



Dr. Kim's feline mews



Phone: 0400 756 331

Dust Storm Sequellae

The recent dust storms, and the extreme asthma season, have resulted in a lot of cats getting very sticky, dirty coats.

CAT SPIT + DIESEL FUMES + POLLEN = GLUE

They only have little tongues to clean themselves with, resulting in sore mouths and sneezing, so a lot of them will need some help from you. Now that the dust has been largely washed down the drain, it is the stuff indoors, and the resurgence of plants with sticky pollen that are going to cause the next wave of sore mouths. The answer is - Bathe your cat - REALLY. This is the Actual Way to Bath a cat. Dr Kim has had to do several 'emergency bathings' already in the last couple of weeks.

In an emergency, if you do not have or cannot get some proper cat shampoo like Aloveen or Dermcare Natural Shampoo (remember cat skin is different), then Baby Shampoo, Morning Fresh Detergent or Sunlight Soap (all Unscented and especially not lemon scented) will do. Unlike proper cat shampoos, those will take the oil out of the cat's fur and make them take much longer to dry, but otherwise the cats will be fine.

There are 3 secrets - Use VERY WARM (ie Hand Hot) water. Dr Kim can wash a cat in cold water but you've got to be strong and quick to get away with it!. DO NOT RAIN on the cat - use a jug of water to dampen the coat, or hold the shower spray CLOSE to their bodies, especially when rinsing. You can 'dunk' a cat in a bucket of water if you lower it in back feet first but it is harder to wash and rinse them. DO NOT LET the water come over their feet - leave the plug out of the sink and put a rubber mat or towel in the basin for less slip.



Wash with 2 people the first time - one to push the cat firmly DOWN on the shoulders (scruff) and bum (if they get up and onto their back legs, you've lost them). Wash in 2 goes - the first to dampen the coat to get through the 'glue' or the water repellent natural coat oils. It is helpful to have a little bit of shampoo in the jug to start. The second wash is to get the shampoo right down to the skin and remove the irritants - you do not need much shampoo on a cat to get a good foam and clean. This is a very useful technique if owners are allergic to their cat as well - the feline allergen is actually water soluble and rinses away. Really itchy cats will go and sit in the bath by themselves after a few washes - they learn it feels good.

Last step is to rinse well. You really only need a fairly rough towel dry - even if the day is a bit cool. If the cat is healthy, once it starts licking itself, their coat dries like magic (what is IN cat spit?). Wiping the cat's coat with a warm damp cloth daily works as maintenance between washes. In 'sticky weather' a wash every 4 - 6 weeks is probably OK. And remember - cats rub their faces on everything to say 'mine mine mine', so that area is very prone to connecting with irritants.

If your cat is not eating, or is showing signs of baldness or other irritation, then obviously they need to come and see Dr Kim. Otherwise - Good Luck with REALLY BATHING A CAT. The obvious other alternative is: Book your cat in for a Professional Groom - PHONE CAT PALACE NOW 02 9417 3329. So much more than just how to bath a cat - learn how to Tame the Inner Lion! Kitty Day Spa may be just what your cat needs to FEEL GREAT THIS SUMMER!