

VetterCare
Expert Pet Care. At Home.

A FREE KIT FOR CATS WITH ARTHRITIS

Small changes. More comfortable days.

Cats hide joint pain, so the signs are easy to miss. This kit helps you notice small changes, set up your home for comfort, keep medication on your vet's schedule, and hand off your cat's care with confidence, whoever is giving it.

General information to use with your veterinarian. Not medical advice.

1. Weekly comfort and mobility notes
2. Home setup checklist
3. Medication schedule
4. Signs to call your vet
5. Care handoff sheet
6. Questions for your vet

STEP 1 · ONE LINE PER WEEK

Weekly comfort and mobility notes

Compare your cat with their usual self. Small, slow changes are the ones that matter. It's a record for you and your vet, not a guide to changing treatment.

Week of	Jumping up / down usual / less / not	Stairs usual / slower / avoids	Play and running usual / less	Litter box in and out OK? any outside?	Grooming usual / less / one spot	Mood usual / hiding / grumpy	Meds given as prescribed all / missed	Notes, video taken?

Weight at home _____ **Date** _____ **Weight** _____ **Date** _____

Vets look at running, jumping up, jumping down, going up and down stairs, and chasing toys. Videos from home help: the whole cat in frame, the whole movement, good light. Cats with arthritis rarely limp; watch for jumping less, trouble with the litter box, and grooming less. (AAHA; Cat Friendly Homes; FDA; Cornell) Print as many copies as you need.

STEP 2 · TICK WHAT'S DONE

Home setup checklist

Simple changes at home help your cat keep doing normal cat things. Ask your vet which ones fit your cat. Cat Friendly Homes

Litter box

- [ ] A box with low sides or a low entry, so getting in and out is easier. FDA; Cat Friendly Homes
- [ ] Within a short walk of the resting spot. AAHA

Getting around

- [ ] Ramps or steps to favorite high places. FDA; Cat Friendly Homes; AAHA
- [ ] Rugs or carpet runners for secure footing. AAHA
- [ ] Night lights, to see better in the dark. Cat Friendly Homes

Food and water

- [ ] Raised bowls, for cats who hurt when they bend down. FDA; Cat Friendly Homes
- [ ] Wide, low-sided bowls that don't touch the whiskers. Cat Friendly Homes
- [ ] Within a short walk of the resting spot, to encourage gentle movement. AAHA

Rest

- [ ] Soft bedding. FDA
- [ ] A quiet, protected spot. Pets in pain often prefer a quiet corner. AAHA
- [ ] Indoors when it's cold: cold weather can make arthritis worse. LSU Vet Med

MY VET'S ADVICE

Target weight _____ **Exercise** _____

Food or diet _____

Other changes at home _____

Weight matters: overweight cats are more likely to develop arthritis, and extra weight strains the joints. Weigh your cat at home and tell your vet about any change. Cat Friendly Homes; Cornell

STEP 3 · FILL THIS IN WITH YOUR VET

Medication schedule

Write each medicine exactly as your vet prescribed it. Give only what your vet prescribes. Cat Friendly Homes

Medication (name on the label)	Amount, as prescribed	Times	With food?	Refill date

Vet visits or injections given at the clinic: next date _____

Day	Morning med + time + initials	Midday med + time + initials	Evening med + time + initials	Notes
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Never give your cat any medicine without your vet's direction, including over-the-counter human pain relievers. Many of them can be deadly to cats. Cats are especially sensitive to the side effects of some pain medicines, and many approved for dogs are not approved for long-term use in cats. Cat Friendly Homes; FDA

Side effects my vet wants me to watch for:

_____

If a dose is missed or late, my vet says:

_____

STEP 4 · KEEP THIS ON THE FRIDGE

Signs to call your vet

CALL YOUR VET RIGHT AWAY IF YOUR CAT

- Jumps up or down less, or not as high
- Has trouble with stairs, or is slower on them
- Is stiff
- Is less active and playful
- Is withdrawn, hiding, or more clingy
- Grooms less, or over-grooms one painful spot
- Is aggressive when handled, or with another pet
- Isn't using the litter box for urine or stool

Any change in your cat's usual behavior can mean pain, illness or stress. These are all reasons to talk with your vet.

