



Example Survey Questions and Automatic Advice For Foster Caregivers of Kittens Under 8 Weeks of Age

The following survey questions, selected survey answers, and automatic advice are examples from the “Your First Day Together” Survey for foster caregivers of kittens under 8 weeks of age.

Please note: This may not be a comprehensive showing of all survey questions, answer options, or automated advice available in the app. The database is quite extensive, and questions/advice may change based on increased or decreased severity of selected issues over time (e.g., if issue is better, same or worse in subsequent surveys, like from Day 1 to Day 3). Additionally, if an option is selected (ex: diarrhea) within the following survey, then that survey may include immediate follow up questions specific to that issue (e.g., frequency, consistency, severity, etc.).

The following example only displays answer options that have automated advice.

Components of a Survey Response:

QUESTION	
SELECTED ANSWER OPTION	AUTOMATIC ADVICE BASED ON SELECTED ANSWER

Example Survey:

Check all that apply. Are any of your foster kitten(s) experiencing any of the following?	
Not eating	<p>If your foster kitten(s) are 3-4 weeks or younger and are being bottle fed, we recommend that you watch: Maddie's Fund video: Bottle Feeding an Orphaned Kitten and that you review the following chart: Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kitten Feeding Problems, Issues and Solutions.</p> <p>If your foster kitten(s) are 4 weeks or older and are being transitioned to solid food, we recommend that you watch: Maddie's Fund video: Orphaned Kitten Care: How to Videos- How to Wean Orphaned Kittens onto Solid Foods.</p> <p>Please contact the foster coordinator if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The above steps are not helpful, and your foster kitten(s) are still not eating.• Your foster kittens are lethargic or appear to be sick (coughing, sneezing, vomiting, diarrhea, etc.)



<p>Diarrhea (watery, unusual color)</p>	<p>Here are a few tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The most common cause of diarrhea in kittens is intestinal parasites (e.g. roundworms and coccidia). Please contact the foster coordinator; you may need to bring in a stool sample.• Stress and dietary changes are also common causes of diarrhea in kittens. Avoid diet changes when possible. Most diet and stress related diarrhea resolves in a day or two.• Probiotics might be useful to help resolve kitten diarrhea.• If you are bottle-feeding your kitten(s), please be sure that you are not overfeeding and that you are not using sour milk or unclean bottle-feeding equipment. <p>If your kitten(s) are also vomiting, lethargic, not eating, or if the diarrhea becomes watery or bloody, please contact the foster coordinator as soon as possible. Your kittens may need veterinary care.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maddie's Fund Video: Giving Orphaned Kittens Probiotics• PetMD: 6 Kitten Health Issues to Watch For• Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kitten Feeding Problems. Issues, and Solutions
<p>Parasites in stool and/or vomit</p>	<p>Two common types of worms are roundworms and tapeworms; however, there are many other kinds of intestinal parasites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Roundworms look like spaghetti and can be found in vomit and/or stool.• Tapeworms are long, flat, and segmented. Whole tapeworms can be found in stool or sticking out of the rectum. Most commonly, the tapeworm segments break apart and look like pieces of rice stuck on the kitten's rear end. <p>Please contact your foster coordinator to describe what you are seeing. You may need to get a de-wormer for your kitten(s) or you may need to bring in a stool sample for microscopic exam.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetMD: Intestinal Worms in Dogs and Cats• VCA: Internal Parasites in Cats• VeterinaryPartner.com: Roundworms: Cats & Kittens



<p>Losing weight or not gaining weight</p>	<p>If your foster kittens are losing weight or are not gaining at least 1/4 oz to 1/2 oz per day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please check your foster kitten(s) for any signs of illness (e.g. vomiting, diarrhea, sneezing, coughing, lethargy). If the foster kittens are not feeling well, they are likely not eating as much as they should and this is probably why they are not gaining weight or are losing weight. If you think your foster kitten(s) may be sick, please contact the foster coordinator.• Please double check that what you are feeding, the amount that you are feeding and the frequency with which you are feeding your kitten(s) is appropriate. Kittens need to be fed small amounts frequently, and they need to be fed foods that are formulated for kitten growth.• Some kittens don't gain weight for the first few days as they adjust to a new environment. If you recently brought your foster kittens home and they are active, alert, and otherwise are in good health, sometimes they need a few days to adjust and will start gaining weight soon. Contact the foster coordinator if you have questions. <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maddie's Fund Orphaned Kitten Feeding and Stomach Capacity Table• Maddie's Fund video: Orphaned Kitten Care: How to Videos - How to Wean Orphaned Kittens onto Solid Foods• ASPCA: Cat Nutrition Tips
<p>Distended belly (e.g. bloated or firm abdomen)</p>	<p>Common causes of a distended belly in kittens are eating a large meal, roundworms, constipation and/or excessive gas accumulation in the intestines. If your kitten has a distended belly that doesn't go away after a few hours, please contact the foster coordinator.</p> <p>If you are bottle-feeding your kitten(s), please be sure that you are not overfeeding, feeding milk that is too cold, or using a nursing bottle that has milk coming out of the nipple too fast.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VCA: Roundworm Infection in Cats• eHow Video: Kitten Care- How to Deal With Newborn Kittens Bloating• Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kitten Feeding Problems, Issues and Solutions
<p>Not keeping food down (vomiting)</p>	<p>Common causes of vomiting in kittens are stress, dietary changes, intestinal parasites, and viral infections.</p> <p>If the kitten(s) have vomited only once or twice, and seem otherwise normal with no other signs of illness, you do not need to contact the foster coordinator. Allow the kitten(s) to settle into their new foster home with as little stress as possible, and avoid sudden changes in their diet.</p>



