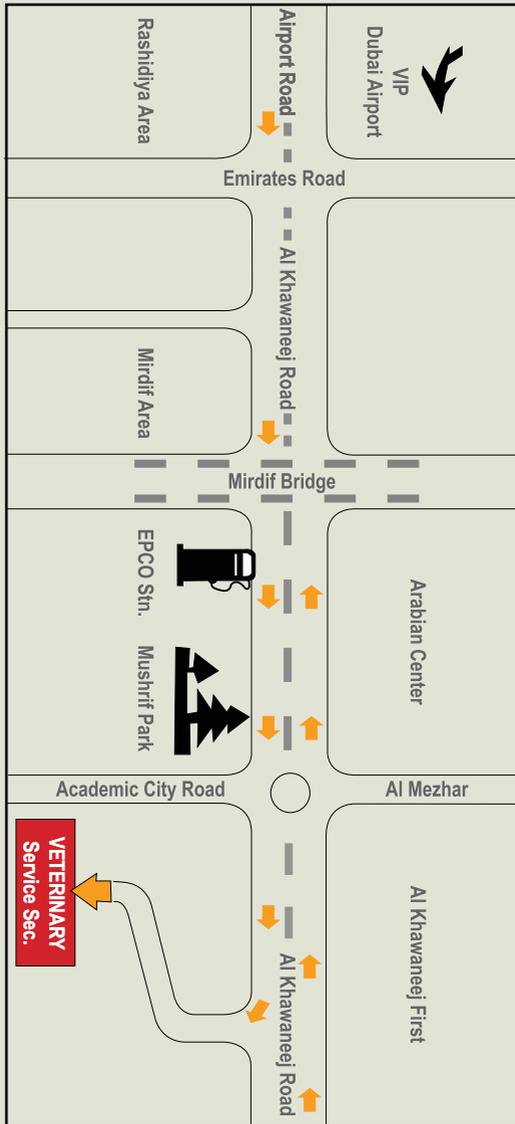




Stray Cats: Health Risks & Methods of Control



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Introduction

Many believe that cats are not harmful at all, and this is not true. Cats may become in the absence of care and vaccination a source of transmission for many diseases to humans, particularly for those who are suffering from immunodeficiency or irregularity of immune system (such as the elderly and children in particular), so the importance of control thereon emerged to adjust their numbers and reduce their health risks in order to preserve the health of community.

The nature and behavior of cats

It is a nature of cats that they live in a specific area or place determined by the smell of their urine from which they go out, return and prevent others from entering it by all means.

Cats reflect their mood and desires through sound and movement of the eyes, ears, whiskers and tail, as well position of standing or sitting and the body.

Cats like the movement, activity, and constant search which is an important factor in disease transmission and their speed of spread.

Methods of Diseases transmission

There are many diseases transmitted by cats to humans, by the following:

- Injuries resulting from exposure to bites.
- Being scratched by the claws of cats.
- Direct contact with infected cats or exposing to their secretions.



The most important diseases transmitted to human by cats

First: infection through biting

1. Rabies:

It is a viral, dangerous fatal disease affects the nervous system and can be transmitted from the infected cat to the human through biting where there is a large amount of virus in their saliva.

- Symptoms begin with a strong sense of thirst by the infected person with which he cannot drink water because of the severe pain in the throat, and this phenomenon is called (hydrophobia).
- Then, the tongue becomes lolled and the saliva drips in the form of froth from the mouth.
- When the state exaggerated, paralysis prevails in all areas of the body causing the death of the patient. This disease exists in most countries of the world, and the preventive rule bases on that any cat which is not immune to the disease is considered a health hazard, and when an infection occurred, the cat shall put under control, and is infected with rabies until otherwise is proved, then the infected is treated by the anti-serum injection.
- “No any case reported in Dubai”

2. Flesh and cutting wounds

Bite injury can cause inflammation, swelling and pain because of contamination of the wound by *Pasturella* germ or other.



