



## Coping with Kitten Season

Kitten season starts in spring, peaks in late spring or early summer, and ends in fall.

There are "The Dog Days of Summer," but did you also know that there's a "Kitten Season?"

Kitten season is the time of year when cats give birth, flooding animal shelters across the nation with homeless litters. Kitten season is really three seasons in one, starting in spring, peaking in late

spring or early summer, and ending in fall.

### Why Does Kitten Season Occur?

When warm weather coincides with female cats' heat cycles, female cats go into heat and male cats come running from near and far.

**The easiest way to help reduce the overwhelming numbers of unwanted cats is to spay and neuter your own cat and encourage others to do the same.** Unaltered cats are driven by their hormones and tend to sneak outdoors primarily in search of a mate. Mating just once can start a domino effect that can result in dozens, even hundreds or thousands of unwanted animals.

These unwanted cats and kittens, when not left on the street to fend for themselves, often turn up in high volume at the local animal shelter.

### Straining Shelters

Kitten season presents many challenges for shelter staff and the cats in their care. Resources already hard to come by—like food, money and space—are often stretched to their limit as shelters, that often take in thousands of animals every year, are inundated with homeless cats.

Typically, the adult cats feel the most immediate effects, as they are often overlooked by potential adopters when kittens are in abundance. As shelters struggle to accommodate as many cats as possible, the risk of illness also increases.

The animals aren't the only ones who feel the effects of stress. The burden often carries over to staff and vet services as they attempt to cope with the overwhelming number of cats.

## Five Ways You Can Help

Here's how you can get involved:

### 1. Spay or neuter your cats

Kittens as young as two months and weighing two pounds can be safely altered. Many people ask their veterinarian to spay or neuter their pet. If you have trouble affording the fee, consider these steps.

### 2. Help your local shelter

Donate supplies, money or your time. Contact the Madison-Greene Humane Society at [info@madisongreenehumanesociety.com](mailto:info@madisongreenehumanesociety.com) or at 434-985-3203 to find out what you can do to help!

### 3. Become a foster parent

Contact us to learn more about becoming a foster parent for cats or kittens in need.

### 4. Adopt!

Open your home to new cat or adopt a playmate for your existing pets.

**[www.MadisonGreeneHumaneSociety.com](http://www.MadisonGreeneHumaneSociety.com)**