

Your Foster Information and Vaccine Schedule

Names, Descriptions, DOB

Mom: _____

Kittens:

1: _____

2: _____

3: _____

4: _____

5: _____

6: _____

7: _____

First Vaccine Appointment will need to be scheduled the week of: _____

2nd Vaccine Appointment: _____

3rd Vaccine Appointment: _____

Surgery/Return Day: _____



Itty Bitty Kitty Foster Guide

Thank you for volunteering to foster itty bitty kitties for Angels of Assisi. When orphaned kittens are brought into a pound, they are generally euthanized because staff is not able to care for them in a shelter environment. With the help of fosters, we are able to pull these kittens from the pound and get them into a foster home where they can get the TLC and socialization necessary until they are old enough to be placed in our adoption center (usually around 8 weeks old).

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact staff for help and advice. If you need a sick visit for your kittens or it is time to start getting them their vaccines, please email Frances at the address below to request an appointment.

Kittens are extremely fragile, and even with the best of care, a kitten may pass away. Never blame yourself if this happens. If you have a kitten that is crashing and is not responding to any stimulation, call the emergency vet line and we will get you and the kitten in ASAP. If you do lose a kitten, you can bring him or her to us and we will take care of the cremation.

Name	Service	Contact
Chelsea Ellis	Foster Coordinator	cellis@angelsofassisi.org
Frances Arnold	Appointments (both sick and vaccine)	fmarnold@angelsofassisi.org
24hr Vet Cell Phone	Emergency only	540-355-7713

SUPPLIES

We recommend having these items on hand to help make fostering fun and easy. Check with us to see what we can provide to help get you started!

- Large dog crate if unable to keep kittens in a spare room
- Carrier to bring kittens in for appointments
- Food/water bowls - shallow dishes are recommended for kittens, any size can be used for a momma cat
- Litter box and scoops - small box for kittens, a large one for momma cat. A large litter box or storage tote with towels in it also makes a great nesting box for a nursing mom
- Non-clumping litter - we recommend non-clumping for kittens because as they learn to use the box, they will get messy. When they clean themselves, we don't want them ingesting clumping litter, which can swell in their stomach and intestines and cause serious damage
- Bed/towels - kittens can be messy, so use something that's easily washable
- KMR (kitten milk replacer) and bottles
- Food – Purina Kitten Chow for both kittens and a nursing mom, as well as canned food (pate style for kittens, any canned for mom)
- Toys – kittens love to play!
- Heating pad or rice socks – kittens need to stay warm, especially if you're bottle feeding orphaned kittens
- Dawn dish liquid – great to use on kittens as both a flea dip and general soap
- Pedialyte, Nutrical, Karo Syrup, Val-Tinic/Liqui-Tinic – these things are good to have on hand in case you have a kitten who 'crashes' from low blood sugar as well as replenishing electrolytes from diarrhea
- Oral syringes (for giving the above items) and a bulb syringe, good for helping clear nasal passages of a stuffy kitten

Fostering options:

A mother cat with kittens:

A mom with kittens is one of the easiest foster options - mom does all the work! We will provide supplies (litter box, litter, food, etc.), you will provide the love! Crates are available if needed but a small bathroom or extra room works just fine, as well! Kittens will need to be handled as much as possible so when they return to the adoption center they will be used to being cuddled and socialized. Be sure to provide momma cat with food at all times. Kitten chow is great as it has extra calories to help her keep up with nursing the babies. Canned food is a great treat! Momma would also love to have a 'nesting box' where she can jump out of for some alone time but leave the kittens in for safety. A simple cardboard box, shallow storage tote, or even a large litter box would work just fine!

Self-feeding orphaned kittens:

Kittens 4-8 weeks old can eat on their own and use the litter box, but still need to be in a foster until they are old enough to be adopted. You'll feed them, clean their litter box, and help socialize them until they are 8 weeks old and can come back to the adoption center. You may have to feed kittens canned food at first and transition them to hard food.

