

Mobile Cat Grooming, Part 3

Juli Anderson, CFMG, CFCG

There is no better resistance to fleas and parasites than never allowing them to enter the environment in the first place. Mobile groomers have the benefit of conducting the cat's initial health assessment in the home, providing an additional layer of hygienic protection for the animals. This same level of flea and parasite protection is much harder to achieve in a standard shop. Clients, either unknowingly or without concern, bring pets into the salon infested with parasites, often failing to advise the groomer.

Many of the contagious feline viruses are not a significant threat in the typical salon that exercises due diligence to cleaning, because such viruses as Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) or Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) do not survive outside the host environment. Once again, there is an additional level of protection in a mobile salon because there is no chance of coming into contact with another client's pet and transferring the virus through direct contact.

The mobile salon is a small environment and easily cleaned, quickly and safely, between house calls to effectively protect clients. However, a groomer should not bring a cat suspected of being infected with Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP) or infected with Panleukopenia (otherwise known as feline distemper) into the salon. Both of these viruses are highly contagious and can survive in the air or surfaces of the salon for some time. If it is suspected that a positive cat has breached the environment, all surface tops need to be cleaned immediately with bleach before introducing any other animals to the salon. As we have seen, mobile grooming is able to provide the best conditions for specific cats. This can include the geriatric or senior cat or those felines with health issues that quickly display stress symptoms. It is a fact that it is easier to notify an owner of their cat's stress issues when sitting in their driveway. Owners can immediately take part in the decision-making process of whether to continue or to postpone a groom based on actually witnessing the symptoms that the cat is displaying.

It is important to emphasize that the mobile salon must provide a toxin-free environment for cats. An important concern for the mobile salon that does dual duty—servicing felines as well as canines—is that many dog-safe products are toxic to cats, including shampoos, ear cleaners, and, in particular, essential oils such as (but not limited to) Tea Tree, Lavender, or Peppermint oil. If you do groom dogs as well as cats, make a commitment to use all natural products that are safe for both cats and dogs. Aromatherapy is tricky business given the sensitive nature of cats' nervous system and their livers' inability to metabolize certain compounds. For these reasons, it is better to play it safe than risk having residue from an earlier grooming interfere in any way with the health and wellbeing of a cat that follows. If you wish to practice aromatherapy with dogs, switch to utilizing hydrosols and take appropriate classes to improve your understanding of the practice and risks involved.

Written by Juli Anderson, owner of Anam Cara Pet Spa, Inc., an upscale mobile grooming salon. Juli lives in New Jersey with too many dogs, too many cats, and too many kids (according to her sister).



National Cat Groomers Institute of America, Inc.

701 Pendleton Street • Greenville, SC 29601

www.nationalcatgroomers.com

TF: 877.302.7430 • F: 864.271.7828 • E: info@nationalcatgroomers.com