Feline First Aid & Early Illness Recognition Delegate Workbook

THE KAT LADY WAY



BY KATIE GWILT - THE KAT LADY



WELCOME

FELINE FIRST AID & EARLY ILLNESS RECOGNITION - THE KAT LADY WAY

Welcome to Feline First Aid & Early Illness Recognition: The Kat Lady Way.

This workbook has been designed to support your learning during the course and provide a practical reference guide afterwards.

It is not intended to replace veterinary advice or veterinary treatment.

The aim of this workbook is to help you:

- Recognise early signs of illness
- Identify common feline emergencies
- Support feline welfare
- Know when veterinary referral is required
- Develop confidence in your observations and decision-making

Remember:

Cats often whisper before they scream. Learning to recognise those whispers can make all the difference.

This course is dedicated to every cat I have loved, but espeically Loki and Eris my tabby twins.

Name :

Course Date :

Location :

Katie Gwilt

Katie Gwilt
Founder of www.thekatlady.co.uk

WORKBOOK

THE KAT LADY PHILOSOPHY

At the heart of this course are several key principles:

- Cats are not small dogs
- Behaviour is communication
- Welfare comes before completion
- Early recognition saves lives
- Observe, don't assume
- Refer when needed
- Support, don't force

Reflection

What is your biggest takeaway from these principles?

NORMAL VITAL SIGNS QUICK REFERENCE

	CAT	DOG	HUMAN	YOUR CAT
HEART RATE	140-220 BPM	60-140 BPM	60-100 BPM	
RESPIRATORY RATE	20-30 breaths/min	10-30 breaths/min	12-20 breaths/min	
TEMPERATURE	38.1-39.2°C	38.3-39.2°C	36.1-37.2°C	

HEALTHY GUMS

Healthy gums should be:

- Moist
- Smooth
- Bubblegum pink

Seek veterinary advice if gums appear:

- Pale
- White
- Blue/Grey
- Bright red

READING THE CAT BEFORE HANDLING

BEFORE APPROACHING ANY CAT, TAKE A MOMENT TO OBSERVE:

- [ ] BODY POSTURE
- [ ] FACIAL EXPRESSION
- [ ] EAR POSITION
- [ ] TAIL POSITION
- [ ] BREATHING
- [ ] MOVEMENT
- [ ] WILLINGNESS TO INTERACT
- [ ] SIGNS OF STRESS
- [ ] SIGNS OF PAIN

NOTES

STRESS SIGNALS CHECKLIST

COMMON SIGNS OF STRESS MAY INCLUDE :

- [ ] DILATED PUPILS
- [ ] TAIL FLICKING
- [ ] EAR CHANGES
- [ ] TENSE POSTURE
- [ ] HIDING
- [ ] INCREASED VOCALISATION
- [ ] FREEZING
- [ ] AVOIDING
- [ ] HYPERVIGILANCE

NOTES

PAIN SIGNALS CHECKLIST

PAIN CAN BE SUBTLE IN CATS, WATCH FOR :

- [ ] REDUCED GROOMING
- [ ] HIDING
- [ ] APPETITE CHANGES
- [ ] RELUCTANCE TO JUMP
- [ ] BEHAVIOUR CHANGES
- [ ] AGGRESSION
- [ ] REDUCED MOBILITY
- [ ] ALTERED POSTURE
- [ ] INCREASED VOCALISATION

NOTES

KNOWING YOUR CATS NORMAL

	WHAT IS NORMAL	CHANGES
EATING		
DRINKING		
GROOMING		
BEHAVIOUR		
MOBILITY		
TOILETING		

YOU CANNOT RECOGNISE ILLNESS WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS NORMAL FOR THE INDIVIDUAL CAT.

COMMON CHRONIC CONDITIONS

HYPERTHYROIDISM

Common Signs:

- Weight loss
- Increased appetite
- Increased drinking
- Increased urination
- Restlessness
- Coat changes
- Increased vocalisation

DIABETES

Common Signs:

- Increased drinking
- Increased urination
- Weight loss
- Increased appetite
- Weakness
- Walking on hocks

ARTHRITIS & CHRONIC PAIN

Common Signs:

- Reduced jumping
- Stiffness
- Behaviour changes
- Reduced grooming

Mats around back legs and lower spine

- Reduced activity
- Difficulty using stairs

CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

Common Signs:

- Increased drinking
- Increased urination
- Weight loss & muscle wasting
- Poor coat quality
- Reduced appetite
- Dehydration

DENTAL DISEASE

Common Signs:

- Bad breath
- Drooling
- Reduced grooming
- Food dropping
- Facial sensitivity
- Reduced appetite

SENIOR CAT RED FLAGS

NEVER IGNORE :