Bottle babies:

Bottle fed kittens are under 4 weeks old with no momma cat and will need to be bottle fed every 2-6 hours depending on how old they are. These kittens will also need help learning to use a litter box; below is some info on stimulating kittens to urinate and defecate. It is VERY important to keep bottle babies warm; you can use a heating pad on a low setting covered with a towel. Never feed a chilled kitten as their intestines will not digest the formula properly and this can lead to death. Always warm a kitten before feeding him, either by rubbing him briskly with your hands, keeping him against your skin, or wrapping him in a towel with a heating pad. A good thing to make and have on hand to use in a pinch is a rice sock. Take an old tube sock and fill it with uncooked white rice. Tie a knot in the sock and when needed, simply microwave the sock (put a small bowl of water in the microwave next to the sock) for a minute or so to get it warm. This can be placed in with a kitten to act as a heating pad.

For tips and tricks on bottle feeding, check out this website:

<http://www.austinpetsalive.org/about/programs/bottle-baby-program/>

Bathroom Stimulation

The kitten's natural mother takes care of both ends of her baby. By licking the kitten's abdomen, she stimulates the bowels and bladder and tidies up the resulting mess. A surrogate cat mom should gently rub the kitten's abdomen and bottom with a cotton ball or pad or tissues moistened with warm water. This stimulates the discharge of waste and keeps babies clean. Be careful to rub only enough to get them to expel waste materials. Keep the area clean and watch for chafing which might indicate that you are rubbing too hard or not cleaning well enough.

Health and Safety Basics:

For the safety of the kittens we recommend keeping them in a crate or kitten-proofed room unless you are in the room providing direct supervision.

Kittens should be alert and warm to the touch. Do not attempt to feed chilled kittens; warm them up first.

If you notice fleas, you can bathe the kitten in Dawn dish liquid (avoid getting their head wet) and flea comb kitty. Dry the kitten immediately.

Diarrhea and upper respiratory infections (watery/goopy eyes, sneezing, and nasal drainage) can be serious and should be treated immediately.

We recommend keeping young kittens away from your resident pets until they are at least 8 weeks old and have been vaccinated and combo tested.

When you feed and clean the kittens, wash their fur all over with a barely damp towel using short strokes as the mother would use. This cleans their fur, teaches them to clean their fur, and gives them a feeling of attention and well-being.

If the kittens have diarrhea and become caked with stool, it is easier on their skin to soak and wash them in warm water.

The kitten's instinctive need to suckle (frustrated by the lack of the mother's breast) may cause the kitten to suckle its litter mate's ears, tail or genitals, causing irritations to develop. Try to satisfy this oral need by caressing each kitten's mouth with your finger or a soft cloth.

- Starting at 6 weeks of age, kittens need to start their vaccines. Please contact Frances when your kittens reach 6 weeks of age to make the appointment. They will get vaccines every 2-3 weeks. If able, we would like the kittens to stay in foster with you until they reach 2 pounds and we can schedule their surgery day and return day at the same time.

General Kitten Timeline:

Newborn: eyes are closed, ears are flat to the head, and fur is thin

10-14 days old: eyes begin to open

3 weeks old: ears stand up, teeth are visible, and wobbly walking begins

4 weeks old: kittens begin eating on their own and using the litter box

8 weeks old: healthy kittens will weigh about 2 pounds and are ready for spay/neuter and adoption

Feeding Guide:

Make sure your formula is not chilled; use hot (not boiling) water to mix			
Age in Weeks	Average Weight of Kitten	Amount of Formula Per Day	Number of Feedings Per Day
1	4 ounces	32 cc	6
2	7 ounces	56 cc	4
3	10 ounces	80 cc	3
4	13 ounces	104 cc	3

At 4 weeks you can also start weaning them by free feeding kitten chow and canned food.

Other Feeding options: Some kittens will automatically transition from nursing on mom or being bottle fed to moistened kitten chow; some will require a little more work. You can try simply moistening dry kitten chow with warm water or covering the top with some wet food to entice them to eat it. If they simply will not eat; you can try a combination of wet food (pate style), baby food (plain turkey or chicken), and some KMR (kitten milk replacement). If you are having trouble getting your foster kittens to eat, do not hesitate to ask staff what “formula” they would recommend. Every litter and every kitten will be different.