

Fostering an Isolation Cat

Frequently asked questions!

What is an Isolation Cat?!

- Sometimes cats come in with injuries- perhaps they have been in a fight with another cat, were bitten by a dog or another animal. The source of the wound is unknown. When these cats come in, they are required by state law to go through a period of observation where they are isolated from other animals and have limited contact with people to monitor for signs of rabies.

Rabies? Yikes! What are the risks to me?

- Following procedures, risks are low! Wear gloves during all interactions with the cat to avoid accidental exposure to saliva. Consider using disposable food dishes, keep the cat in its established confinement area, limit contact to just one person and no contact with other animals!

How is rabies spread?

- Rabies is spread through direct contact (such as through broken skin or mucous membranes in the eyes, nose, or mouth) with the saliva or brain/nervous system tissue of an infected animal. It is possible for people to get rabies from non-bite exposures including scratches, abrasions, or open wounds that are exposed to saliva or other infectious material. Petting a rabid animal, contact with their blood, urine, or feces are not considered to be exposures of concern for rabies. The rabies virus becomes noninfectious when it dries out.

Maybe I can do this! What type of set up do I need?

- The cat must have two doors between it and the outside. Spare bedrooms, a bathroom, or even isolation in a large crate all work! The cat cannot have contact with other animals and cannot free roam in your home so there is no risk of slipping out the door to escape. A spare bedroom or bathroom with a baby gate (to keep them from slipping out when you open the door) are ideal spaces to isolate a cat.
- We'll provide all the supplies you need!

I have other pets; do I need to keep them separate?

- Yes! For the safety of your pets, keep them completely separated. Just because you have other pets does not mean you cannot effectively isolate a cat, so consider if this is a way you are able to help the shelter.

What do I do if the cat starts acting different or becomes ill?

- Contact the Office of Animal Services immediately. The cat may not be removed from its place of confinement, *even for a veterinary visit*, without authorization from the OAS. During business hours, call 240-773-5925. After hours, the emergency dispatcher at 301-279-8000 option 2 can locate a supervisor for consultation.

When does isolation end?

- Each month one of our officers will schedule a time to view the cat in person. These are quick check ins that are usually done in only 5 minutes. The cat cannot be released from the isolation period until cleared by an officer during the final inspection- even if the final date of the quarantine has passed.

I still have questions!

- We've got answers! Email us at FosterMCASAC@montgomerycountymd.gov for more information.