



## **Cat Adopter Tips: Common Issues**

### **Help! My cat keeps waking me up at night.**

Cats are naturally crepuscular, meaning they are typically most active during dawn and dusk. They often get a boost of energy just before sunrise and sunset (about 4 a.m. and 4 p.m.), and want to play and eat for a few hours. If your cat's nighttime play is keeping you awake, try tiring them out with extra playtime right before you go to bed. Check out our Feline Playtime tips!

An automatic feeder scheduled at about 4 a.m. helps for some, and earplugs and an eye mask are helpful for letting you sleep through your cat's antics! If you lock them out of the bedroom, remember to make up for that lost social time the next day.

### **Help! My cat keeps attacking my ankles.**

Cats are hunters by nature, and if they haven't spent enough time lately chasing and catching toys, they'll pick the next best thing: your feet! Some older cats only need 15-20 minutes of playtime a day, while energetic young cats and kittens could need up to 4 hours.

Check out our Feline Playtime tips for ideas to keep them occupied. If this isn't enough, read our Play Aggression handout.

### **Help! My cat is peeing outside the litter box.**

First, make sure the box is clean and smelling fresh. If it is, take them to the vet right away for an exam and urine test. They could be in pain when they try to pee and is avoiding the box to avoid the pain. If you rule out any medical issues, then you can assume it's a behavioral problem. Check out our Kitty Litter tips and our Marking and Spraying tips if it continues.

### **Help! I want my cat to stay indoors, but they keep trying to run outside.**

Stomp your feet when coming in the door to teach your cat that it's scary out there! Keep a basket of toys by the door so you can toss one back into the room, then slip out the door while they run the other way to chase the toy. Remember, there's a reason they want to go out, and that's probably because they're scared of something in the house or they are bored. If you have young children, make sure there is always a quiet room available where your cat can retreat for a break from youngster energy. If your cat may be bored, make sure to play with them more! Check out our Feline Playtime tips for ideas.

### **Help! I think I'm allergic to my cat.**

Allergies of all kinds are on the rise, and it's easy to mistake a seasonal allergy for a pet allergy. If you believe you are developing an allergy to a cat you've already had for a while, try seeing an allergist to get a diagnosis.

You can manage allergies by keeping the cat locked out of your bedroom to give your body a break every night, cleaning more often (dusting, vacuuming, and using a washable couch cover), and using an air purifier with a HEPA filter. Brushing and wiping the cat with pet-safe wipes also help contain the allergens – some people also opt for a professional groomer.

If it's only been a day or two since you brought your cat home and you're noticing milder symptoms, then hang tight! Often, people adjust to the new allergen after a few weeks and no longer have any issues. Try taking an over-the-counter allergy medication during that time to stay comfortable, then wait it out before trying to wean yourself off the medication.

**Having a problem that isn't listed here? Call PAWS for more advice!**