

Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

1. "How big do they get?"

A full-grown female typically weighs between 9-12 pounds and males tend to be in the 13 to 18 pound range. Yes, neutered cats gain weight and coat better than whole cats. Some male Maine Coons have grown to 20-28 lbs.

2. "Do they need much grooming?"

Maine Coons do not need much grooming and a weekly combing is all that is usually required to keep the coat in top condition.

3. "But I thought Maine Coons had extra toes...?"

Some "original" Maine Coons were polydactyls (had extra toes). However, modern purebred Maine Coons are rarely polydactyls. This is because all cat associations automatically disqualify polydactyls from competition in the purebred classes. Because of this, most polydactyls were culled from the Maine Coon breed decades ago, and only a few breeders continue to work with them. Since the polydactyl gene is dominant, you can't get a polydactyl kitten unless at least one of the parents is also a polydactyl.

4. "I think my cat is part Maine Coon. How do I tell?"

The Maine Coon is America's native longhair cat; it evolved naturally in response to the New England climate. Your cat's ancestors might be similar to the cats that founded the Maine Coon breed. However, it's impossible to tell from just looking at your cat if it is related to the Maine Coon or to any other breed. Because the Maine Coon is a natural breed and hasn't been bred to extremes, there are cats all over the world that resemble the Maine Coon. The only way to tell for sure if your cat is a Maine Coon is to look at the pedigree.

5. "Is that a Maine Coon? I thought all Maine Coons were brown."

Maine Coons come in a [wide variety of color combinations](#). The only colors you won't find are the Siamese-type colors.

Information from <http://www.fanciers.com/breed-faqs/maine-coon-faq.html>

~ Interesting Kitten Facts: Purring in cats first occurs at about one week of age. It serves as a signal to the nursing mother cat that all is well with her babies and that the milk supply is reaching its destination. She, in turn, purrs, letting the kittens know that she too is in a relaxed and cooperative mood. It is believed that purring among adult cats and between adult cats and humans is derived from this primal parent-offspring context. Contentment is not the sole condition for purring, however. A more precise explanation is that purring signals a friendly social mood and can be employed by an injured cat to indicate the need for friendship and help. It has been observed that cats in great pain often purr loud and long and can hardly be considered to be contented.

~ Kittens have 26 temporary teeth that begin to erupt at about two to three weeks of age. They have 30 permanent teeth that erupt at about three to four months.

~ Cats have small barbs on their tongues. The barbs point backwards. The function of these, aside from making the cat's tongue feel like sandpaper when he licks you, is to make grooming more effective. These little barbs also make it very difficult for a cat to remove string or fabric from its mouth. If a cat is playing with, or chewing on, one of these materials, and it gets too far back in the mouth, it will catch on these little barbs. The cat is not able to pull it back out again, and will reflexively start to swallow the string. Little by little he will be forced to swallow the whole thing.

~ Cats produce pheromones in three parts of their bodies. The pheromones from their cheeks give the friendly message of "Hi there, I like you, I'm happy." The pheromones that come out with their urine and feces are very different and tell other cats "Hey buddy, this is my territory." Cats don't tend to urinate and/or defecate where they smell the 'friendly' pheromones!