	<p>Please contact the foster coordinator if the kitten(s) have other symptoms (e.g. diarrhea, lethargy, not eating, temperature higher than 102.5°F), if the vomiting becomes more frequent, and/or if the amount of vomiting increases. Your foster kitten(s) will likely need veterinary care.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetMD: Vomiting in Cats• PetsWebMD: What Causes Cats to Vomit?• VCA: Vomiting in Cats
Constipation	<p>Please contact the foster coordinator. Your foster kitten(s) may need veterinary care.</p> <p>Here are a few tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you are bottle-feeding the kitten(s), add 25% more water to the milk replacer.• If you are bottle-feeding the kitten(s), please do not give them any mineral oil by mouth or in the nursing bottle! There is too much risk of the kitten aspirating (inhaling) the mineral oil.• If the kitten(s) are eating solid food, mix 1 teaspoon of canned pumpkin in with each kitten's food each day. Be sure to use plain canned pumpkin only and not pumpkin pie mix or spiced pumpkin mix. <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetMD: My Cat Can't Poop! Constipation in Cats• eHow Video: Kitten Care- How to Deal With Newborn Kittens Bloating• PetsWebMD: Constipation in Cats- Symptoms and Treatment
Not peeing or peeing very little	<p>If your foster kitten(s) are 3-4 weeks old or younger and are without a mother cat caring for them, please double check that you are correctly stimulating them to urinate. If you are unable to stimulate them to urinate a decent volume, please call your foster coordinator. Your foster kitten(s) may have deformities that they were born with, that are causing problems with urination.</p> <p>Sometimes kittens of any age that are dehydrated will not urinate, or will urinate very little. Common causes of kitten dehydration are vomiting, diarrhea, and/or inadequate intake of liquids. You can check your kitten for dehydration in two ways: 1) Pick up the skin between the shoulder blades and drop it. If the skin snaps back into place quickly, the kitten is probably well hydrated. If it takes a while to sink back down into place, the kitten is probably dehydrated. 2) Rub your finger on the kitten's gums. If the gums feel wet and slippery, your kitten is probably well hydrated. If the gums feel sticky, your kitten is probably dehydrated. If you suspect that your foster kitten is dehydrated, please contact the foster coordinator. Dehydration can kill young kittens if left untreated.</p>



If your foster kitten is older than 4 weeks, a urinary tract infection and/or inflammation of the bladder are possibilities, but this is very rare in young kittens. If your kitten is urinating frequently or straining to urinate, please contact your foster coordinator, as your foster kitten may need a urinalysis to rule out these possibilities.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [PetMD: Dehydration in Cats](#)
- [Maddie's Fund video: Stimulating an Orphaned Kitten to Urinate and Defecate.](#)
- [PetsWebMD: Urinary Tract Problems in Cats](#)

Check all that apply. How would you describe the diarrhea?

Bloody

Please contact your foster coordinator as soon as possible; it is likely that the kitten(s) need urgent veterinary care.

Here are a few tips:

- Encourage the kitten(s) to intake liquids. Watery diarrhea can cause dehydration.
- If your foster kitten(s) are eating solid food, feed them canned food only. You can also water down the canned food to make it soupy.
- Offer canned salmon or tuna juice to encourage liquid intake.
- If your foster kitten(s) are being bottle fed, you can use Pedialyte instead of water to reconstitute powdered milk replacer.

Additional information can be found on this website:

[PetMD: Dehydration in Cats](#)

Approximately, how many times have your foster kitten(s) vomited in the past 24 hours?

Four or more times

Please call your foster coordinator as soon as possible; it is likely that the kitten(s) need urgent veterinary care. Frequent vomiting, and/or vomiting moderate to large amounts can cause dehydration, which can be life threatening if untreated.

Here are a few tips:

- Unlike adult cats who are vomiting, kittens should not have their food or water withheld. Kittens who go too long without any food or water can quickly become hypoglycemic (low blood sugar) and/or even more dehydrated.
- If your foster kitten(s) are eating solid food, feed them very small, frequent amounts of canned food only; and also water down the canned food to make it very soupy and less "rich".
- If your foster kitten(s) are being bottle fed, you can try using 25% more water to reconstitute the powdered milk replacer; this may make the milk replacer less likely to upset the kitten's stomach.



- If your foster kitten(s) are not keeping much food down, you should rub the kitten's gums with a cotton swab that has been rolled in light corn syrup (e.g. Karo syrup) or honey. This will help keep your kitten's blood sugar from getting too low.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [PetMD: Dehydration in Cats](#)
- [PetPlace.com: Hypoglycemia \(Low Blood Sugar\) in Cats](#)

Approximately, how much are your foster kitten(s) vomiting?

**Moderate amount(s) or
Large amount(s)**

Please call your foster coordinator as soon as possible; it is likely that the kitten(s) need urgent veterinary care. Frequent vomiting, and/or vomiting moderate to large amounts can cause dehydration, which can be life threatening if untreated.

Here are a few tips:

- Unlike adult cats who are vomiting, kittens should not have their food or water withheld. Kittens who go too long without any food or water can quickly become hypoglycemic (low blood sugar) and/or even more dehydrated.
- If your foster kitten(s) are eating solid food, feed them very small, frequent amounts of canned food only; and also water down the canned food to make it very soupy and less "rich".
- If your foster kitten(s) are being bottle fed, you can try using 25% more water to reconstitute the powdered milk replacer. This may make the milk replacer less likely to upset the kitten's stomach.
- If your foster kitten(s) are not keeping much food down, you should rub the kitten's gums with a cotton swab that has been rolled in light corn syrup (e.g. Karo syrup) or honey. This will help keep your kitten's blood sugar from getting too low.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [PetMD: Dehydration in Cats](#)
- [PetPlace.com: Hypoglycemia \(Low Blood Sugar\) in Cats](#)

Check all that apply. Are any of your foster kitten(s) experiencing any of the following?

**Eye discharge, redness
or
swelling**

The most common cause of eye problems in kittens is feline herpesvirus, which is one of the viruses that can also cause upper respiratory infection. Feline herpesvirus can cause conjunctivitis (swelling and redness of the eye, discharge from the eye), which can progress to corneal ulceration. Severe corneal ulceration can sometimes result in the kitten(s) needing to have an eye removed.



	<p>Please contact the foster coordinator, as the kitten(s) may need to be evaluated and started on eye medications. If they have white spots on the surface of their eye (cornea), they may have corneal ulceration, in which case their need for treatment is more urgent in order to reduce the risk of the kitten(s) losing an eye.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetMD: Eye Infection in Newborn Cats• VCA: Conjunctivitis- Feline Herpes Viral• Veterinary Partner: Feline Upper Respiratory Infection
<p>Eyes not opening (for kittens more than 10 days old)</p>	<p>Kittens' eyes open at 7-10 days, on the average. Some kittens' eyes do not open until they are 14 days old. If the kittens' eyes have not opened by the time they are 14 days old, please contact your foster coordinator.</p> <p>Sometimes kittens' eyes are infected and are crusted shut with eye discharge. If your kitten's eyes are bulging or if you are seeing any discharge coming out of the eyes, please contact your foster coordinator. Your kitten(s) may need veterinary care for an eye infection.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetMD: Eye Infection in Newborn Cats• Maddie's Fund: Physical and Behavioral Development of Kittens for the First Six Weeks of Life
<p>Nasal discharge and/or sneezing</p>	<p>It is very common for cats and kittens to get upper respiratory infections, especially if they have been in an animal shelter setting where they are exposed to many cats. Upper respiratory infections are most commonly caused by a virus-feline herpesvirus and/or feline calicivirus. These viral infections can progress to secondary bacterial infections, in which case medications are needed.</p> <p>If your foster kitten(s) and/or mother cat (if there is one) are only showing symptoms of sneezing and/or mild clear nasal discharge, they probably have an early viral infection, which may run its course. In this case, you do not need to contact the foster coordinator. Antibiotics are not helpful against viral infections.</p> <p>Some symptoms related to upper respiratory infection may need attention. This may include one or more of the following: yellow or green nasal discharge, yellow or green eye discharge, coughing, open mouth breathing, fever (temperature higher than 102.5° F), ulcers on the tongue or nose, not eating, lethargy, limping. In this case, you should contact the foster coordinator, as your foster kitten(s) and mother cat (if there is one) may need an exam and medications.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Veterinary Partner: Feline Upper Respiratory Infection



