



## Feline Forum

Courtesy of:

### Traveling with your Cat

The best advice is not to travel with your pet. However, if you decide you must take your cat on your vacation you should plan carefully to ensure that the journey is safe and pleasureable for both you and your cat.

Just as you pack your suitcase for your needs, you should also pack for your cat's needs. Items should include dishes, food, litter box, litter, a sturdy pet carrier, leash, harness, identification tags, toys, and health certificates.

If you are staying at motels, campgrounds or rental property, check to be sure that they allow pets. Many places do not allow pets. There are various travel guides, such as "Take Your Pet USA" (Artco Publishing, 12 Channel St., Boston, MA 02210), that provide information on hotels that accept pets. Also, find out if there are any travel restrictions in the states or countries you will be visiting. Certain states require proof that your cat is current on

vaccinations and is healthy. Many countries impose quarantines on animals arriving in their countries. Finding out about restrictions after your arrival can ruin an otherwise well-planned vacation.

When staying at a hotel be sure to inform housekeeping staff of your cat, and ask that they wait until you return before entering your room. Using do-not-disturb signs on the door will help to reinforce this message. Whenever you leave your room, place your

cat back in the travel carrier or enclose it in the bathroom. But before leaving, be sure to provide a bowl of fresh water.

### Cat Scratch Disease

A cat scratch or bite can be a minor injury or it could be the start of cat scratch disease (CSD), a bacterial disease. Even though 90 percent of CSD patients had contact with a cat, the cat's role in the disease still remains a mystery.

Although the disease typically is self-limiting and is benign, the painful enlargement of lymph nodes can be disconcerting to a person until a diagnosis is made. Other symptoms of the disease include lethargy, chills, inappetence, fever and skin lesions. Most skin lesions persist one to three weeks. The enlarged lymph nodes usually develop about two weeks after the scratch or bite and may last for several months before gradual resolution.

Diagnosis is made on the basis of symptoms, contact with a cat, biopsy of an affected lymph node, and a skin test. Because the disease tends to be self-limiting, treatment usually is not given.

### *Is Your Cat Getting Bald?*

Does your cat have bald patches that are self-inflicted by pulling or chewing of the hair? This is a fairly common problem in cats that is usually caused by itchy skin problems. Many causes of itchiness exist, including internal and external parasites, ringworm, hypersensitivities such as flea bite dermatitis, and allergic inhalant dermatitis. If these causes are ruled out by your veterinarian, then a behavioral cause (psychogenic alopecia) could be the underlying problem. Diagnostic tests will help to determine the cause. Once the cause is identified, the most effective treatment can be started to resolve the problem.

The information for *Feline Forum* has been prepared by the Cornell Feline Health Center, Cornell College of Veterinary Medicine, Ithaca, NY. Copyright 1993.



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## How to Use These Articles

These articles are to be used as fillers in your client newsletter. They can be cut and pasted onto your master layout for the printer. Choose the style that matches your format best.

"Feline Forum" can be used a flyer or as one page of your newsletter.

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