

# CATS

## Welfare friendly examination procedure without the owner

Remember that a trip to the veterinary practice constitutes a significant routine change for the cats. Whenever a cat is away from home, they will often seek out a hiding place, so we need to facilitate this behaviour. The carrier should act as a safe place for the cats and, whenever the cat needs to visit the veterinary practice a towel can be used to cover the carrier.

Where possible, try to book the consultation to limit waiting time for the cat.

Please consider the need of pre-visit medication for some cats that can be excessively stressed.



### BEFORE THE EXAMINATION



1. Inform the owner to habituate their cat to carrier before traveling (the carrier should be visible and accessible at home, in a safe and quiet area. Treats and toys should be available inside.) Advise owners to use a carrier with a grid on top or a carrier that can be opened on the sides easily so the examination can be performed in the carrier. You can also put a towel in the carrier with odours familiar to the cat.

2. Inform the owner that pheromone spray (fraction F3) in the cat's carrier about 15 minutes before travel is useful to reduce stress during travelling.



3. Advise the owner to bring a soft towel to cover the carrier during travel and to cover the cat during manipulation. In this way, visual stimuli are reduced. Additionally, an elevated place or a platform could increase its comfort during the waiting time.



### DURING THE VISIT

1. Cats are able to feel emotions, so try to keep a positive attitude when the owner leaves the cat in the consultation room.

2. Take your time to examine the cat that might be afraid and fearful. Leave time for exploring the room and the table, and let the cats explore your hands too. Avoid visual and noise stimuli (such as lower level lighting, fast movements, and loud noises).

During the consultation, avoid noises and strong smells because the cat without its owner might feel very threatened.

3. Use a soft towel to cover cat's face and to suggest the position during procedures (such as ultrasound).

4. Use the towel that owners brought in the carrier to allow the cat to lay down on it.

5. Use minimal restraint and low stress handling (i.e. avoid heavy handling such as a scruffing).

6. You might even suggest a special care by introducing the cat in a multicat household after the consultation.