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetsWebMD: Upper Respiratory Infection in Cats• VCA: Feline Calicivirus Infection
Coughing	<p>The most likely cause of coughing in your foster kitten(s) is an upper respiratory infection. It is very common for cats and kittens to get upper respiratory infections, especially if they have been in an animal shelter setting. Symptoms of an upper respiratory infection may include one or more of the following: yellow or green nasal discharge, yellow or green eye discharge, coughing, open mouth breathing, fever (temperature higher than 102.5° F), ulcers on the tongue or nose, not eating, lethargy, limping. In this case, you should contact the foster coordinator, as your foster kitten(s) and mother cat (if there is one) will need an exam and may need medications.</p> <p>Another less common but serious cause of coughing is related to objects stuck in the back of your kitten's throat. Make sure that the kitten has a clear airway. Check for objects stuck in the back of the throat, by opening the kitten's mouth and looking in the back of the kitten's throat with a flashlight. Unless your kitten is having difficulty breathing, you should not attempt to remove any objects from the back of the throat yourself. Contact the foster coordinator, as your kitten may need a veterinarian to remove the object, especially if it is linear (e.g. yarn, string). Sometimes linear objects are attached to needles, or are wrapped around the tongue, and more damage can be caused if you attempt to remove them.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VeterinaryPartner.com: Feline Upper Respiratory Infection• PetsWebMD: Upper Respiratory Infection in Cats• VCA: Coughing in Cats



Check all that apply. Are any of your foster kitten(s) experiencing any of the following?

<p>Low body temperature (kitten feels cool or cold to the touch)</p>	<p>You should contact your foster coordinator immediately, as your foster kitten(s) may need emergency veterinary care!</p> <p>If your kitten is cold, start trying to warm the kitten up. You can do this by using a Snuggle Safe disc, a hot water bottle, or rice packs. Warm towels from the dryer are also a helpful addition to the warming efforts. A cheap and fast way to make a hot water bottle is to fill up a plastic soda or water bottle with hot water. Be sure that the heat source is not so hot that it may burn the kitten(s), and that the heat source is wrapped in a towel instead of being directly placed on the kitten(s).</p> <p>Additional Information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetMD.com: Hypothermia in Cats
<p>Difficulty breathing (gasping for air, labored)</p>	<p>You should contact your foster coordinator immediately, as your foster kitten(s) may need emergency veterinary care!</p> <p>Some things that you can do to help your foster kitten(s) in the meantime:</p> <p>If your kitten is having difficulty breathing, make sure that your kitten has a clear airway. Check for objects stuck in the back of the throat; gently wipe away any discharge coming out of the nose, etc.</p> <p>Additional Information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetMD.com: Common Emergencies for Kittens
<p>Jerky movements or seizures</p>	<p>The most common cause of jerky movements/seizures in kittens is low blood sugar (hypoglycemia). You should use a cotton swab to rub some Karo syrup or honey on your foster kitten's gums, this will help bring the blood sugar back up.</p> <p>You should also contact your foster coordinator immediately; your foster kitten needs a veterinary evaluation.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VeterinaryPartner.com: Seizures / Convulsions• PetPlace.com: Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Sugar) in Cats• PetMD: Seizures and Convulsions in Cats
<p>Meowing or crying a lot</p>	<p>Here are some helpful tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Kittens can meow or cry a lot when they are hungry, when they want attention, or when they are uncomfortable.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first thing that you should do is make sure that your foster kitten(s) are not hungry.• If you are not already doing so, play with the kitten(s) several times per day and provide them with plenty toys for when you are not there.• In the case of orphan kittens, placing a large stuffed animal in the nesting box along with a ticking clock may have a soothing effect on the kittens. <p>If none of the above steps work, or if your foster kitten(s) are showing any symptoms of a medical problem, please contact your foster coordinator. Your foster kitten(s) may need to be examined by a veterinarian.</p> <p>Additional Information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• eHow: How to Tell if Newborn Kittens Are Getting Enough to Eat• Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kitten Feeding and Stomach Capacity Table• ASPCA: Common Cat Behavior Issues- Meowing and Yowling
<p>Red or swollen umbilical area</p>	<p>If the kitten's umbilical area is warm, red, painful, and/or has a discharge coming from it, please call your foster coordinator immediately. Your kitten may have an umbilical infection, which will need veterinary treatment before it progresses to septicemia (a blood infection that can be fatal).</p> <p>If the kitten's umbilical area is just swollen - and the area isn't warm, red, or painful; doesn't have a discharge; and the kitten otherwise appears healthy - the kitten probably has an umbilical hernia. Umbilical hernias can be surgically repaired at the time of the kitten's spay/neuter surgery.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VCA Hospitals: Hernia- Umbilical in Cats• PetMD.com: Umbilical hernia in cats• PetMD.com: Septicemia and Bacteremia in Cats
<p>Limping</p>	<p>There are many different reasons why your kitten might be limping. Some are serious and some aren't. Here are a few tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the kitten is extremely lethargic, not putting any weight on the leg, meowing in pain, not eating, has a fever, and/or has swelling of the leg or paw, please contact your foster coordinator. Your kitten likely needs veterinary care.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If your kitten is also showing symptoms of an upper respiratory infection, please contact your foster coordinator. Your kitten may have calicivirus, and likely needs veterinary care.• If you are not seeing any of the above symptoms, and the kitten is putting some weight on the leg off and on, it is possible that the kitten has a sprain or other soft tissue injury. In this case, give the kitten a day or two to see if the limping gets better. If it does not get better, or if it is getting worse, please call the foster coordinator. <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VCA: Feline Calicivirus Infection• PetPlace.com: Lameness (Limping) in Cats
<p>Fleas</p>	<p>Heavy flea infestation in kittens can lead to death from anemia (blood loss). Please contact your foster coordinator immediately if the kitten's gums are very pale, or if the kitten is lethargic/weak. The kitten may need emergency veterinary care.</p> <p>If your kittens are 0-4 weeks old, they are too young for any oral or topical flea prevention. You can use a flea comb to manually remove fleas from the kitten(s). For very young kittens, full bathing to remove fleas is not ideal, since they cannot regulate their own body temperature. If your foster kitten(s) have a mother cat taking care of them, the mother cat will need to be treated for fleas. Please contact your foster coordinator about treating the mother cat for fleas.</p> <p>If your kittens are 4 weeks of age or older, there are some flea prevention products that can be used at their age. Please contact your foster coordinator about treating the kitten(s) and the mother cat (if there is one) for fleas. Environmental flea control is also important. Check out the links below to learn about ridding the environment of fleas.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• San Francisco SPCA: Pet Health- Fleas• VeterinaryPartner.com: Flea Anemia• VeterinaryPartner.com: Fleas- Know Your Enemy



