



## Shelter Cats and Upper Respiratory Infections

Occasionally, we have cats/kittens returned to the shelter because they develop signs of a cold once they are in their new homes. It might be a good time to review upper respiratory infections in cats and give you some valuable tips in becoming more comfortable with these symptoms.

First, almost ALL cats/kittens that leave a shelter (or a pet store, for that matter) are going to develop a cold when they leave. Stress plays a huge factor in the way these viruses operate. They lay dormant in the system until there is some "shake-up" -- a stressor, like traveling to a new home with new smells, a new family, etc. The next thing you know; you have a sneezing cat who seems hardly able to breathe!

DON'T PANIC! In most cases, these "colds" will go away on their own once your new cat gets settled in, is eating good food, and getting lots of love from you! Every now and then antibiotics are needed, but that is the exception rather than the rule.

Symptoms to watch for:

- Sneezing
- Clear discharge from the nose and/or watery eyes
- Fever (above 102.5 on a digital thermometer when taken rectally)

At this stage, all that is needed is some TLC from you. As long as they are eating and active, they should get through it just fine! Fevers are actually HELPFUL in fighting these infections -- there is no need to worry unless your cat is lethargic or is no longer eating.

Symptoms that may warrant further treatment: (CONTACT US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE)

- Green or yellow discharge from the eyes and/or nose
- Fevers of 105 or above
- Lethargy
- Lack of appetite

The Humane Society of Manatee County is DEDICATED to helping our kittens and cats adjust to life in their new homes! If you notice any of the above symptoms, please let us know so that we can help! We can provide you with any/all of the following:

- Handout on keeping nose/eyes clear of discharge
- Handout on preventing the spread to other cats in your household
- Antibiotics if deemed necessary, as well as antibiotic eye ointments if needed