New Kitten

**The Big Surprise**

Kittens can have kittens. Technically, felines can have up to five litters a year, starting soon after they leave their mother. Female kittens can begin their cycles as young as four months of age but is generally more like six months.

**Litter Box and Litter**

Many cats prefer much larger litter boxes than what is sold in pet supply stores, something like a concrete mixing tub found at hardware stores, but for a kitten, you can start out with a standard-sized box. For one feline, have two boxes in different locations. Some cats like the boxes to be on different floors or at opposite ends of the house. Most dislike having them adjacent to the washing machine and dryer, and they really don't want it near their food bowls. Each box should be scooped clean once every day and the litter in it should be replaced every one to two weeks.

**Vaccinations**

Vaccinations typically start around 6 weeks of age and are continued every 2 to 4 weeks until the kitten is about 16 weeks old. The reason for revaccinating is due to the window of susceptibility. By 14-20 weeks of age, maternal antibodies are gone. Kittens receive a series of vaccines ending at a time when we know the baby's own immune system should be able to respond to those vaccines. A kitten's vaccination schedule is staggered because vaccinations produce a much greater response if they follow a vaccine given 3-4 weeks prior.

**Kitten-Proofing**

At around 8 to 10 weeks of age some can be fearful, and they tend not to get into too much trouble, but around 10 weeks, kittens start to practice the art of pure love. They get cuddles and they get bold and courageous so they jump off things, dash underfoot, chew cords, and jump on the hot stove. This period will last for a few months. When your kitty is still tiny, double-check the washer, dryer, and dishwasher before you start them because kitties will nap inside. If you have any furniture that reclines, check before you put the footrest down because kitties will find a way to nap in there.