<p>Ear mites</p>	<p>When cats and kittens have ear mites, you will often notice crusty black debris in the ears. Ear mites are very itchy, and may cause cats and kittens to scratch their ears so hard that the backs of the ears start bleeding. Please contact your foster coordinator about getting your kitten(s) and the mother cat (if there is one) evaluated and treated for ear mites.</p> <p>In the meantime, you can clean the ears. Place some pet ear cleaner on a cotton ball and gently wipe the debris out of the ears. It is best to avoid cotton swabs, and to be careful not to go further down into the ear canal than you can see.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VeterinaryPartner.com: Ear Mites FAQ• Cornell Feline Health Center: Ear Mites: Tiny Critters that can Pose a Major Threat• PetsWebMD: Ear Care and Ear Problems in Cats
<p>Skin issues other than ringworm (hair loss, red or irritated skin)</p>	<p>The most common cause of hair loss and red or irritated skin in cats and kittens is an allergy to fleas. If you are seeing fleas on the kitten(s) and mother cat (if there is one), please contact your foster coordinator about getting them treated for fleas.</p> <p>If you are noticing hair loss in circular spots, with or without flaky/scaly debris, it is possible that your foster kitten(s) may have ringworm. Please contact the foster coordinator about getting your foster kitten(s) checked out to be sure that they do not have ringworm. In the meantime, take proper precautions such as wearing long sleeves and gloves while handling the kitten(s); and washing your hands after handling the kitten(s). People can get ringworm from cats and kittens.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• VeterinaryPartner.Com: Itching and Allergy in Cats• VCA: Ringworm in Cats• VeterinaryPartner.Com: Flea Control for Allergy Cases
<p>Other (please specify):</p>	<p>If your foster kitten(s) are experiencing a medical issue that we did not specify here, and you are not certain of the seriousness of the symptoms, please call your foster coordinator for advice.</p> <p>If you feel that your foster kitten(s) need emergency care (e.g. are in pain or in distress, are bleeding, etc.), please contact your foster coordinator immediately.</p>



How lethargic are your foster kitten(s)?

<p>Moderately lethargic (not active, sleeping more than usual)</p>	<p>Kittens that are slightly to moderately lethargic can progress rapidly to being very lethargic or extremely lethargic.</p> <p>Some things that you can do to help your foster kitten(s):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) Rub the kitten's gums with a cotton swab that has been rolled in light corn syrup (e.g. Karo syrup) or honey. If your kitten's lethargy is due to low blood sugar, this will help bring your kitten's blood sugar back up.2) If your kitten is also cold, start trying to warm the kitten up. You can do this by using a Snuggle Safe disc, a hot water bottle, or rice packs. Warm towels from the dryer are also a helpful addition to the warming efforts. A cheap and fast way to make a hot water bottle is to fill up a plastic soda or water bottle with hot water. Be sure that the heat source is not so hot that it may burn the kitten(s), and that the heat source is wrapped in a towel instead of being directly placed on the kitten(s). <p>If the above steps do not help, or if your foster kitten(s) are showing other symptoms of illness (e.g. not eating, vomiting, sneezing/nasal discharge, diarrhea), please contact your foster coordinator. Your foster kitten(s) may need veterinary care.</p> <p>Additional Information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetPlace.com: Hypoglycemia (Low Blood Sugar) in Cats• PetMD.com: Hypothermia in Cats
<p>Very lethargic (sleeping excessively, limited movement, disinterested)</p> <p>or</p> <p>Extremely lethargic (barely moving, difficulty holding head up)</p>	<p>You should contact your foster coordinator immediately, as your foster kitten(s) may need emergency veterinary care!</p> <p>Some things that you can do to help your foster kitten(s) in the meantime:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) If your kitten is having difficulty breathing, make sure that your kitten has a clear airway. Check for objects stuck in the back of the throat; gently wipe away any discharge coming out of the nose, etc.2) If your kitten is lethargic, rub the kitten's gums with a cotton swab that has been rolled in light corn syrup (e.g. Karo syrup) or honey. If your kitten's extreme lethargy is due to low blood sugar, this will help bring your kitten's blood sugar back up.3) If your kitten is cold, start trying to warm the kitten up. You can do this by using a Snuggle Safe disc, a hot water bottle, or rice packs. Warm towels from the dryer are also a helpful addition to the warming efforts. A cheap and fast way to make a hot water bottle is to fill up a plastic soda or water bottle with hot water. Be sure that the heat source is not so hot that it may burn the kitten(s), and that the heat source is wrapped in a towel instead of being directly placed on the kitten(s). <p>Additional Information can be found on these websites:</p>



- [PetPlace.com: Hypoglycemia \(Low Blood Sugar\) in Cats](#)
- [PetMD.com: Common Emergencies for Kittens](#)
- [PetMD.com: Hypothermia in Cats](#)

Are you providing foster care to kitten(s) with ringworm or possible ringworm?

Yes or Not sure

If your foster coordinator is unaware of this problem, please contact them immediately. The kittens will likely need further diagnostics (e.g. Wood's Lamp, fungal culture) and/or treatment (e.g. Lime Dips, oral anti-fungal medication).

Please note that if your foster kitten(s) have ringworm, humans and other pets can get it! You should take precautions such as washing your hands after handling your foster kitten(s), wearing gloves and a long sleeved shirt when handling the kitten(s), and vacuuming/disinfecting areas that the kitten(s) have spent time in. Disinfection should be done with chlorine bleach diluted 1:10 (1 1/2 cups in 1 gallon of water), and care should be taken to avoid exposing pets or people to chlorine bleach fumes. Keep your kittens away from visitors and other pets in the household.

