

Can I Keep My Cat?

Toxoplasmosis is a rare and easily avoidable disease, which can cause serious birth defects. The parasite is most commonly found in uncooked or undercooked meat. It can also be found in the feces of cats who ingest raw meat, birds, mice or contaminated soil.

The odds of contracting toxoplasmosis during pregnancy are extremely low, and even lower for your baby.

Prevention tips:

- Don't handle or eat uncooked meat.
- Keep your cat indoors and away from wildlife.
- Have someone else clean the litter box daily. Or wear gloves and wash your hands.
- Feed cats only commercially prepared cat food.



About Us

Hawaiian Humane Society is the only animal welfare organization on Oahu that shelters, rescues, adopts and welcomes all animals. As an independent, local non-profit organization, we receive no funding from organizations such as ASPCA or HSUS.

Our work to promote the human-animal bond and the humane treatment of all animals is supported largely by donations. To make a gift, visit hawaiianhumane.org.



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Preparing Pets for a New Baby



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Bringing Baby Home

Before you bring your baby home from the hospital, have someone take home something with the baby's scent (such as a blanket) for your pet to investigate.

When you return from the hospital, your pet may be eager to greet you and receive your attention. Have someone else take the baby into another room while you give your pet a warm, but calm, welcome.

After the initial greeting, you can bring your pet with you to sit next to the baby; reward your pet with treats for appropriate behavior. Remember, you want your pet to view associating with the baby as a positive experience.

Never force your pet to get near the baby, and always supervise any interaction.

Maintain regular routines as much as possible to help your pet adjust. And be sure to spend quality one-on-one time with your pet each day.



Preparing Your Pet

Your dog or cat was your first "baby" and is used to being the center of attention. It's understandable that she may experience something akin to sibling rivalry when you introduce a new human baby.

Work with her before you bring home your baby so she gradually gets accustomed to spending less time with you. Drastically decreasing attention and scolding, ignoring, or isolating your pet after the baby comes home will likely make your pet feel stressed.

If your pet is particularly attached to the mother-to-be, another family member should develop a closer relationship with the family pet.



Preparation Tips

- Take your pet to the veterinarian for a health exam, get necessary vaccinations, and ensure that he is on a program that prevents ticks, fleas and heartworms.
- Spay or neuter your pet. Not only do sterilized pets typically have fewer health problems associated with their reproductive systems, but they are also calmer and less likely to bite.
- If your pet exhibits fear and anxiety, get help from an animal behavior specialist.
- Consider enrolling in a training class with your dog, and practice training techniques. Training allows you to safely and humanely control your dog's behavior and enhances the bond between you and your pet.
- Consult with a veterinarian and pediatrician if newborn interaction with your pet makes you uncomfortable. By working with these experts before your baby is born, you can resolve problems early.
- Accustom your pet to baby-related noises. Play recordings of a baby crying, turn on the mechanical infant swing and use the rocking chair. Make these positive experiences for your pet by offering a treat or playtime.
- If your pet's behavior includes gentle nibbling, pouncing, or swatting, redirect that behavior to appropriate objects.
- Encourage friends with infants to visit your home to accustom your pet to babies. Supervise all pet-infant interactions.
- Sprinkle baby powder or baby oil on your skin so your pet becomes familiar with the new smells.

