



Kitrina Journell, DVM **Animal Hospital of Lewisville**

Dr. Kitrina Journell graduated from the University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana College of Veterinary Medicine in 2007 and then worked in the suburbs of Chicago for two years before relocating to North Carolina. Dr. Journell met her husband while completing her Biology, Pre-med Degree at James Madison University. They are now happy to call

North Carolina home and enjoy exploring all NC has to offer with their daughter Hadleigh and three furry kids (Parker, Abe, and Madison)! Dr. Journell loves practicing at the Animal Hospital of Lewisville because of the close relationships she has been able to establish with many clients and their pets.

Puppy Love

Adopting a new puppy or kitten is a very exciting time for the whole family. If you have decided to add a puppy to your family, make sure you have everything ready before you bring him home. Your puppy will be away from his mother and littermates for the first time and may be a little stressed at first.



You can welcome him home by having a safe place for him to stay. Crate training is often a successful way to house-train a puppy and keep him safe when he cannot be supervised. Puppies love to chew things, especially things that don't belong to them. While you get to know your puppy, make sure he does not shred any toys and eat the pieces. This could lead to gastroenteritis (inflamed gut) or worse, an obstruction that requires surgery.

After adopting your puppy, you will want to establish a relationship with a local veterinarian. You'll want a full physical exam to detect any problems your puppy may have. Sometimes puppies have already received their first vaccine, but they will need to get a booster vaccine every 3-4 weeks until the puppy is 16 weeks old. Generally, the first vaccine is given between 6-9 weeks old, but your veterinarian will establish an appropriate schedule based on size, age, and health. During these early weeks, your puppy should only be around healthy, vaccinated dogs. Also, remember to only walk him in an area that does not have other dogs' feces. Unfortunately, Parvovirus has the potential to be in the environment up to 6 months and is highly contagious to a puppy.

A large majority of puppies have intestinal parasites (worms) and possibly fleas. Both problems can make your puppy sick if not treated appropriately. Many intestinal parasites are zoonotic (transmissible to humans); therefore, pick up their poop as soon as they go to prevent contamination. Young children need to be reminded to wash their hands after handling the puppy. For your

family and your puppy's safety, it is generally recommended that all puppies be dewormed, even if the fecal appears negative. Your veterinarian will also decide what the safest flea, tick, and heartworm preventative is based on your puppy's lifestyle.

Kitten Love

Much like a new puppy, adding a new kitten to your family requires preparation. When kittens are little, they need to be kept in a safe area where they can't get lost or stuck in furniture or cords. Generally a small room with a litter box, food, and water is acceptable. If the kitten is very small (less than 2lbs), often a large dog crate can be the safest option when the kitten can't be watched.

Litter box selection and hygiene are extremely important with cats. The litter box should be placed in a quiet area without any noises that could be perceived as scary (away from laundry machines, high traffic areas for kids, blowing fans, etc). As the kitten grows, so should the litter box. Your cat should be able to turn completely around and have enough litter to bury any excrement. A large storage container can work well when the kitten gets bigger but still needs to be scooped at least once daily.

The best food for your kitten (or cat, for that matter) is canned food. Depending on their age, they may be able to have dry kibble available as well. Younger kittens may need to be fed multiple times per day, but your veterinarian will help guide you to what is best for your cat.

New cats should be tested for Feline Leukemia (FELV) and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) before being introduced to other cats in the household. Kittens also have to go through a series of vaccines to keep them protected. Most kittens receive their first vaccine between 8-10 weeks of age, and then every 3-4 weeks after until they are 16 weeks. They also need to be treated with an appropriate dewormer and flea product. There are many flea and tick products that can be very dangerous for cats. Please consult with your veterinarian before applying or giving any products.

If your kitten (or puppy) must have a bath before your first appointment, it is imperative that they are kept warm after the bath. Young, small pets have a harder time maintaining their body temperature. It is generally considered acceptable to use Dawn liquid dish washing soap to help with a flea infestation, but further prevention will be needed.

Kittens love playing and sleeping in cardboard boxes, and it can be therapeutic to watch. Puppies love to play tug of war and keep themselves busy with food dispensing toys. These toys provide entertainment and fulfill their desire to chew, while mentally challenging them to get the food out of the container. Inviting a new puppy or kitten to your home can be a very rewarding experience when you are prepared.



ANIMAL HOSPITAL OF LEWISVILLE
6260 Shallowford Rd., Lewisville
336-946-3441