* COMMON QUESTIONS & ANSWERS TO COONPALS *

Updated 7--10--2015

1. *How do you communicate with potential CoonPals families?* Through meeting at cat shows, my website information and pictures, emails, phone and/or US mail, & appointments..
2. *Why is it important for the breeder to be an active member in cat associations and active in showing their cats?* Responsible Breeders stay current and knowledgeable about their breeds and cat issues through their associations, interaction with experienced breeders, research/ reading journals, and exhibiting their cats at shows. Respected Breeders continually learn about, improve the breed they love, and assist/educate others about their breed. There are many unethical breeders selling poor quality and unhealthy Maine Coon Cats! Work with a Nationally acclaimed cattery/breeder who values their reputation and good name and acclaim within the breeding/showing world!
3. *Will you have kittens ready to go to homes in the Spring, Summer and Fall 2015?* Yes!
4. *Do you sell pets, show cats and cats for breeding?* I place neutered & spayed pets to loving families. Special arrangements are made IF, I place a show cat or a breeder. I rarely place a CoonPals Coon with breeding rights. The prices are significantly higher for show/breed cats, and require an additional contract with special terms of agreement.
5. *How big can Maine Coons grow?* Maine Coon females are typically large, compared to other breeds, but smaller and lighter than Maine Coon males. Average Maine Coon females tend to be 8-12lbs with 13lbs or more being a very large female. Average males tend to be 10-15lbs, large males 16-20lbs, and 21-25lbs being an exceptionally EXTRA large male. REMEMBER: SHOW CATS strive to meet the IDEAL STANDARD ... the BEST of Maine Coons! Keep reasonable expectations when finding your PET! Weight should be fit and muscular, not fat. SIZE is greatly exaggerated, as to the average Maine Coon size & should NOT be one of the main reasons for getting one!

6. *What makes the Maine Coon special, and your favorite cat breed?* Maine Coons are extremely intelligent-alert, playful, loving, snugglers, quirky personalities, interactive, gorgeous, long silky soft coats & long plume tails, "wild looking large cats, puppy-like behavior (meet humans at door, follow room-to-room, seek human interaction and loyal, jump high in play, fetch, bury food and toys for later retrieval, vocal cat 'barks,' chirps, trills, meows, purrs while not irritatingly regular or loud), sensitive... *I could go on and on!*

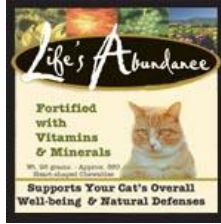
7. *What are the colors and patterns for Maine Coons?* The most common colors and patterns are brown classic tabby, brown mackerel tabby, and brown patch tabby (females only) Sometimes referred to as "BLACK." "Exotic Maine Coon Colors" are less plentiful and common, in solid colors of white, black, blue, & red; bi-colors; smokes (undercoat is white with colored tips on the fur) in black & blue; patch tabby girls (multicolored plus red & creamy patches of color); and/or with patterns of classic tabby (large marble swirls through fur with stripped legs/tail) or mackerel tabby (thin tiger stripes through fur with stripped legs/tail).

8. *Can Coons be an indoor-outdoor cat?* Indoors and enclosed porch-type environments only! This provides the safest and healthiest environment for your pedigreed 'family member' & long-term investment!

9. *Do Maine Coons get along well with other animals and children?* Yes! Coons are great companions in single human and multi-human homes. They are great with other animals and children. Most Coons are the "BOSS" because they are so smart and crafty. Part of daily fun includes outsmarting and playing tricks on their humans and other living things in the home!

10. *How much grooming do Maine Coons require?* I keep a cat comb and brush by the couch and by my bed. We train Coons young that brushing is part of our petting/loving time, to remove loose fur and prevent hairballs. Brush the furniture, too! We train ours YOUNG to trim nails every two weeks. Baths for pet coons aren't needed very often- keep some baby wipes nearby for occasional clean offs.

11. *What do you feed Maine Coons?* Our kittens & adults eat a mixture of Diamond Active Cat hard foods, canned foods & hard treats made by [LIFE'S ABUNDANCE](#). Pregnant, nursing moms and kitten's get goat milk., All our CoonPals get fresh water with RED CELL, Liquid Vitamin/Mineral Supplement in it. Treats include cooked chicken, cooked fish, tuna, and Tartar Control hard treats. TIP: Check the ingredients in wet food & hard food ingredients in what you are feeding; if it contains corn, gluten, soy, wheat, beet pulp, dairy products and/or artificial additives and preservatives, these are all common allergens for cats. This is one reason we feed exclusively [LIFE'S ABUNDANCE](#), a more 'natural' food which contains none of these allergens. Click on the link to order [LIFE'S ABUNDANCE FOOD](#) from us! DO NOT feed cow's milk because it is hard for kittens & cats to digest... causes diarrhea!



12. **What about declawing my Maine Coon?** Cat Associations consider declawing inhumane. I have found that training Coons young to have nail trimmings every two weeks, and doing this regularly, plus providing scratching posts, keeps problems under control. Squirt water bottles come in handy for a stubborn habit of scratching on furniture.