Ringworm left untreated can get progressively worse, and/or can increase the likelihood of spread to other pets and humans.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [Cornell Feline Health Center: Ringworm: A Serious but Readily Treatable Affliction](#)
- [VCA: Ringworm in Cats](#)
- [CDC: Healthy Pets Healthy People: Ringworm](#)

Please check all that apply. Which of the following ringworm treatments you are using?

Other (please specify):

If you are using a ringworm treatment that was not recommended by shelter/rescue organization or a veterinarian, please contact your foster coordinator to be sure that the treatment you are using is appropriate. Please be aware that there are many home remedies that are very ineffective against ringworm. Ringworm that is inappropriately treated can get progressively worse, and/or can increase the likelihood of spread to other pets and humans.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [Cornell Feline Health Center: Ringworm: A Serious but Readily Treatable Affliction](#)
- [VCA: Ringworm in Cats](#)



- [CDC: Healthy Pets Healthy People: Ringworm](#)

Is it easy to give your foster kitten(s) medication by mouth (orally)?

No

Giving oral medication to kittens and cats can be challenging!

Here are some helpful tips:

- Wrap the kitten or cat in a towel if giving the medication by mouth directly.
- Find an assistant to help hold the cat or kitten if giving the medication by mouth directly.
- Pills can be hidden in tasty treats (e.g. Pill Pockets, cheese, butter, canned kitten food meatball).
- Liquid medication can be mixed in with canned kitten food, and/or with tuna juice.
- Kittens and cats can spit medications out and/or refuse to eat medications that are hidden in food. Watch them closely to make sure they did swallow their medication!

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [PetMD: How to Get Your Cat to Take Medicine](#)
- [VeterinaryPartner.com: How to Give Your Cat a Pill](#)
- [VeterinaryPartner.com: Pilling Dogs and Cats](#)

Is it easy to lime dip your foster kitten(s)?

No

Lime Dipping kittens and cats can be challenging!

We recommend that you watch the following video: [Austin Pets Alive!: Cat Ringworm Treatment Training](#)

If you are still having problems Lime Dipping your kitten(s) and/or cat(s), please contact the foster coordinator. The foster coordinator may be able to give you additional advice or arrange for someone else to Lime Dip the kittens and cats for you.

Have your foster kitten(s) been in direct contact with family members other than you, visitors to your home, cats (other than littermates/mother cat) or dogs?

Yes

Ringworm is contagious to other pets and to people! Children and immunocompromised individuals (e.g. HIV/AIDS patients, cancer patients, patients on immunosuppressive medications) are especially susceptible to ringworm.

Helpful Tips:

- Contact all visitors and other family members who came in direct contact with the ringworm kitten(s) and/or mother cat. If they find any skin lesions on themselves, they should see their physician.
- Parents or guardians should closely monitor any children who came in direct contact with the ringworm kitten(s) and/or mother cat. If any skin lesions are found on the children, they should be taken to a physician.



- Contact your own veterinarian for advice if any of your own pets have been directly exposed to the ringworm kitten(s) and/or mother cat.
- Contact your foster coordinator for advice if any other pets that you are fostering have been exposed to the ringworm kitten(s) and/or mother cat.
- Everyone handling the ringworm kitten(s) and/or mother cat should take precautions such as wearing gloves and a long-sleeved shirt, washing hands, and vacuuming/disinfecting areas that the kitten(s) and/or mother cat have spent time in.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [CDC: Healthy Pets Healthy People: Ringworm](#)
- [PetsWebMD: Ringworm in Cats](#)
- [eHow: How to Disinfect for Ringworm](#)

Where are you keeping your foster kitten(s)?

Confined to one carpeted room

Ringworm is a fungus; spores can be very hard to eradicate from carpet and furniture. It is best to confine all pets with ringworm to one small room in the house that can be easily disinfected.

Helpful tips:

- A small non-carpeted bathroom is the ideal choice for housing pets with ringworm.
- Do not keep your foster pet in a room with fabric-covered furniture, which would be difficult to disinfect; these items often need to be discarded in order to eliminate ringworm spores from the environment.

Check all that apply. What type of cleaning solution do you use to clean the environment that your foster kitten(s) are in?

Household cleaners (Clorox wipes, 409, Mr. Clean, Comet, etc.) Or Chlorine bleach - other dilution Or I am not doing any cleaning Or Other (please specify):

Ringworm is a fungus which. Ringworm spores can survive for a LONG time and can be very difficult to eradicate from carpet and furniture.

Helpful Tips:

- Household cleaners do not effectively kill ringworm spores.
- Disinfect with a 1:10 dilution of chlorine bleach (1 ½ cups chlorine bleach to 1 gallon of water).
- This website gives great advice on how to disinfect: [eHow: How to Disinfect for Ringworm](#)



Would you like more information on how to stimulate your foster kitten(s) to pee or poop?

Yes

Kittens do not start peeing and pooping on their own until they are at least 3 weeks old. The mother cat licks the kitten's bottom, stimulating the kittens to relieve themselves. Orphan kittens, or kittens whose mother has rejected them, will need your help to pee and poop, you will need to use a cotton square soaked in warm water and gently rub it over the kitten's bottom. The kittens should be stimulated to eliminate after every meal.

We recommend that you watch: [Maddie's Fund video: Stimulating an Orphaned Kitten to Urinate and Defecate.](#)

Approximately how often do you feed your foster kitten(s) liquids (e.g., milk replacer, etc.)?

Not sure

Your response to this question tells us that you may benefit from some information about feeding orphan kittens.

Here are a few tips:

- Orphan kittens or kittens needing supplemental bottle feeding should ideally be bottle fed 4-7 times per day depending on their age.
- The amounts fed at each feeding are based on the kitten's age and body weight, and on whether or not the kitten has started eating some on its own.
- Newborn kittens have smaller stomachs, so they need to be fed smaller amounts more frequently compared to older kittens. Older kittens who have started eating some on their own do not need to be bottle-fed as much or as often as kittens who are not yet eating anything on their own.

This bottle feeding chart is a good guideline for how much you should be bottle feeding your foster kitten(s) and how often: [Maddie's Fund Orphaned Kitten Feeding and Stomach Capacity Table.](#)

After following the advice given above, if you are still having problems with your foster kitten(s) eating poorly or eating less than the recommended amount of milk replacer, please contact your foster coordinator.

