

## Help for Hairballs

**CatChannel veterinary expert Arnold Plotnick, DVM, discusses hairball prevention and treatment**

*By Arnold Plotnick, DVM*

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**Q:** We will soon be bringing a Maine Coon kitten into our family. How soon should we begin hairball prevention, if at all?

**A:** I think that the most important part of hairball prevention is to brush your cat regularly and to remove as much loose hair from the coat as possible. Kittenhood is the perfect time to get your cat used to being handled and brushed regularly. If brushing alone is enough to prevent hairballs, then that's all you have to do. If hairballs become a problem despite diligent brushing, then you may have to administer the brown gooey oral hairball remedies that are sold in pet stores and at veterinary offices. Some cats are plagued by hairballs even if brushed regularly and given hairball remedies. For these cats, I recommend a commercially manufactured "hairball diet." Most of the premium pet food manufacturers make these diets. Using a combination of these three recommendations – brushing, hairball remedy and hairball diet – your cat should have no future problem with hairballs.