diagnostic tests where knowing the result is essential to case management
- lengthy treatment plans that will extend the time a cat must spend in rescue care should be avoided. Euthanasia should be considered for any condition which cannot be stabilised well enough for a cat to be homed within a reasonable timeframe

## FIV and FELV testing

Test all higher risk cats.

- Please refer to Cats Protection's [Veterinary Guide](#) for further details on which cats to test
- Follow our [flowchart](#) for guidance on how to test, where to send the blood and how to interpret results

## Vaccinations

All cats must be vaccinated as soon as possible. Only vets may vaccinate Cats Protection's cats following a clinical examination, using Cats Protection's preferred vaccine.

For further details, see our [Vaccination FAQs](#) document.

Cats can be vaccinated 48 hours before neutering. Avoid vaccinating pregnant queens if they are not to be neutered during pregnancy. Lactating queens can be vaccinated two weeks post-partum.

A vaccination card must be completed for each cat.

## Parasite control

All cats must be treated as soon as possible, after being examined by a vet. Follow our [parasite procedures](#).

## Neutering

All cats must be neutered before homing.

Kittens may be neutered from two days after their first vaccine or homed with a neutering voucher.

See Cats Protection's [Veterinary Guide](#) for further information and for anaesthetic dose rates for kittens.

## Infectious disease

Cats Protection has [guidance](#) for the management of infectious disease outbreaks.

For a list of diseases which are reportable to the Cats Protection Veterinary department, please see Cats Protection's [Veterinary Guide](#).

## Euthanasia

For further information and for a list of situations where euthanasia might be considered, see Cats Protection's [Veterinary Guide](#).

## Signing off cats as 'fit to home'

All cats must be deemed as 'fit to home' before adoption. Any condition they may have must be either resolved or stabilised.

At the point the cat is deemed 'fit to home' by the attending vet, a Cats Protection [Medical Summary form](#) should be completed. Ensure full disclosure of all veterinary treatments administered, including the dental status.

Guidance on how to complete the Medical Summary form can be found [here](#).

## Support available for vets

- Cats Protection's [Veterinary Guide](#)
- Cats Protection's [Minimum Vet Standards](#) infographic
- Information about [Cats Protection's veterinary discount schemes](#)
- You can find Cats Protection's veterinary protocols, advice for adopters, CPD Academy and information about our EMS placements [here](#)
- Our team of Field Veterinary Officers are available to discuss cases and offer additional support. They can be contacted by emailing [veterinary@cats.org.uk](mailto:veterinary@cats.org.uk)