13. **What do I need to provide to my Maine Coon?** Lots of interaction, love, time and humor! Regular VET vaccines and care, high quality hard food, fresh water in porcelain or stainless steel bowls, windows to nature, high sturdy scratching posts or towers, a deep plastic 58 QT litter box (Wal-Mart) filled with mixture of 3" deep Feline Pine Litter pellets and clumping litter, and a variety of toys.

14. **What are my responsibilities concerning neutering the Coon?** CoonPals Kittens are neutered at 12-18 weeks old, before going to families. This assures that CoonPals is supporting the need for Early Spay/Neuter to control overpopulation; in order to prevent accidental cross breedings to protect the integrity of pedigreed Maine Coon Cats; and protection of CoonPals bloodlines from theft. The cost of neutering is included in CoonPals' Full Package Price which includes: Preventative dewormings, neuter/spay, 3 sets of 4-in-one kitten vaccines, adult rabies vaccine, microchip, pedigreed papers in American Cat Fancier's Association with your name for the pet, & a full gift bag of cat toys/ cat items... & come freshly bathed, nails clipped & ears cleaned!!! Our total price saves the new family on gas, vet bills, time off from work for vet visits, and overall costs!

TODAY'S TIP: HEALTH & WELLNESS May 3, 2010

BY JANE A KELLEY, CAT EXPERT AND ANIMAL COMMUNICATOR, PAWS AND EFFECT

IS EARLY SPAY/NEUTER GOOD FOR CATS' HEALTH?

Many shelters neuter cats at an early age so they're fixed by the time they're adopted. But some have raised concerns about the safety of this practice. Of particular concern was cats' urinary tract development. The Winn Feline Foundation did a survey on cats that were fixed at a young age, and to date, no health risks resulting from early neutering were found. There were no significant differences in urinary tract development in cats neutered early. Cats fixed early tend to be longer and taller than cats that have the surgery at a later date because their bones don't stop growing as early as cats fixed in adolescence. The results indicate that early spay/neuter is perfectly healthy.

Cat expert and animal communicator JaneA Kelley is the webmaster and chief cat slave for Paws and Effect, a weekly cat advice column by cats, for cats and their people.

15. Please read this Winn Feline Foundation Article on Early Spay/Neuter: [Neuter in the Cat - a Winn Feline Foundation Report](#)
16. What guarantees are provided in the CoonPals' Written Contract? CoonPals guarantees that our cats are pedigreed Maine Coons, registered in CFA, ACFA and/or TICA. We provide our kittens with two preventative de-wormings, their initial 2-3 sets of kitten 4-in-1 vaccines called FVRCP, sent with FL Vet's Health Certificate stating the Coon is in good health: free of ear mites-fleas- worms-obvious feline illnesses/diseases. CoonPals Sires and Dams are screened for HCM: Hypertropic Cardiomyopathy, and are guaranteed to be Feline Leukemia and Feline AIDS negative. A free ACFA Cat Association Pedigreed registration of your Maine Coon will be submitted with your name as owner and your chosen name for the cat, & we microchip and register your CoonPals with 24PetWatch or SMARTTAG..... & come freshly bathed, nails clipped, ears cleaned & oral CAPSTAR flea treatment pill!!! Our total price saves the new family on gas, vet bills, time off from work for vet visits, and overall costs! We DO NOT recommend the Feline Leukemia or Feline AIDS vaccines!
17. Do you always place CoonPals' Coons to all families who contact you? NO! My Coons are my furry children! After thorough mutual interviewing and discussions, I may not think the environment and/or human understands and is willing to make the necessary commitment required to own a CoonPals Maine Coon Cat: one that will provide a stimulating, safe, healthy and thriving home, as 'one of the family' and 'cherished pet.' I have met some who view and look to add a Maine Coon as a "conversation piece, huge, trophy-like object," and I will not release my furry children to that attitude or environment.
18. What does "reserving a CoonPals' Coon" mean? After communications and discussions, mutual agreement is made to be added to the CoonPals' VIP List, & submitting a non refundable deposit by money order or cashier's check on an upcoming Coon. VIPs have extra communications, pictures, etc., and are notified first to choose from available CoonPals Coons.
19. When can my Maine Coon kitten come home with me? I let the mommies and kittens decide when the weaning process is complete- no earlier than 12 weeks of age, and sometimes 16 to 24 weeks.
20. Do you ever place older kittens or adult cats as pets? Yes. Occasionally I show a kitten or cat for a period of time, or a particular title, and then match that Coon to just the right family. Terms and cost are the same.
21. What is a microchip & Why do you microchip your cats?