Are you weighing or are you planning to weigh your foster kitten(s) on a regular basis?

No

We recommend that you weigh your foster kitten(s) at least once daily, at the same time each day. This way, you can be sure that they are gaining weight and not losing weight. Your foster kitten(s) should be gaining 1/4 oz to 1/2 oz per day.

Helpful tips:

- A human baby scale, a kitchen scale, or a postal scale can be used for weighing your foster kitten(s).
- Keeping track of the weight of each kitten on a chart is important.



- If you have more than one kitten, it is a good idea to find a way to tell them apart, so that you are certain you are weighing the same kitten each time. Sometimes this is easy, when the kittens are different colors or have unique markings. Sometimes it is not so easy when the kittens are all the same color and look exactly alike. In that case, you can make different colored “dots” on the inside of the kitten’s ear tips using a Sharpie or a highlighter.

Additional information can be found here:

- [YouTube video: “Weigh A Kitten”](#)

How often are you weighing or planning to weigh your foster kitten(s)?

Less frequently than every three days or (etc.)...

We recommend that you weigh your foster kitten(s) at least once daily, at the same time each day. This way, you can be sure that they are gaining weight and not losing weight. Your foster kitten(s) should be gaining 1/4 oz to 1/2 oz per day.

Helpful tips:

- A human baby scale, a kitchen scale, or a postal scale can be used for weighing your foster kitten(s).
- Keeping track of the weight of each kitten on a chart is important.
- If you have more than one kitten, it is a good idea to find a way to tell them apart, so that you are certain you are weighing the same kitten each time. Sometimes this is easy, when the kittens are different colors or have unique markings. Sometimes it is not so easy when the kittens are all the same color and look exactly alike. In that case, you can make different colored “dots” on the inside of the kitten’s ear tips using a Sharpie or a highlighter.

Additional information can be found here: [YouTube video: “Weigh A Kitten”](#)

Check all that apply. What food are you currently using to feed your foster kitten(s) liquids?

Homemade milk replacer (e.g., from a recipe)

We recommend that homemade milk replacers only be used on a temporary basis. It is very difficult to create a homemade milk replacer that meets all of the nutritional and caloric needs of a young kitten. Commercial milk replacers such as PetAg’s KMR are preferred, since they are correctly formulated with all of the nutrients in the right quantities.

If you need to use a homemade milk replacer on a temporary basis, we recommend following one of these two recipes: [Maddie’s Fund: Orphaned Kitten Emergency Milk Replacer Recipe](#).



Are any of your foster kitten(s) eating poorly or eating less than recommended amounts of milk replacer?

Yes	<p>If your foster kitten(s) are eating poorly or not taking the bottle feeding well, try these tips:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check your kitten's Kittens who are chilled won't be able to digest their food. Warm the kitten up slowly (2° F per hour) and then try again.• Check the temperature of the milk. Milk should be warmed to 97-100° F• Assess your kitten's energy level. If the kitten is lethargic, try a drop of Karo syrup on their gums or under the tongue and contact your foster coordinator ASAP.• The kitten might not be hungry. If the kitten is alert and responsive and acting OK otherwise, wait a half hour to an hour and try feeding again. <p>You can also try the tips given here: Maddie's Fund Orphaned Kitten Feeding Problems, Issues and Solutions.</p> <p>After following the advice given above, if you are still having problems with your foster kitten(s) eating poorly or eating less than the recommended amount of milk replacer, please contact your foster coordinator.</p>
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Would you like more information on how to bottle-feed your foster kitten(s)?

Yes	<p>We recommend that you watch: Maddie's Fund video: Bottle Feeding an Orphaned Kitten.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kitten Feeding Problems, Issues and Solutions• Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kitten Feeding and Stomach Capacity Table
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Check all that apply. What food are you currently using to feed your foster kitten(s) solid food?

<p>Home-prepared diet</p> <p>Or</p> <p>Other (please specify):</p>	<p>It is very difficult to create a home-prepared diet that meets all of the nutritional and caloric needs of a young kitten. It is recommended that you select commercial foods that are formulated to meet the nutritional requirements of kittens, or for both kittens and cats. You can do this by looking at the cat food label. It should state that the food is a complete and balanced product for kittens or for all stages of a cat's life cycle. It should also state that it meets the requirements of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO).</p> <p>For younger kittens (3-6 weeks of age) who are transitioning to solid food, it is acceptable to moisten commercial kitten foods with milk replacer or water.</p>
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Pet Assistant

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [Cornell Feline Health Center: Feeding Your Cat](#)
- [ASPCA: Cat Nutrition Tips](#)
- [PetMD.com: The Special Nutritional Needs of Kittens](#)



The solid food you are feeding your foster kitten(s) is formulated for:

<p>Cats or Not sure</p>	<p>It is recommended that you select commercial foods that are formulated to meet the nutritional requirements of kittens, or for both kittens and cats. You can do this by looking at the cat food label. It should state that the food is a complete and balanced product for kittens or for all stages of a cat's life cycle. It should also state that it meets the requirements of the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO).</p> <p>For younger kittens (3-6 weeks of age) who are transitioning to solid food, it is acceptable to moisten commercial kitten foods with milk replacer or water.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cornell Feline Health Center: Feeding Your Cat• ASPCA: Cat Nutrition Tips• PetMD.com: The Special Nutritional Needs of Kittens
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Approximately how often do you feed your foster kitten(s) gruel, wet food, or a home-prepared diet?

<p>Three times a day</p> <p>Or</p> <p>I leave this type of food out at all times</p> <p>or (etc.)...</p>	<p>Kittens need to be fed frequent small meals. They should be fed a minimum of 3-4 times per day. Their stomachs are smaller than adult cat stomachs, and they have higher nutritional requirements than adult cats do. We recommend that you leave dry kitten food out at all times.</p> <p>For younger kittens (3-6 weeks of age) who are transitioning to solid food, it is acceptable to moisten commercial kitten foods with milk replacer or water to make a gruel. Older kitten(s) also benefit from being fed wet food several times per day, in addition to dry food. Gruel and wet food should not be left out for very long or it can spoil.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ASPCA: Cat Nutrition Tips• Pet MD: Feeding Schedule for Kittens
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Would you like more information on how to help transition your foster kitten(s) to eating on their own?

<p>Yes</p>	<p>We recommend that you watch: Maddie's Fund video: Orphaned Kitten Care: How to Videos - How to Wean Orphaned Kittens onto Solid Foods.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p>
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- [PetMD.com- Weaning Kittens: How and When](#)
- [PetMD.com- Weaning A Kitten](#)

Check all that apply. Are you keeping your foster kitten(s) warm and how?

