

## Sleeping With the Cats

**CatChannel expert Jeanne Adlon, professional cat sitter, discusses setting some boundaries for more successful snoozing.**

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**Q:** My cat enjoys sleeping with me. How can I make that comfortable for both of us?

**A:** Cuddling at bedtime can give you and your cat a warm and fuzzy feeling, especially as the fall and winter months approach, but there can be a down side. A friend of mine has several cats who insist on sleeping so close to her that if she has to get up in the middle of the night, she has to struggle her way out from under the covers. When she returns, they have usually taken over her entire bed, leaving her only a tiny space to call her own.

I have found that cats like to lean on something when they are resting, and on the bed that can mean either right next to you or on top of you. When this happens to me I sometimes feel like I have a girdle on! That said, it's best to create some boundaries for successful snoozing.

If you are a sound sleeper, having your furry friends sleep with you is easy. However, if you are a light sleeper I suggest trying to establish a side of the bed for her. Try this: Put something soft like a piece of fleece or her own bed pillow (with one of your pillow cases on it) on what you choose to be her side of the bed and see if she claims it as her area. Add a favorite soft toy (with no bells) to the area as well.

Nighttime does not have to be when you give cats the attention and affection they need. If you like to take an afternoon nap, let them cuddle then and you'll get a good night's sleep later. Also, aggressively playful cats should be kept out of the bedroom or you won't get any sleep at all. Kitties pouncing on hands and feet moving under the covers is only fun when you are awake.

Cats are famous for encouraging you to wake up to feed them breakfast. If you do not want to be timed to their personal kitty alarm clock, try leaving a small snack in the bedroom before going to sleep. I have found that consistency works well so I suggest doing that on a nightly basis. Meanwhile, with a little give and take, there should be sweet dreams for all.