Animal microchips are about the size of a grain of rice and are typically implanted just beneath the skin between the shoulder blades by a veterinarian or trained member of an animal welfare organization. The process is similar to a vaccination and most animals do not react when the microchip is implanted. Once implanted the microchip remains just beneath the skin for the rest of the animal's lifetime, a permanent form of identification. Cats are naturally curious and unpredictable, in the event that they are drawn away from the safety of their home you need to give them the best chance of

getting home safely. In the event that your cat does get lost a microchip registered with 24PetWatch is your cat's best chance of getting home. – tell them that you would prefer to have a 24PetWatch microchip Or a SMARTTAG. In the event that they use a different brand of microchip you should still register your pet's microchip with 24PetWatch or SMARTTAG- the only full service pet recovery networkS that provides free registration for all brands of microchips in North America.

What should I do if my pet goes missing?

Call 24PetWatch or SMART TAG companies immediately. The Lost Pet Recovery Specialists on duty will fill in a lost pet report, check for any corresponding pets found and conduct a real time search for your pet in over 500 animal welfare organizations across North America. In the event that we locate your pet we will help to arrange a re-union between you and your pet.

If my pet is taken to a veterinary clinic or shelter how will they know to call 24PetWatch?

22. What is feline herpes virus? Feline herpes virus is an upper respiratory virus of cats. It is also known as rhinotracheitis virus. It is very common among cats, especially in environments where there are multiple cats or new cats are constantly interacting. The virus is spread through the air and replicates in the upper respiratory tract (nasal area, tonsils). The conjunctiva of the eye is also affected during the primary infection. Clinical signs of infection include sneezing and ocular and nasal discharge. In most cases the primary infection resolves with no residual ocular lesions. However, depending on the age when the cat is affected, the serotype of the virus (infectivity or strength of infection), and other factors, there may be various ocular signs. In very young cats, adhesions of the eyelids to each other or to the cornea may occur. Adult cats may experience recurrent conjunctivitis or corneal ulcers. The virus remains latent in the nerves that serve the eyes. When a cat is stressed or exposed to new serotypes (different strains) of herpes virus, the ocular disease can recur. There is some evidence that eosinophilic keratitis, plasmacytic-lymphocytic keratitis, corneal sequestrum, and some cases of anterior uveitis may be associated with feline herpes virus infection.

How do cats get feline herpes virus? Most cats are affected as kittens, contracting the infection from their mothers. Stray cats, multi-cat households, and cats from households where new cats are constantly introduced are more likely to suffer infection. Feline herpes virus is not contagious to dogs or to humans but only affects cats.

How is feline herpes virus diagnosed? History and clinical signs can diagnose ocular diseases caused by feline herpes virus. Aside from history and clinical signs, diagnostic tests for feline herpes virus include virus isolation, immunofluorescent antibody testing, polymerase chain reaction testing, serology, and cytology. Testing can be expensive and is generally reserved for specific cases. Tests that may not specifically detect the presence of herpes may be used to detect ocular disease caused by herpes. These tests include a Schirmer tear test (measuring tear production), corneal staining, and conjunctival biopsy.