- [ ] WEIGHT LOSS
- [ ] MUSCLE WASTING
- [ ] INCREASED DRINKING
- [ ] BEHAVIOUR CHANGES
- [ ] REDUCED GROOMING
- [ ] MOBILITY CHANGES
- [ ] APPETITE CHANGES
- [ ] TOILETING CHANGES

NOTES

EMERGENCY QUICK REFERENCE

SEEK IMMEDIATE VETERINARY HELP IF YOU OBSERVE :

- 🚨 OPEN-MOUTH BREATHING
- 🚨 COLLAPSE
- 🚨 SUSPECTED URINARY BLOCKAGE
- 🚨 SEVERE BLEEDING
- 🚨 SEVERE TRAUMA
- 🚨 SUSPECTED POISONING
- 🚨 HEATSTROKE
- 🚨 SEIZURES LASTING LONGER THAN 5 MINUTES
- 🚨 BLUE, GREY OR WHITE GUMS

NOTES

HANDS ON WELFARE CHECKS

DURING ROUTINE INTERACTIONS ASSESS

APPEARANCE

- ☐ COAT
- ☐ SKIN
- ☐ BODY CONDITION

BEHAVIOUR

- ☐ RELAXED
- ☐ TENSE
- ☐ WITHDRAWN

MOBILITY

- ☐ WALKING NORMALLY
- ☐ JUMPING NORMALLY

HYDRATION

- ☐ MOIST GUMS
- ☐ BRIGHT EYES

NOTES

STROKING WITH INTENT

EVERY TOUCH IS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GATHER INFORMATION

OBSERVE:

- ☐ COAT CONDITION
- ☐ BODY CONDITION
- ☐ MATS
- ☐ MUSCLE MASS
- ☐ LUMPS AND BUMPS
- ☐ SENSITIVITY
- ☐ BEHAVIOURAL RESPONSE

WHAT DID YOU OBSERVE

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT

ESSENTIALS

- ☐ TOWELS
- ☐ SALINE SOLUTION
- ☐ GAUZE SWABS
- ☐ NON-STICK DRESSINGS
- ☐ BANDAGE & VET WRAP
- ☐ GLOVES
- ☐ TICK REMOVER
- ☐ TORCH
- ☐ NOTEBOOK
- ☐ EMERGENCY CONTACTS

BEFORE EVERY BOOKING

- ☐ VETERINARY PRACTICE DETAILS
- ☐ OUT-OF-HOURS DETAILS
- ☐ OWNER CONTACT INFORMATION
- ☐ ALTERNATIVE EMERGENCY CONTACT
- ☐ CURRENT MEDICATIONS
- ☐ RELEVANT MEDICAL HISTORY

BEHAVIOUR IS A VITAL SIGN

WHEN BEHAVIOUR CHANGES ASK :

- ☐ COULD THIS BE PAIN?
- ☐ COULD THIS BE ILLNESS?
- ☐ COULD THIS BE STRESS?
- ☐ DOES THIS REQUIRE VETERINARY ATTENTION?

REMEMBER:

BEHAVIOUR IS INFORMATION, NOT DEFIANCE.

NOTES

COURSE REFLECTION

MY THREE BIGGEST LEARNING POINTS ARE :

#1

#2

#3

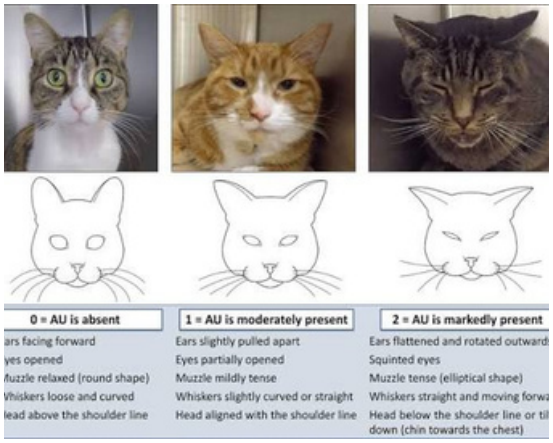
WHAT WILL I CHANGE IN MY PRACTICE?

