

BENEFITS OF HAVING INDOOR-ONLY CATS

Once your cat has become accustomed to your house, please consider keeping her indoors only. Cats who spend time outdoors require more medical attention from injury and diseases. SPCA vets estimate the average lifespan of an indoor-only cat to be 18 years or longer. The life span will be considerably less than that for a pet allowed to roam freely outdoors. Indoor/outdoor cats live to be an estimated 6-10 years old.

Here is a partial list of what your cat misses by staying indoors:

- Fights with other cats that may cause injuries requiring veterinary care.
- Being hit by a car and killed or seriously injured.
- Being attacked or chased by free-roaming dogs.
- Being shot at, poisoned or tortured.
- Exposure to Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) and Feline Leukemia.
- Being stolen for reasons that often end in death.
- Getting lost or trapped and turned in to an animal shelter.
- Exposure to rabies, ringworm, or other diseases transmittable to humans.
- Encountering wild predatory animals like coyotes, raccoons, and owls.
- Fleas, ticks and other parasites.

If you love wildlife, please keep your cat indoors.

- Cats kill four to five million birds each day.
- Cats will hunt small wild animals, despite how well they are fed.
- Most birds or small animals caught by cats are not killed outright. They die slowly from injuries or infection.
- Ground-nesting birds are particularly susceptible to predation by cats.
- Cats that kill small rodents can eliminate a critical food source for beneficial owls, hawks, and snakes.

If you decide it isn't feasible for you or your cat to keep her indoors only, please take steps to minimize the risks of the outside world. No cat should be allowed to go outside unless they are up-to-date on all shots. Besides the annual booster shot and a rabies shot, an indoor-outdoor cat should also be vaccinated against feline leukemia and she should be microchipped to protect her against being lost. All cats, whether they go outdoors or not, should wear a collar with an identification tag with your contact info on it so that she can be traceable to you.