How is feline herpes virus treated? Treatment for feline herpes virus infections is nonspecific and generally directed at controlling secondary bacterial infection. A

topical antibiotic such as tetracycline or erythromycin may be prescribed for use in the eye. Systemic antibiotics may also be prescribed. Viralys Powder contains: 250 mg. L-Lysine per 1 rounded scoop. Scoop provided in container. Approximately 310 doses per container. Oral L-Lysine is recommended by many veterinary ophthalmologists at a dose of 250-500 mg twice daily. Lysine competes with another amino acid, arginine, that herpes virus must have in order to reproduce. Lysine has been demonstrated to decrease the severity of ocular symptoms associated with herpes virus infection (1) and reduce viral shedding during periods of disease recurrence (2). Depending on symptoms, other medications such as topical antiviral drugs, topical polysulfated glycosaminoglycans, topical nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs or topical interferon may be used. In some cases the ocular diseases resulting from feline herpes virus may require surgical intervention. The key to managing the clinical signs associated with feline herpes virus is controlling the cat's environment. Cats exposed to multiple cats (indoor-outdoor cats), cats in multiple cat households, or cats that are frequently introduced to new cats are difficult to keep disease free. Reducing stress by maintaining a stable routine is helpful in preventing recurrences of disease. Keep in mind that it is the nature of the virus to see recurrences of the disease and periodic treatment is often necessary.

23. What is ringworm, & how is it treated? "Ringworm" is the common name for the skin infection caused by a special group of fungi; it is not caused by a worm at all. The fungi feed upon the dead cells of skin and hair causing, in people, a classic round, red lesion with a ring of scale around the edges and normal recovering skin in the center. Because the ring of irritated, itchy skin looked like a worm, the infection was erroneously named. The fungi responsible are called "dermatophytes," meaning "plants that live on the skin" thus the more correct term for ringworm is "dermatophytosis." The characteristic "ring" appearance is primarily a human phenomenon. In animals, ringworm frequently looks like a dry, grey, scaly patch but can also mimic any other skin lesion and have any appearance.

WHERE WOULD MY PET PICK UP THIS INFECTION? The spores of dermatophyte fungi are extremely hardy in the environment; they can live for years. All it takes is skin contact with a spore to cause infection. Infected animals are continuously dropping spore-covered hairs as infected hairs break off into the environment. Some animals are carriers, who never show signs of skin irritation themselves but can infect others readily. There are several species of dermatophyte fungi. Different species of fungi come from different kinds of animals or even from soil thus determining the ringworm species can help determine the source of the fungal infection.

CAN I GET THIS INFECTION? Yes, ringworm is contagious to people; however, some people are at greater risk than others. The fungus takes advantage of skin belonging to those with reduced immune capacity. This puts young animals and children, elderly people and pets, those who are HIV+, people on chemotherapy or taking medication after transfusion or organ transplant and highly stressed people and animals at high risk. In general, if you do not already have ringworm at the time your pet is diagnosed, you probably will not get it.

HOW DOES THE DOCTOR KNOW THIS IS REALLY RINGWORM? In some cases, we know for sure that dermatophyte fungi are present while in other cases we are only highly suspicious. Lesions on animal skin are rarely the classic ring-shaped as in people (in fact, in animals, lesions are often not even itchy) thus some testing is usually necessary.

WOOD'S LIGHT: *Microsporum canis*, the most common ringworm fungus, will fluoresce apple green in approximately 50% of cases. Fluorescence is an easy test to perform and may provide a strong clue that dermatophytes are present. Further testing is usually needed, however, to absolutely confirm diagnosis.

MICROSCOPIC EXAMINATION: Your veterinarian may wish to examine some hairs for microscopic spores. If spores can be seen on damaged hairs then the diagnosis of ringworm is confirmed; however, as spores are very difficult to see, many veterinarians skip this step.

FUNGAL CULTURE: Here, some hairs and skin scales are placed on a special culture medium in an attempt to grow one of the ringworm fungi. The advantage of this test is that it not only can confirm ringworm but can tell exactly which species of fungus is present. Knowing the identity of the fungus may help determine the source of infection. The disadvantage, however, is that fungi require 10 days to grow out. Also, this is the only test that is helpful in determining if animal is an asymptomatic carrier. The other tests require an apparent skin lesion to test. A pet with no apparent lesions can be combed over its whole body and the fur and skin that are removed can be cultured. Carrier animals are usually cats living with several other cats.

TREATMENT: Commitment is the key to success especially if you have more than one pet. Infected animals are constantly shedding spores into the environment (your house) thus disinfection is just as important as treatment of the affected pet.