Second: Infection by scratching

Cat scratch fever

Occurs when a man scratched by the claws of cats infected by *Bartonella* germ, which causes swelling of lymph nodes accompanied with fever, headache and sore throat, as this germs transmitted to cats by fleas.

Third: Infection by touching or exposing to cat secretions

1. Toxoplasma

A parasitic disease hits humans when dealing with infected cats, as parasites multiply in the intestines of cats and come out with their secretions, and causes embryological malformation or abortion for women, and the appearance of neurologic symptoms of newborns in the event of brain injury.

2. Chlamydia

This bacteria (Chlamydia) causes infections in the noses of cats, and can be transmitted to humans causing conjunctivitis.

3. Tinea (Fungus)

One of the most fungal diseases that commonly affect the skin. The injury appears at the hands of the owners of cats causing itching and redness in the form of circles as a result of touching and wiping the skin of the infected cats.

4. Salmonella:

Affects cats when eating the meat of infected birds or carrier Salmonella, and transmits from cats to humans when exposing to their secretions.



5. Stomach ulcer:

Caused by Helicobacter Pylori bacteria found in the infected cats, and transmitted to humans through the mouth by eating food contaminated with secretions.

6. External & Internal parasites:

There are different kinds of parasites can be found on the skin and hair of cats such as ticks, fleas and lice and can be transmitted to the breeders of cat causing a disease, as well children can also be infected with certain enterobiasis when dealing with cats such as Toxocara Caty worm which causes intestinal diseases or permanent blindness in some cases.

Stray cats control team/Veterinary Services Section:

Veterinary Services Section of Public Health Department to follow a program to monitor and control of stray cats in order to control their numbers by collecting and sterilizing them, and then returning the sound cats to the same areas trapped in (TNR) for the purpose of maintaining Public Health and preventing the society of their risks, a program adopted by the World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA), which has trained and qualified employees on the program from the section staff as a program used by a large number of countries facing the same problem.



The program idea relies on the need to keeping reasonable numbers of cats in the area (with neutering them), in order to preserve the diversity and biological balance. Controlling depends on collecting stray cats by using traps designed specifically for this purpose, in which decoys are placed and distributed in the areas to be covered or reported to the notifications system of the department. Cats are collected and then sent to the veterinary clinic in veterinary services section to do the following:

- ▶ Sort all the controlled cats to know the registered ones by electronic chip scanner, and then contacting their owners for receiving them within three working days after the payment of prescribed fees.
- ▶ The veterinarian examines the remaining cats to make sure they are sound and clear of diseases for sterilizing and returning them on the next day to their areas.
- ▶ Sick cats that their recovery is hopeless are euthanized

Necessary points to ensure the success and effectiveness of the cats sterilization program (TNR)

- Put household garbage in bags closed tightly and gets rid of them in the designated places.
- Cover trash containers and not leave them uncovered.



- Do not remove the collected cats from cages and contact the assigned supervisor.
- Cooperate fully with stray cats control teams in the Emirate, enable them to do their job, and obligate to their instructions.

General tips and instructions when dealing with cats:

- Wash hands with water, soap and disinfectant after examining, touching or exposing to cats' secretions.
- Wash wounds caused by cat bites with disinfectant and consult a doctor immediately.
- Do not let the animal licking your face or hands or kissing it.
- Dispose of animal excretions immediately in a healthy and safe way, and should not be left in the yard or in the open places as it may be a source of infection for you and for others, especially children and other animals.
- Avoid keeping animals near the children's toys and tools or near their playing places to avoid soiled them with animals secretions.
- It is important to register and immune cats and provide an adequate environment for them and not leaving them stray.
- Do not feed stray cats.
- Do not be annoyed when you see cats that gathered once again in the same area.
- Do not leave cats in the house without a care in the event of being abroad

If you have any enquiries, please contact the Call Center of the department:

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