

Hygiene care to keep your cat purring and proud

Where daily personal hygiene is concerned, a cat's tongue is both a wash cloth and a brush. Cats use their tongues to remove loose hair and dust. Nonetheless, it is sometimes ok for cat owners to lend their feline friends a helping hand, say the vets from the specialist retail chain Maxi Zoo.

Shorthaired cats only need brushing three times a week in springtime and in autumn when their coat changes. Other than that, they don't really need any help in looking after their fur but there are some cats that love the occasional gentle grooming. On the other hand, longhaired types such as Persians have to be brushed daily to prevent the coat from becoming matted. Otherwise, the cat becomes limited in its freedom of movement and parasites can nest in the matted fur. A long-toothed comb and a soft wire brush for untangling knots are useful. Cut away matted knotting with scissors. Cats with very thick coats such as karthaeuser (shorthaired) types regularly need a few strokes with the brush. Such grooming also provides a good opportunity to check the health of your cat. The coat should be glossy, clean and there should be no bald patches. Dandruff, incrustated or inflamed areas on the skin

PET POINTERS



with Tony Cross

indicate possible parasite infestation or eczema in which case you should visit your vet.

Cats are extremely averse to water and will probably fight vehemently against being bathed. Sticky or very dirty areas of the coat can be carefully cleaned using warm water and then thoroughly dried off. Damp cleansing wipes help in cleaning the outer ear cavities and re-moving encrusting from the corners of the eyes. Particular

attention should be paid to the latter in the case of longhaired cats and old cats.

Dental health is especially important for cats. Around one third of cats have problems in their oral cavity. Deposits can cause tartar, which in turn causes inflammation and shrinkage of the gums. Quality dried food mechanically cleans the chewing surfaces and protects against plaque with special supplements. Ideally you should get your cat accustomed to this while still young.

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THE RIGHT CARE PLAN

- Avoid bathing cats if at all possible, brushing long haired breeds once a week.
- Examine their ears weekly and clean the ear cavity if necessary. If its ears are hot or if the animal frequently shakes its head, go to the vet.
- Relieve the eyes from incrustations regularly.
- Prevent tooth scale with the appropriate food or special snacks.
- Examine the gums and teeth monthly. If you find brownish coatings or dark, reddened gums, visit your vet.



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