

WELCOME TO THE FUNGAL JUNGLE TEAM

Fostering Ringworm

INFORMATION ON FOSTERING A RINGWORM CAT

Thank you for fostering a cat with ringworm! Treatment of a cat with ringworm is normally 3 weeks to 3 months, but as with any medical condition complications may cause treatment to last longer. However, cats tend to recover faster in the kind of loving, low-stress environment that only a home can provide! Treatment involves a daily fungal spray medication and a weekly lime dipping to help kill and control the spores. Though it may feel like a lot of hard work, ringworm is totally curable, non-lethal, and not nearly as scary as it seems at first. Since these cats are routinely euthanized in other shelters, your choice to foster them saves lives!

RINGWORM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is ringworm (dermatophytosis)?

Ringworm is the common name for the skin infection caused by a group of fungi; it is not caused by a worm at all. Most often it will cause a circular area of fur loss that is red and may be slightly raised. Ringworm can also have other characteristics but these circular, hairless lesions are the most common symptom. Ringworm is closely related to athlete's foot in people, and it is contagious to us; the young, old, and immunocompromised are more likely to get it. Ringworm is also very contagious to other animals including dogs, other cats, guinea pigs, etc.

Am I going to get ringworm from my foster kitty?

It is possible for you and anybody in your living space to get ringworm from your foster cat. Washing your hands after handling the cat and keeping them isolated in a bathroom for the length of their treatment can help reduce the chances of transmission, but some people may be at greater risk than others. This puts young animals and children, elderly people and pets, those who are HIV+, people on chemotherapy or taking medication after a transfusion or organ transplant, and highly stressed people and animals at high risk.

What if I get ringworm?

We recommend that you see a physician. While ringworm is a curable, self-limiting ailment in healthy adults, and while effective over-the-counter treatments are available, we always recommend getting professional advice to resolve it in a timely manner.

What about my other animals?

In order to keep your other pets from getting ringworm we recommend that you keep your cat isolated in a room that is easy to clean, such as a bathroom. Washing your hands and changing your clothes in between your ringworm kitty and other animals can reduce the chance of spreading the fungus as well. Remember, your shoes can also be a carrier of the spores.

RINGWORM FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

What about my home?

If you keep your cat in a bathroom or other confined, tiled area it is very easy to clean the space. Ringworm is killed using a bleach dilution of 10 parts water to 1 part bleach. Let the solution sit for approximately 10 minutes for maximum efficacy.

What treatment will my foster cat need?

Your foster cat will be prescribed an antifungal spray, called conzol spray, to be applied to the ringworm spots twice daily. They will also be treated with a weekly lime dip (which can be done at the shelter if you don't want to do it). Instructions for dipping are included in this handout, and we are always available for advice and support. This process typically takes 10-20 minutes.

Remember! By fostering this cat you are truly saving a life!

While cats and dogs with ringworm are routinely euthanized at shelters around the country, West Valley Humane Society believes that these animals deserve to be alive just as much as an animal without ringworm. It is a very treatable and temporary issue that, with a little TLC, will leave you feeling proud you saved a very worthy little life!

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email our foster coordinator anytime at: foster@westvalleyhumanesociety.org.

LIME DIP INSTRUCTIONS:

Supplies needed:

- Lime sulfur dip
- Measuring cup
- Rubber gloves
- Plastic container sized to fit the body of your cat [litter box with high sides]
- Wash cloth to apply dip over cat
- Large cotton balls
- Disinfected carrier



Things to know before dipping:

- Lime dip stings in eyes, noses, and open wounds, so be careful around these
- Lime dip will change the color of metal, so remove jewelry before dipping and avoid stainless steel sinks
- Lime dip is a sulfur compound, and has a "rotten egg"-like odor
- Keep towels used for dipping separate from regular laundry because it will transfer smell
- Wear old clothes to dip as the dip can stain them yellow
- Dip will cause the fur of cats to turn yellow, but this will fade quickly
- Lime dipping is much easier with two people!

Procedure:

Find a warm, well-ventilated room to dip in. Put on rubber gloves, and pour ½ of a cup of lime dip and 1 gallon of warm water into the plastic dipping tub. Scruff the cat and lower them into the warm lime dip solution. Pour solution over cat, making sure to get them completely wet down to the skin; this might require you to rub the solution onto the cat or brush the wash cloth against the grain of their fur. Squeeze their feet gently to extract claws and dip feet. Use a cotton ball or toothbrush to get the face wet, paying extra attention to the ears, nose, whiskers, and chin. If you happen to get dip in the cat's eye, be sure to flush the eye well with fresh water.

While the kitty drips dry in their carrier, clean up the room, wash their towels and bedding, and spray hard surfaces with a solution of 1 part bleach in 10 parts water. Let this sit for at least ten minutes, then dry the room and set it back up.

Repeat these steps once a week.

Once your cat is clear of ringworm, it is recommended to dip them once more to kill any spores and give the room a final cleaning with the 10:1 bleach solution.