

Ringworm Daily Care & Cleaning

PURPOSE

This document defines APA! policy and procedures for daily care and cleaning of ringworm wards.

SCOPE

These policies and procedures apply to all staff and volunteers responsible for, or assisting with, APA! Cat Program and Ringworm Wards.

POLICY

APA! staff and volunteers will care for and clean ringworm wards in accordance with these documented procedures.

PROCEDURES

General Health and Safety

The health and safety of the cats is always the number one priority. The importance of observing each cat's behavior, food intake, output of urine and feces, and signs of illness cannot be stressed enough.

- Cats should always have access to food and fresh water.
- Litter boxes must be scooped at least once a day, but ideally once in the morning and again in the evening.
- Litter box contents should be inspected for any irregularities, such as diarrhea, worms, foreign objects, abnormally large or small amounts of urine or feces, etc.
- Any cat displaying suspicious behavior or symptoms should be isolated for close monitoring. Follow the appropriate Clinic Triage flow to determine whether an appointment is needed and if so, which tier.
- Any emergencies (labored breathing, seizing, extreme injury, unresponsiveness, etc.) should be immediately brought to attention of a veterinarian by bringing the cat directly to the clinic, or by contacting the med tech on call if the emergency occurs outside of regular clinic hours.

Facility Cleaning

1. General Cleaning

- a. A clean ringworm treatment facility is essential to remove spores from the environment and to help limit the reinfection of cats with ringworm or other pathogens/parasites.
- b. Areas that house the healthiest cats should be cleaned first, and areas housing animals showing signs of illness or parasitic infection should be cleaned last.
- c. All surfaces should be thoroughly cleaned with a detergent (simple green, dish soap, etc.) to remove debris and organic compounds.
- d. Solution comprised of 10 parts water to one part bleach is used to kill ringworm spores on hard surfaces.
- e. Solution should be mixed in a spray bottle and refreshed every 24 hours to ensure it remains potent and effective.
- f. 10:1 bleach solution should remain wet on surfaces for at least 10 minutes for proper disinfection. Surfaces can be wiped dry after this time.
- g. When using bleach solution, be careful to avoid food and water dishes, litter boxes, and animals.

2. Daily Cleaning Tasks

- a. The following items need to be performed daily:
 - i. Litter boxes scooped (preferably 2 x day), and litter scoops washed with soap followed by bleach solution soak (or other appropriate disinfectant).
 - ii. All cages and enclosures wiped down with detergent and a paper towel.
 - iii. Shake out bedding, replace if soiled.
 - iv. Sweep floors preferably with a Swiffer to prevent airborne particles and remove spores but can be done with a standard broom if necessary.
 - v. Mop floors alternating daily between detergent, bleach, and Trifectant.
 - vi. Wash dirty dishes with antibacterial dish soap, disinfect in bleach tub solution, rinse, and air dry.
 - vii. Dispose of all contaminated food and water, wash contaminated bowls.
 - viii. Inspect vomit if present for irregularities, then clean up immediately, and disinfect area with Trifectant.
 - ix. Any additional messes cleaned throughout the day.

b. Hard Scrubs Bi-Weekly Tasks

- i. Twice a week, the ward should be given a "hard scrub." This should coincide with the twice weekly lime dipping so that freshly dipped cats return to a thoroughly disinfected ward. This is necessary to prevent constant reinfection.
- ii. **Note:** Proper ventilation is a necessity when performing 'hard scrubs' that involve using bleach and other chemicals. Cleaning fumes can be irritating and hazardous to the lungs and eyes of both cats and humans.
- iii. The following items need to be done during a hard scrub:
 1. Cats should be removed from cages or enclosures and placed in temporary housing situations (i.e, dog kennels set up in the room).
 2. All bedding, bowls, litter boxes, and toys removed.
 3. Bedding laundered with bleach, and plastic toys washed with antibacterial dish soap followed by bleach soak for disinfection.
 4. Wash and replace litter boxes. Wash dirty boxes with antibacterial soap using a designated litter scrub brush, spray with bleach solution for disinfection, and allow to air dry. Dirty litter water from washing to be dumped in a designated area outside, **never** down the drain.
 5. All surfaces that cats come into contact with thoroughly wiped down with detergent and sprayed with 10:1 bleach solution. Allow 10 minutes of wet contact time with bleach solution. Remember to include surfaces such as window sills, doors, tracks, and anywhere else dust and spores might accumulate.
 6. If cats are housed in enclosures, floors and walls should be Swiffered, and mopped with bleach solution.
 7. All cat trees, tunnels, scratching posts, etc., should be saturated with bleach solution.
 8. After proper disinfection, clean bedding, food, water, toys, and litter boxes replaced and cats returned into their enclosures.

c. Miscellaneous Cleaning Tasks

- i. Ringworm laundry to be kept separate from other laundry. If using a shared laundry facility, do not leave dirty laundry unattended. All bags of ringworm laundry must be sealed and be labeled accordingly.
- ii. Office areas, storage areas, door handles, tops/outside of enclosures, and other items that are kept in the building and are frequently touched by staff and visitors, must be cleaned and sprayed with bleach solution.
- iii. Carriers must be wiped down and sprayed with bleach solution after each use; bedding inside replaced.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For questions regarding this policy, contact document author.