

## **Sharing my foster care experience with kittens.**

**By Amrita**

Surprisingly, I have been able to save almost 90% of the kittens I took for foster care. I've taken a very few puppies (only around 5 or 6 of them) as I already have kittens to be taken care of. Also, I feel there are people who want to take puppies for foster care but very few who want to take kittens home. As soon as I get the young ones from Blue Cross, I make sure that I disinfect their boxes/baskets and remove whatever clothes/newspapers they had been sleeping on. I use fresh clean clothes (washed with warm water and dried in sun) for them as cleanliness is very important and also because they are very susceptible to infections.

Also, the first step is to clean them with cotton and warm water and use Savlon if required (in some cases they poop on each other when they are in BCH as there is not enough space inside the cages). Also, I massage their tummy lightly when they finish drinking as it helps in digestion (the way their mother would do). I try to keep them warm as they need a room temperature of 35 degrees centigrade when they are very young (the same temperature which their mom would give them). I use a blanket for this which I have kept for foster care.

### **Stage One (1 To 2 Weeks)**

I feed them lactol diluted in warm water, every 2 and 1/2 hours of the day. So typically young ones at this stage are to be fed 8 to 9 times a day! Some are weak and suffer from diarrhea when they first come. The first stage is to restore lost fluid by administering diluted ORS and further diluted lactol. Dr. Pushkin also suggested Gramogyl syrup for loose motions. Once they regain their health, they are back on normal lactol.

### **Stage Two (2 To 3 Weeks)**

I slowly introduce diluted milk as lactol alone is no more sufficient and they become hungry sooner; in some cases a combination of lactol + milk + glucose (in some cases). In the third week, I start the deworming process. I use Worex syrup (0.2ml diluted with water) (again as suggested by Dr. Pushkin).

### **Stage Three**

I start introducing solid food and reduce bottle feeding. In a few days they start eating on their own and are ready for adoption. I advise my adopters to vaccinate them when they are 45 days old.

As of now I have one kitten (four weeks old) which is getting adopted this Saturday. Her other two brothers got adopted last week and all of them are healthy. I got them when they were around 10 days old.

So far we've taken care of about 30 young ones (most of them are kittens) and they have a pretty good survival rate. Initially they were not making it, but as I became more aware of the process and all, their survival rate has gone up tremendously.

*A few important tips for anyone attempting foster care:*

Basic things like changing of newspapers /clothes in the cage every two hours are very important as they poop/pee frequently when they are young and it is the main reason for their death (apart

from regular feeding). There also has to be someone who is around 24 hours as they wake up very early (around 5.30 am and are often hungry).

A separate microwave plus fridge to sterilize feeding bottles/heating milk and water for feeding and fridge for storing milk exclusively for foster care so the left over milk is sterilized every time before feeding.

Also I feel cubicle like areas for animals may be better and not cages. So they can go out of their sleeping place and poop on sand or newspaper nearby in the same cubicle. This way we can use the space effectively and they'll not be depressed inside the cages. All these suggestions are also true for disabled animals as they need as much attention as the young ones.

We (Rindha, Pradeep Nair and I) are planning to build a shelter exclusively for disabled animals ([ps4a.org](http://ps4a.org)) so the disabled animals find a home until they become healthy again. We hope the shelter will be ready in six to nine months. Please help us with your valuable suggestions as I think your suggestions will be very important to us.

Please let me know if you have any questions and thank you so much for letting me be a part of Blue Cross to help animals. I along with my friends will continue to spread awareness among college students and other corporates with help from Google.

Regards,  
Amrita.