



The National Kitten Coalition - Kitten Confident® Certificate: Essential Knowledge for Veterinary Professionals

Purpose

A comprehensive, RACE®-approved certificate program designed to equip veterinary professionals with essential knowledge and practical skills for supporting kittens from birth through weaning and early development.

Learning Outcomes

Participants completing the course will be able to:

- Learn the physical and behavioral milestones of kitten development to accurately and confidently determine kitten age, gender, and condition.
 - Understand how to perform an accurate exam on a kitten – including for newborns -- and how to provide appropriate husbandry and medical care for kittens of all ages.
 - Know which diagnostics to use and what treatment options are available for the most common kitten conditions or illnesses they will encounter in practice, including fading kitten/failure to thrive, parasites, diarrhea, and upper respiratory infections.
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This summary outlines the major topics covered in the course and is meant as an overview rather than a comprehensive representation of all lesson material.

Module 1 — Essential Kitten Knowledge

This module builds the foundation for understanding and supporting healthy kitten development. You will explore early developmental stages, essential supplies for safe and effective care, and the fundamentals of kitten nutrition. We will also walk through practical guidance on weaning, hygiene, and maintaining a clean environment to promote healthy growth and prevent common issues.

Key Topics:

- Feline development from gestation through adolescence, including week-by-week physical and behavioral milestones, medical care for the pregnant queen, socialization best practices, and the supplies needed to support kittens at every life stage.
 - Evidence-based review of the essential supplies and environmental considerations required for kitten care across two critical developmental stages—neonatal (0–4 weeks) and weaning/weaned (4 weeks to one year)—drawing on current veterinary literature to inform best practices in nutrition, housing, grooming, enrichment, and medical management.
 - Current evidence-based guidelines for feline neonatal nutrition, addressing the physiological demands of each developmental stage—from birth through weaning—to inform individualized feeding protocols that optimize growth, prevent common metabolic complications, and support long-term health outcomes.
 - Research-backed, individualized clinical methodology for weaning kittens—grounded in current veterinary literature and guided by developmental readiness indicators rather than rigid age-based timelines—to promote safe nutritional transitions and optimal growth outcomes.
 - Evidence-based review of proactive hygiene protocols for neonatal and developing kittens—encompassing targeted bathing techniques, flea management, and caregiver-assisted grooming.
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Module 2 — Exam Room Essentials

This module focuses on the core clinical skills and knowledge needed to assess and support kittens in a veterinary or shelter setting. You will learn how to perform a thorough kitten examination, recognize, and manage common intestinal parasites, and understand recommended vaccination protocols. We will also cover FeLV/FIV testing considerations and key elements of supportive care to help stabilize and protect vulnerable kittens.

Key Topics:

- Systematic approach to the neonatal kitten physical examination, covering age determination through developmental milestones, baseline vital parameters, and a comprehensive body-system assessment from eyes to anorectal region.
- Comprehensive guide to identifying, diagnosing, treating, and preventing common internal parasites in kittens, including roundworms, hookworms, tapeworms, coccidia, and giardia.
- Evidence-based vaccination protocols are essential for protecting kittens against preventable infectious diseases, with individualized schedules guided by current AAHA/AAFP guidelines to optimize immunity across each life stage.
- Evidence-based guidelines for FeLV and FIV retrovirus testing in kittens—covering prevalence, recommended screening protocols, testing methods, interpretation of results, and management of positive cases—to support informed clinical decision-making and minimize disease spread.
- Comprehensive supportive care for kittens requires simultaneous management of heat, oxygen, hydration, caloric intake, and emotional well-being across each developmental stage.

Module 3 — Common Kitten Medical Issues

This module addresses the most frequent and high-impact medical concerns seen in kittens, with a focus on early recognition and timely intervention. You will learn to identify and respond to kitten emergencies, understand the presentation and management of upper respiratory tract infections, and navigate common gastrointestinal issues such as diarrhea and constipation. We will also explore the realities and misconceptions surrounding fading kitten syndrome, along with essential information on panleukopenia in kittens.

Focus: Clinical evaluation, infectious disease, and emergency response.

Key Topics:

- Protocols for the identification, triage, and clinical management of common neonatal kitten emergencies—including ocular, respiratory, septicemic, metabolic, and traumatic conditions—with emphasis on systematic assessment, timely supportive care, and informed decision-making guided by current veterinary literature across each critical life stage.
- Evidence-based overview of upper respiratory tract infections in kittens—encompassing viral, bacterial, and fungal etiologies, clinical presentation, diagnostic approaches, current treatment protocols, ocular complications, and quarantine considerations—to guide systematic clinical decision-making and optimize outcomes in vulnerable neonatal and juvenile feline populations.
- Approach to the identification, diagnosis, treatment, and management of diarrhea and constipation in neonatal kittens, emphasizing prompt clinical intervention, multimodal therapeutic strategies, and comprehensive supportive care to optimize patient outcomes.
- Review of fading kitten syndrome—encompassing etiology, early clinical recognition, differential diagnosis, and current best-practice interventions—to equip practitioners with a systematic, research-backed framework for reducing neonatal kitten mortality from birth through weaning.
- Evidence-based clinical approach to the identification, diagnosis, treatment, and management of feline panleukopenia in kittens—covering virology, pathogenesis, clinical presentation, diagnostic strategies, hospitalization protocols, outpatient care modifications, targeted supportive interventions, and shelter-based disease transmission prevention—guided by current veterinary standards to optimize survival outcomes across all stages of care.

The National Kitten Coalition - AAVSB RACE Provider, CE Broker Tracking Number: 50-27875 | Kitten Confident®: Essential Knowledge for Veterinary Professionals| AAVSB Course Number: 20-1294300

This program, 20-1294300, is approved by the AAVSB for a maximum of 3.00 RACE® CE credits to veterinarians and 3.00 RACE® CE credits to veterinary technicians/nurses. This RACE® approval is for the subject matter categories of Medical using the delivery method of Anytime, Non-Interactive-Distance. This approval is valid in jurisdictions which recognize AAVSB RACE®; however, participants are responsible for ascertaining each board's CE requirements.

The National Kitten Coalition Kitten Confident® Essential Knowledge for Veterinary Professionals Certificate Program is intended for veterinarians, veterinary technicians/nurses, those currently enrolled in veterinary or veterinary technician schools, veterinary staff members in private practices and shelters, and those involved in veterinary education and research.