

**For after-hours
emergencies
(before 9:30 a.m.
and after 6:30 p.m.,
seven days a
week), call:
*your number here***



STAGE 1 KITTENS

BOTTLE KITTEN, 6-7 FEEDINGS/DAY, OVERNIGHT FEEDINGS

HEAT SUPPORT

- Kittens of this age should have a source of heat at all times.
- Make sure they have space to move away from the heat when needed.
- The plug-in heat pad may shut off after a few hours. Please check heat pad to make sure it is still on.
- Microwavable heat discs can also be used.
 - Heat disc in microwave for five minutes every eight hours.

FEEDING

- These kittens will need to be fed around the clock every three to four hours, including overnight.
- Record feeding times and amount of formula eaten on foster care **Log Sheet**.
- Mix formula with a ratio of one scoop formula to two scoops warm/hot water, and shake well.
 - Mixed formula can only be refrigerated for up to 24 hours. After 24 hours, discard and make a fresh batch.
- To reheat the bottle, simply place in a cup of hot water until warmed.
- Feed kittens in a flat, upright position, as if they were nursing on mom (tummies to ground).
 - Do not force feed them formula, as their gag reflexes are not fully developed.
- Test the temperature of the formula on your wrist to make sure that it's not too hot or cold.
- Hold the bottle at a 45 degree angle to make sure there is always formula in the end of the bottle.
 - While on bottle, our target quantity for kittens is 5 percent of their body weight at each feeding.
 - For example, if they weigh 200 grams, then 10 milliliters of formula would be the target amount.
 - Over eating can cause loose stool.
- When they are about 4 weeks old you can start to offer wet food to see if they are interested. If so, then continue to offer them wet food first at each feeding, and then follow up with the bottle to make sure they are not hungry. See the **Stage 2 Care Sheet** for more details.

FUSSY KITTENS

- Let foster staff know if they are having trouble latching onto the bottle, as kittens learning how to eat from the bottle may be fussy. Here are some tips:
 - If they are being very fussy, it could be that the formula is a little too hot or too cold, so the temperature may need to be adjusted.
 - You can also try the alternate nipple in with the supplies to see if they prefer that one.

- o One way to see if the kitten has eaten anything during the feeding is to stimulate them to defecate, weighing them right before feeding and weighing them again right after feeding. Weight gain during the feeding time should mean that the kitten has actually eaten formula (1 gram = 1 milliliter of formula).

STIMULATION

- Stimulate kittens to urinate and defecate before and after each feeding:
 - o Utilize Kleenex tissues or toilet paper.
 - o You can also use warm/wet tissues or unscented babies wipes to help stimulate if you are having difficulty getting them to defecate.
- Kittens should urinate at every feeding.
- Kittens should pass stool once a day. Please let your foster team know if a kitten has not defecated in 48 hours.

WEIGHT

- Weigh kittens daily in grams, using gram scale provided. Please weigh kittens around the same time every day and prior to eating, for consistency.
 - o Notify foster staff of weight loss, especially large weight drops (10 percent of body weight or more) in one day.
- Record daily weights on your foster care [Log Sheet](#).

KEEPING KITTENS CLEAN

- Use baby wipes to clean light messes off kittens, ensuring kittens are fully dry and warm after cleaning.
- If bathing, use a gentle soap (baby shampoo or Dawn dish soap) and avoid getting water in or near kitten's face. Lightly blow dry kittens on warm heat after bath until they are **fully** dry.

SUCKING

- Orphan kittens sometimes develop a habit of nursing on each other in the absence of their mother. If you notice kittens sucking on each other, separate them immediately. Sucking can cause serious injury, especially to male kittens.
- After kittens are separated examine each kitten's genital region for swelling.
- Stimulate each kitten to ensure they are able to urinate. If they do not urinate after the next feeding alert your foster team.
- Clean and dry any soiled kittens to prevent skin irritation from urine and feces.

MEDICAL MONITORING

- Monitoring for signs of illness is very important in young kittens. Here are some signs to look out for:
 - o Coughing, sneezing, eye/nasal discharge, lethargy, vomiting, loss of appetite, weight loss or diarrhea.
- Notify foster staff of any medical concerns the same day you notice the issue.
- For urgent matters, contact the emergency number listed at the top of this care form.

ROUTINE TREATMENTS

- Kittens need routine treatments to stay healthy:
 - o Dewormers are due every two weeks.
 - o At five weeks old, the kittens will be due for first vaccine, feline leukemia testing and microchip.
 - o Booster vaccines will be scheduled every two weeks after the initial vaccines.

SPAY/NEUTER TIME

- Kittens will be able to return for surgery/adoption once they are around eight weeks old, weigh at least 850 grams and are totally off the bottle.
- We can also have them return once they are around six weeks old and weaning off the bottle, if you prefer that they go to another foster at that time.
- Contact your foster team to schedule a return date or surgery appointment.