ADDITIONAL NOTES

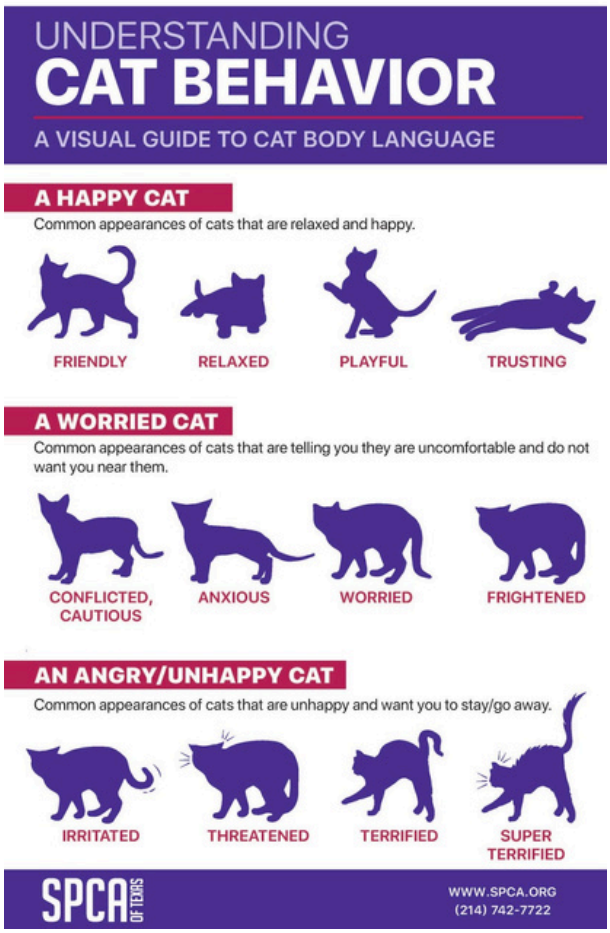
USEFUL RESOURCES

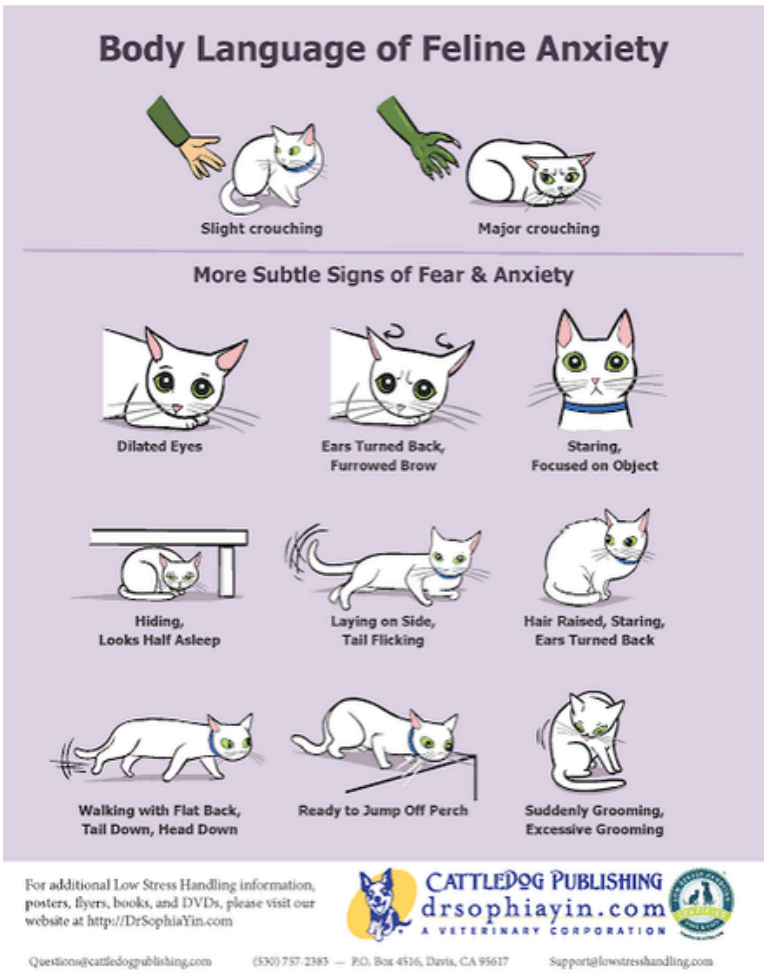
Reference charts included for educational purposes. Always refer to current veterinary guidance when assessing health or welfare concerns.

FELINE GRIMMACE SCALE











MEET THE AUTHOR

KATIE GWILT

Where cats come first - always

Katie Gwilt, better known as The Kat Lady, is a holistic mobile cat groomer, behaviourist and educator based in Liverpool. Working exclusively with cats since 2018, she is passionate about improving feline welfare through education, observation and understanding.

Katie taught cat grooming and feline first aid for two years with the iPET Network, contributing to the delivery of the UK's only OFQUAL-regulated cat grooming qualification. She also holds a degree in Biochemistry and Neurobiology, combining scientific knowledge with practical, hands-on experience.

Through her work, Katie helps cat owners and pet professionals better understand feline behaviour, recognise early signs of illness and advocate for the wellbeing of the cats in their care. Her philosophy is simple: cats are always communicating, we just need to learn how to listen.

THANK YOU FOR ATTENDING FELINE FIRST AID & EARLY ILLNESS RECOGNITION: THE KAT LADY WAY.

YOUR OBSERVATIONS MATTER.

YOUR ADVOCACY MATTERS.

THE CATS IN YOUR CARE BENEFIT FROM YOUR WILLINGNESS TO LEARN.

CATS OFTEN WHISPER BEFORE THEY SCREAM.