

# Top Ten Reasons to Have Indoor Cats

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Do cats really have nine lives? Well, if they are outdoor cats or are able to go out frequently, their chances of having any extra lives are severely reduced. It's become a commonly held notion that cats are independent types and that they can take care of themselves without the daily attention that dogs require. But here's 10 reasons why we might want to question the wisdom of that kind of thinking.

- 1. Injuries from fighting:** Cats who go outside run into altercations with other cats, which often result in abscesses. Abscesses are painful for the patient and the after care can be tedious. Depending on the severity of the abscess these patients may require surgery to open the wound and allow drainage of the infection. Warm compressing is often advised to aid drainage. Some abscesses can be very messy. Many cats will run away to nurse their wounds when they develop abscesses. This can be life-threatening depending on the severity of their infection.
- 2. Cats kill animals indigenous to the area:** Cats are predators and they hunt birds and other wildlife native to the area in which you live. Any time animals that are not naturally found in a specific environment, i.e. cats, it throws off the natural balance of that environment's ecosystem.
- 3. Parasites:** Parasites are a big problem mainly because they can be transferred to humans. Fleas, ticks, and ear mites are just a few of the parasites cats who go outside come into contact with. Eating fleas causes tapeworms, and even cats who are on a preventative for fleas risk picking up tape worms when they kill rodents or other flea-infested creatures. Chiggers are another lovely little specimen that cats pick up from wild animals. Most of the time chiggers can be found in ears and are itchy like ear mites. Yuck!
- 4. Life Threatening Disease:** Contagious diseases like Feline leukemia, FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus) and FIP (feline infectious peritonitis) are a constant threat to the feline community. Feline leukemia can be effectively vaccinated against, FIV and FIP vaccines are still being researched to determine their efficacy. At some shelters cats testing positive for any of these diseases are euthanized because they are contagious.
- 5. Other people are cruel to Cats:** In this day and age I would like to think that all people and animals would be treated with respect, unfortunately this is just not true. Cruelty to animals is a bigger problem than anyone thinks. The fact that it is so difficult to talk about often keeps it from being discussed. Statistics show that one out of every one-thousand patients we see here at the clinic has been a victim of abuse. When your cat is kept inside you can be sure that he is going to be treated like the royalty he truly is.
- 6. Poisons:** Rodent bait, antifreeze, and lawn chemicals are just a few of the deadly poisons that cats risk coming into contact with when they are allowed outside, all of these can cause severe illness and even death.
- 7. They run away:** For one reason or another some cats just run away. Whether the neighbor is feeding him some delectable gourmet food, or if he just hates the new puppy you brought home, there is really no way of assuring that your kitty will come home when he goes out.
- 8. Run over by cars:** Cats who are out at night are at an especially high risk of being hit by a car. Another factor is the amount of traffic on your street. The mortality rate for cats hit by cars is very high, those who do live are usually hit at a very slow speed, such as cars pulling out of the driveway.
- 9. Neighborhood dogs and wildlife:** There is no way to be sure that neighborhood dogs are feline friendly, and wildlife such as raccoons, owls, mountain lions, coyotes, foxes, and even eagles have been known to try to make a tasty snack out of a cat. As agile as most cats are, a hungry predator will make short work of most cats.
- 10. They age much quicker:** Cats who live outside become weathered much quicker than indoor cats. Extreme weather changes can be difficult on their bodies. Cats with white or very light fur on their ears and faces often develop skin cancer. Cats who fight with other cats and animals are at constant risk of contracting deadly diseases, being hit by cars, picking up parasites and much more.

So keep our furry friends safe and warm and you'll be thanked by them many times over.