American Association of Feline Practitioners, Cat Friendly Homes

QUIETER SIGNS TO MENTION AT YOUR NEXT VISIT

- Uses a chair as a step to the table
- Hesitates before jumping down
- Trouble getting in and out of the litter box
- Constipation
- Sleeps more, plays less
- Seeks warm, sunny spots
- Coat looks unkempt
- Eats less or loses weight

Cats hide pain and rarely limp, because arthritis usually affects both sides. A video of your cat jumping or on the stairs helps your vet see what you see. (AAFP; Cornell; FDA; AAHA)

If your cat is experiencing an emergency, please contact your veterinarian or the nearest emergency animal hospital right away.

Our vet _____ Phone _____

Emergency hospital _____ Phone _____

STEP 5 · FOR ANYONE CARING FOR YOUR CAT

Care handoff sheet

Cat's name _____ Weight _____ Age _____

Joints affected, if known _____

Our vet _____ Phone _____

Emergency hospital _____ Phone _____

My phone while I'm away _____

Medication (name on the label)	Amount, as prescribed	Times	Given with food?

COMFORT ROUTINE

Favorite resting spot _____ Ramps / steps at _____

Litter box at _____ Scoop / change _____

Food + amount _____ Times _____

How to pick up my cat comfortably _____

What's normal for my cat (jumping, stairs, hiding, grooming) _____

ASK YOUR VET, AND WRITE THEIR ANSWER HERE

If my cat stops jumping, or isn't using the litter box, when should my caregiver call?

If a medication is missed or late, what should happen?

If my cat seems in more pain (see page 4), who should be called first?

STEP 6 · BRING THIS TO YOUR NEXT VISIT

Questions for your vet

1. Which joints are affected, and how will we track how my cat is doing?
2. What should I watch for at home, and should I send videos?
3. What is the pain plan, and what side effects should I watch for?
4. Is an injectable arthritis medicine an option for my cat?
5. Is my cat at a healthy weight? If not, what's the target and the plan?
6. Does a special diet, or any supplement, make sense for my cat?
7. Would rehabilitation therapy help?
8. What changes at home would help most: litter box, ramps, bowls, bedding?
9. How often should we have checkups?

Sources. American Association of Feline Practitioners, Cat Friendly Homes, "Degenerative Joint Disease (Arthritis) in Cats" and "Providing Care for a Senior Cat," and the AAFP brochure "Degenerative Joint Disease in Cats" · U.S. Food and Drug Administration, "Osteoarthritis in Cats: More Common Than You Think" · Cornell Feline Health Center, "Is Your Cat Slowing Down?" · American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), 2022 Pain Management Guidelines for Dogs and Cats · Merck Veterinary Manual, "Joint Disorders in Cats" · LSU School of Veterinary Medicine, "Winter weather tips for pet and livestock owners."



NEED TO TRAVEL?

A veterinary professional can keep the comfort routine at home.

A cat with arthritis does best on a steady routine. A VetterCare veterinary professional can give daily medication as prescribed and keep your cat's comfort routine going at home, following your veterinarian's written instructions. Your cat stays home, with their ramps, bowls and favorite spots. You get photo updates while you're away, and you meet your veterinary professional in person before you leave.

vettercare.com

(844) 697-3871

In-home care across Greater Phoenix, Tucson, Prescott and Dallas–Fort Worth.

VetterCare gathers this information from published veterinary sources. It is general information, not veterinary advice, and doesn't replace an exam by your veterinarian. VetterCare veterinary professionals follow your veterinarian's instructions. If your pet is experiencing an emergency, contact your veterinarian or the nearest emergency animal hospital right away.

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