ORAL MEDICATION FOR INFECTED PETS: There are primarily two medications being used to treat ringworm: Griseofulvin and Itraconazole (brand name "Sporonox"). Veterinary dermatologists disagree as to which is better. Both medications are relatively expensive, must be given with food, and have significant potential to cause birth defects in pregnant pets. Treatment with either medication typically is continued for 1-2 months and should not be discontinued until the pet cultures negative. Stopping when the pet simply looks well visually frequently leads to recurrence of the disease.

GRISEOFULVIN (brand name Fulvicin): This medication must be given with a fatty meal in order for an effective dose to be absorbed by the pet. Persian cats and young kittens are felt to be sensitive to its side effects which usually are limited to nausea but can include liver disease and serious white blood cell changes. Cats infected with the [Feline Immunodeficiency Virus](#) commonly develop life-threatening blood cell changes and should never be exposed to this medication. Despite the side effects, which can be severe for some individuals, Griseofulvin is still the traditional medication for the treatment of ringworm and is usually somewhat less expensive than Itraconazole.

ITRACONAZOLE: This medication is highly effective in the treatment of ringworm but is available in capsules far too large to be useful to most small animals. This means that a special company must reformulated the medication into a more useful size. Nausea is a potential side effect for this medication but probably the main reason it is passed by in favor of griseofulvin is expense. Itraconazole is also effective in treating many life-threatening fungal infections whereas Griseofulvin only treats ringworm. By increasing the amount of Itraconazole in the environment, we may be creating resistance in more dangerous fungi which could become a problem over the years. On the average, cats treated with Itraconazole and nothing else were able to achieve cure two weeks sooner than cats treated with Griseofulvin.

ITRACONAZOLE BRAND NAME: SPORONOX: AVAILABLE IN 100 mg CAPSULES or as ORAL SOLUTION

BACKGROUND: The development of oral medications to be used in the treatment of invasive fungal infections has represented an immense medical breakthrough. With oral treatment available, human patients no longer require hospitalization several days a week for intravenous treatment of their disease; a more normal and productive lifestyle is now possible. Further, the toxicity profiles of the newer oral drugs represents vast improvement over those of the injectables.

[Ketoconazole](#) was the first such oral antifungal drug but it had room for improvement regarding its side effect potential. There were problems with nausea, liver toxicity, and feminization of male patients. Itraconazole was developed in answer to these concerns. Its potential for side effects is far lower, although its expense, unfortunately, is far greater.

HOW THIS MEDICATION WORKS: Itraconazole works by inhibiting the fungal enzymes that produce “ergosterol,” an important component of the fungal cell wall. Without adequate ergosterol, the fungal cell becomes weak, leaky and ultimately dies. Fungal infections for which itraconazole can be used include: [Dermatophytosis \(Ringworm\)](#), [Malassezia/Yeast Dermatitis](#), Blastomycosis, Cryptococcosis (“window washer’s disease), Histoplasmosis, Aspergillosis, Candidiasis, Coccidioidomycosis (“Valley Fever”)

SIDE EFFECTS: The chief reason for choosing Itraconazole over other antifungal agents is to avoid side effects. While itraconazole users do not commonly experience side effects, it is important to be aware of what to watch for. Side effects of concern are appetite loss, vomiting, and/or diarrhea. If they occur, medication should be discontinued and liver enzymes should be checked. If an adverse side effect occurs, it is expected to resolve with discontinuation of the medication. After recovery, itraconazole can usually be restarted at a lower dose.

DOES	"PROGRAM"	CURE	RINGWORM?
In the late fall of 2000, the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association published a study of over 200 cases indicating that Lufenuron (the active ingredient of Program) could be an effective treatment for Ringworm. This began as an observation that animals using Program or Sentinel for flea control did not get ringworm. Questions about this work have come up from the public since the release of this work. The fact is that the study is still under scrutiny by members of the American College of Veterinary Dermatology and “the jury is still out.” It is clear that the doses purported to be helpful with Ringworm should not be harmful. At this time the use of lufenuron for Ringworm is reasonable if other more conventional treatments are concurrently used.			