

EXAM HANDLING INTOLERANCE

The cat that you are adopting, while social and friendly in normal circumstances, can be VERY intolerant to invasive handling and/or being placed in a carrier/box – especially in a medical setting. This may mean you will have difficulty getting her into her carrier and during vet visits, but following the steps below will help her feel more comfortable about carriers and vet visits. The following tips can help you provide vadditional care in the home environment for future vet visits.

- **A cat-only clinic** is an excellent choice. If you can't find a cat-only vet in your area, you can look for a clinic that is recognized by the American Association of Feline Practitioners as a cat-friendly practice. Tahe AAFP designated cat-friendly practices have gone through a process that allows them to understand the unique needs of cats and handle even aggressive cats in a gentle, empathetic and caring manner. You can use the AAFP's site to search for a cat friendly veterinarian in your area: catvets.com
- You can also look for a veterinarian that makes **house calls**.
- **Get your cat used to his carrier.** You can do this by leaving the carrier out for several days and put treats in it. When you have to go to the vet, used a pheromone spray to help him feel calmer while he's in the carrier.
- **Place a towel over his carrier** before leaving the house, and do not remove it until the vet is about to start the exam.
- **The vet may recommend a sedative before a vet visit.** These are usually easy to hide in treats or flavored pill gel capsules, and happily eaten!

When you are shopping for a carrier, you'll want to look for one that opens from both the top and the front– this will make it easier to get her in and out. There are hard and soft carrier options that will fit your needs, but a hard sided carrier is best when you are just starting out. Cats are wary of new and unfamiliar things, so you will want to get them used to their crate BEFORE they need to go to the vet or transported. To familiarize them with their new carrier, you can follow these easy steps:

- **Place the carrier in a favorite area** with a soft bed or towel inside.
- **Feed kitty** or toss treats in the carrier several times a day so they will associate it with good things.
- **Leave the door open at first** when they are eating or going after the treats. When they intentionally start entering the carrier on their own, you can shut the carrier door for short periods of time and gradually increase the time that the door is closed– start with a few seconds at first.
- **You can also play with chaser toys** inside and around the carrier if the cat is interested in play (*chasing laser pointer or wand toy inside the crate then back out*).
- **Keep the carrier out and in plain view**– you don't want to bring it out only when your cat is going to be transported.

If your cat still is not adjusting you can follow these steps to get them safely into the carrier:

- **Place the carrier upright** so the door is facing the ceiling, or open the top of the carrier.
- **Pick them up under their front legs**, with your other hand supporting their bottom.
- **Lower your cat rear–end first** into the carrier. Doing it this way will make him feel like he isn't being forced in.
- **Cover the carrier with a towel** when transporting to keep him calm.