

PAWspective

Chain of Lakes Animal Clinic

May 2019



This month we are sharing some tips for a fearless cat! Our number one priority is the well being of your cat, and we start by reducing fear, anxiety, and stress at the veterinary visit.

Choosing A Carrier

The first step of a Fearless visit occurs long before the day of the appointment. This means choosing the right carrier for your cat. Try these tips.

- Hard or Soft Carrier
- Big enough for your cat to lay down & turn around in, but not so large your cat won't feel safe
- At least two openings & can be easily taken apart

Acclimating To The Carrier

Acclimating your cat to the carrier is the next step. This is especially important for kittens to get them use to their carrier early. Consider the following.

- Do not hide the carrier, leave it out for your pet to see and use regularly by making it a piece of furniture
- Pick a place your cat likes to rest, teaching them that their favorite spot is even better with the carrier
- Most cats like elevated spaces, placing the carrier in an elevated spot will be more popular

- Take apart the carrier to make it seem more like a bed
- Place your cat's favorite things around the carrier (such as toys & treats)
- Play with your pet around the carrier
- Place a pheromone infused towel, bed, or item of your own clothing with your scent in the carrier
- Feed your cat in or around the carrier
- Consider using a high value treat (something specifically for these proud moments)

Transporting To The Clinic

With all of this in mind, you are ready to transport your cat to their vet visit.

- Only transport two cats together if they are comfortable. Consider their stress after the visit. They may be comfortable together on the way to the clinic, but afterwards their stress may be elevated and possibly uncomfortable sharing their carrier on the way home
- Keeping the carrier on the floor of the backseat causes less stress in the event of an accident or sudden stop.
- Hold the carrier like a package, versus a suitcase to avoid swinging or seeing a dog at eye level in the lobby
- Consider using a towel or blanket to create a safe, quiet, hideaway when entering and leaving the clinic.

At The Clinic

Once you're in the exam room,

- Place the carrier on the exam table or floor
- Open up both doors to let your cat come out on their own. If they don't, do NOT pull them out.
- Taking apart the carrier will keep them in their safe space while the exam is done.

Always watch for changes in your cat's body language that could be a sign of fear, anxiety, or stress. If you've noticed that your pet is still stressed, reach out to us so can determine the best course for a Fearless visit. We may need to reschedule and/or try a pre-visit medication to combat fear, anxiety, and stress in your pet.