No

Newborn kittens cannot maintain their own body temperature. Newborn kitten temperature varies by age, as does the nesting box temperature in which they must be kept. It is important to make sure that your foster kitten(s) stay warm.

Some helpful tips on how to keep your foster kitten(s) warm:

- Some of the safest heat sources that you can use for your foster kitten(s) are: soft bedding (blankets and towels), a Snuggle Safe disc, a hot water bottle, or rice packs.
- Heating pads or other electrical heating devices are not recommended by many organizations since the electrical cords can be hazardous (the mother cat or kitten(s) may chew on the electrical cords or become entangled in them).
- Regardless of what kind of heat source you choose to use for your foster kitten(s), you should be careful that the heat source is not too hot (can burn the kittens) and that the kitten(s) have a way to crawl away/escape from the heat source if they get too hot.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kittens Temperature Chart](#)
- [PetPlace.com: How to Make a Rice Sock for Heat or Cold Support for Cats.](#)

Yes, by heating pad

Heating pads or other electrical heating devices are not recommended by many organizations since the electrical cords can be hazardous (the mother cat or kitten(s) may chew on the electrical cords or become entangled in them).

Some of the safest heat sources that you can use for your foster kitten(s) are: soft bedding (blankets and towels), a Snuggle Safe disc, a hot water bottle, or rice packs.

Regardless of what kind of heat source you choose to use for your foster kitten(s), you should be careful that the heat source is not too hot (can burn the kittens) and that the kitten(s) have a way crawl away/escape from the heat source if they get too hot.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [FDA/CPSC Public Health Advisory - Hazards Associated With The Use of Electric Heating Pads](#)
- [PetPlace.com: How to Make a Rice Sock for Heat or Cold Support for Cats.](#)



Yes, by snuggle safe disc	<p>A Snuggle Safe disc is an excellent choice; it is one of the safest ways to keep your foster kitten(s) warm! You should still be careful that the Snuggle Safe disc is not too hot (can burn the kittens) and that the kitten(s) have a way crawl away/escape from the Snuggle Safe disc if they get too hot.</p> <p>Additional information can be found here:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• SnuggleSafe.com: Snuggle Safe Instructions• You Tube: Snuggle Safe Video
Yes, by homemade heating device	<p>Caution should be used with homemade heating devices. Anything homemade that is electrical is a serious safety hazard and should be avoided.</p> <p>Rice socks and plastic bottles filled with hot water are two homemade heating devices that can be safely used. You should be careful that the homemade heating device is not too hot (can burn the kittens) and that the kitten(s) have a way to crawl away/escape from the homemade heating device if they get too hot.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PetPlace.com: How to Make a Rice Sock for Heat or Cold Support for Cats.• Offbeat Home and Life: Use a two liter bottle to warm your feet this winter
Yes, other (please specify):	<p>You need to make sure that your method of keeping your foster kitten(s) warm is keeping them warm enough. Newborn kittens cannot maintain their own body temperature. Newborn kitten temperature varies by age, as does the nesting box temperature in which they must be kept.</p> <p>Some of the best and safest heat sources that you can use for your foster kitten(s) are: soft bedding (blankets and towels), a Snuggle Safe disc, a hot water bottle, or rice packs.</p> <p>Regardless of what kind of heat source you choose to use for your foster kitten(s), you should be careful that the heat source is not too hot (can burn the kittens) and that the kitten(s) have a way crawl away/escape from the heat source if they get too hot.</p> <p>Additional information can be found on these websites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kittens Temperature Chart• PetPlace.com: How to Make a Rice Sock for Heat or Cold Support for Cats.
Check all that apply. Are you checking your foster kitten(s) body temperature and how?	
No or Yes, by touch	<p>Taking your kitten's temperature with a thermometer is the only way to accurately measure your kitten's body temperature. Instructions on how to take a cat's temperature can be found here: Cornell Vet: Taking Your Cat's Temperature.</p>



	<p>Newborn kittens cannot maintain their own body temperature. They rely on the mother cat to help keep them warm. With orphaned kittens, or kittens who have been rejected by their mother, it is especially important to make sure that the kittens are staying warm enough. Newborn kitten temperature varies by age, as does the nesting box temperature in which they must be kept. The following chart is a good reference: Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kittens Temperature Chart.</p> <p>It is also important to occasionally check the kitten's body temperature before bottle-feeding. A kitten that is chilled tends to be less responsive and not as interested in nursing.</p>
Yes, other (please specify):	<p>Taking your kitten's temperature with a thermometer is the only way to accurately measure your kitten's body temperature. Instructions on how to take a cat's temperature can be found here: Cornell Vet: Taking Your Cat's Temperature.</p> <p>Newborn kittens cannot maintain their own body temperature. They rely on the mother cat to help keep them warm. With orphaned kittens, or kittens who have been rejected by their mother, it is especially important to make sure that the kittens are staying warm enough. Newborn kitten temperature varies by age, as does the nesting box temperature in which they must be kept. The following chart is a good reference: Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kittens Temperature Chart.</p> <p>It is also important to occasionally check the kitten's body temperature before bottle-feeding. A kitten that is chilled tends to be less responsive and not as interested in nursing.</p>

Are you checking your foster kitten(s) temperature before bottle-feeding?

No	<p>Taking your kitten's temperature with a thermometer is the only way to accurately measure your kitten's body temperature. Instructions on how to take a cat's temperature can be found here: Cornell Vet: Taking Your Cat's Temperature.</p> <p>Newborn kittens cannot maintain their own body temperature. They rely on the mother cat to help keep them warm. With orphaned kittens, or kittens who have been rejected by their mother, it is especially important to make sure that the kittens are staying warm enough. Newborn kitten temperature varies by age, as does the nesting box temperature in which they must be kept. The following chart is a good reference: Maddie's Fund: Orphaned Kittens Temperature Chart.</p> <p>It is also important to occasionally check the kitten's body temperature before bottle-feeding. A kitten that is chilled tends to be less responsive and not as interested in nursing.</p>
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Do you stimulate your foster kitten(s) to help them pee and poop?

Yes, some of them

Kittens do not start peeing and pooping on their own until they are at least 3 weeks old. The mother cat licks the kitten's bottom, stimulating the kittens to relieve themselves. Orphan kittens, or kittens whose mother has rejected them, will need your help to pee and poop, you will need to use a cotton square soaked in warm water and gently rub it over the kitten's bottom. The kittens should be stimulated to eliminate after every meal.

