



# Mum to be? Ignore the old wives!

## Cats and Toxoplasmosis – the facts

If you are expecting a new baby or if your bundle of joy has already arrived, there's a lot to think about! And if you are a cat owner too, worrying about whether your pet could pass on an illness to your child can be one more thing on the list.

There are so many old wives' tales out there about cats, pregnant women and babies, especially concerning the disease Toxoplasmosis. That's why we've produced this leaflet; to give you a few more facts and figures about cats and the disease itself. We hope it will debunk some of the myths out there!

*more details over*



There's no reason why you should get rid of your cat if you are pregnant or have a baby in your household and, with some common sense and planning, the very small risk of Toxoplasmosis being passed on by your cat is reduced even further.

Practising good hygiene when you are pregnant or have little ones around is what parents do anyway, but when it comes to your cat we would recommend you follow the tips below...

- Get someone else to change your cat's litter tray if you can and, if you can't, wear gloves and wash your hands carefully after changing the tray
- Change cat litter daily as *T. gondii*, which causes Toxoplasmosis, is infectious between one and five days after the cat defecates
- Do not feed your cat raw meat
- Wash your hands after contact with stray cats and kittens
- Keep outdoor sandpits covered
- Wear gloves when gardening in case a cat has toileted there

#### **Did you know?**

- **Statistically, cat owners are no more likely to get Toxoplasmosis than non cat owners**
- **You are more likely to contract the disease from handling raw meat than from your cat**

Cats make wonderful companions to young children, helping them to develop important social skills – so please don't forget about your cat if you are having a baby... puss is part of the family too!

Cats Protection is the UK's leading feline welfare charity and helps over 215,000 cats and kittens each year through a national network of over 250 volunteer-run branches, 29 adoption centres and one homing centre.

For more information, visit [www.cats.org.uk](http://www.cats.org.uk) or phone our National Helpline on **03000 12 12 12**

Reg Charity 203644 (England and Wales) and SC037711 (Scotland)