We recommend that you watch: [Maddie's Fund video: Stimulating an Orphaned Kitten to Urinate and Defecate.](#)

Would you like more information on how to stimulate your foster kitten(s) to pee or poop?

Yes

Kittens do not start peeing and pooping on their own until they are at least 3 weeks old. The mother cat licks the kitten's bottom, stimulating the kittens to relieve themselves. Orphan kittens, or kittens whose mother has rejected them, will need your help to pee and poop, you will need to use a cotton square soaked in warm water and gently rub it over the kitten's bottom. The kittens should be stimulated to eliminate after every meal.

We recommend that you watch: [Maddie's Fund video: Stimulating an Orphaned Kitten to Urinate and Defecate.](#)

Are any of your kitten(s) attempting to nurse on other kitten(s)?

Yes or Not sure

Inappropriate nursing is most commonly seen in orphaned kittens and can cause injury to the object of the kitten's affection - physical harm to the littermate and destruction of belongings. When kittens nurse on other kitten's genitals, severe damage can occur – it is VERY important to treat this problem.

Helpful Tips:

- If your kitten is suckling on fur or skin on the other kitten(s)' abdomen/belly, you can create a tiny sweater out of a sock to protect the kitten(s)' skin.
- If your kitten is suckling on the genitals of littermates, the only solution is to separate the littermates. During the time of separation, make sure the littermates have supervised playtime with one another.
- Kittens who are nursing inappropriately may benefit from enriching the environment with many items to suck on or to chew on.
- Try to redirect the kitten to a completely different appropriate behavior, like playing with a wand-type/pole toy.
- Never punish this behavior; it can lead to more undesirable behaviors. In addition, this behavior should not be encouraged through petting or other positive reinforcement.

Additional information can be found on these websites:



- [Maddie's Fund: From Helpless Newborn to Skilled Acrobat: Feline Development and the Orphaned Kitten](#)
- [Pets.thenest.com: How to Keep My Kittens From Nursing on Each Other](#)

Would you like more information on how to introduce your foster kitten(s) to a litter box?

Yes

Most kittens start using a litter box on their own around 3-4 weeks of age, and it is not uncommon for them to have a few 'mistakes' as they learn to use the box and/or adjust to a new home.

Helpful tips:

- Use a litter box with very low sides so that the kitten can easily climb into it.
- Place the litter box in a quiet area, and in a place where the kitten can easily find it.
- Avoid putting the litter box right next to the kitten's food and water dishes.
- Do not yell at or punish the kitten if they pee or poop outside the box, only offer encouragement and praise. It is common for them to make a few 'mistakes' early on.
- Clean the litter box **at least** twice a day, kittens tend to be messy and do not like using a dirty litter box!

If you've tried the above steps and are still having a problem, try placing the kitten(s) in the litter box after a meal. Kitten(s) often need to pee or poop right after they eat.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [ASPCA- Litter Box Problems](#)
- [VeterinaryPartner.com Guidelines for Litter Box Care](#)

Are you providing foster care to shy or fearful kitten(s)?

Yes or Not sure

Some kittens are shy or fearful because they are under-socialized, especially if they are orphaned kittens who do not have a mother cat to teach them social skills, or if the mother cat is under-socialized herself.

Helpful tips:

- Move slowly and talk softly when approaching the kitten(s).
- Try keeping the kitten(s) in a small room initially, with a hiding place provided (such as a carrier or an upside-down cardboard box with a hole cut into the side).
- Try feeding tasty treats or wet/canned food to "make friends" with the kitten(s).
- Try playing with the kitten(s) with toys that are interesting and fun, yet not too noisy/scary for the kitten(s). Wand-type toys are great because you can be further away from the kitten, and therefore less scary, while playing.
- If possible, gently pick up and handle the kitten(s) often.



- Do not punish the kitten(s) for shy or fearful behavior, as this can often frighten the kitten(s) even more. Rather, use encouragement and praise.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [San Francisco ASPCA: Adopting an Under-socialized Kitten](#)
- [The Humane Society of the United States: How to Help a Frightened Cat](#)

Check all that apply. Which of the following behaviors have your foster kitten(s) demonstrated toward you and/or other people?

Bites

Some kittens bite because they are shy, fearful and/or under-socialized. Others bite because they are playing but haven't learned to inhibit their bite. This is most commonly seen in orphaned kittens who do not have a mother cat to teach them social skills, or in kittens whose mother cat is under-socialized herself.

Helpful tips:

- Move slowly and talk softly when approaching the kitten(s)
- Try keeping the kitten(s) in a small room initially, with a hiding place provided (such as a carrier or an upside-down cardboard box with a hole cut into the side)
- Try feeding tasty treats or wet/canned food to "make friends" with the kitten(s)
- Try playing with the kitten(s) with toys that are interesting and fun, yet not too noisy/scary for the kitten(s). Wand-type toys are great because you can be further away from the kitten, and therefore less scary, while playing
- Do not play with your kittens with your hands. It may be cute, but it teaches kittens bad habits that adopters may not enjoy.
- Do not punish the kitten(s) for biting, as this can often frighten the kitten(s) even more. Rather, discourage inappropriate behavior by withdrawing attention when the kitten bites or attempts to bite.

If you've tried the above steps and your kitten(s) are still biting you, and/or if you no longer feel comfortable being a foster parent to the kitten(s), please contact your foster coordinator.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [Dumb Friends League: Understanding Cat Aggression Towards People](#)
- [San Francisco ASPCA: Adopting an Under-socialized Kitten](#)
- [Humane Society of the United States: Teach your Kitten How to Play Nice](#)

Check all that apply. When playing, are any of your foster kitten(s) displaying any of the following behaviors?



**Biting your hands, feet, etc.
when playing**

Some kittens, especially orphaned kittens who do not have a mother cat to teach them social skills, may play roughly or in a way that we consider inappropriate or even painful. It is important to teach cats how to play appropriately at an early age. What may seem “cute” when they are kittens can turn into a serious behavior issue as an adult cat.

Helpful tips:

- Try diverting the kitten’s attention from hands and feet to an interesting toy.
- Never use hands or feet as play toys- this includes toys that you wear on your hands.
- Give the kitten stuffed toys to wrestle/play with.
- Wand-type interactive toys are a great way for kittens to play and exercise.
- Do not smack or punish the kitten for inappropriate play. Rather, gently discourage inappropriate behavior by withdrawing attention when the kitten starts to play too roughly.

Additional information can be found on these websites:

- [Humane Society of the United States: Teach your Kitten How to Play Nice](#)
- [Dumb Friends League: Managing your Young Cat’s Rough Play](#)
- [SFSPCA: Cat Play Aggression](#)