



BRINGING HOME A NEW BABY

HOW TO PREPARE YOUR PET FOR A BABY'S ARRIVAL

The arrival of a new baby is an exciting time for parents, and it brings a lot of changes to a household. These changes not only affect the human members of the family but pets as well.

HOW DO THINGS CHANGE FOR MY PET?

Pets view the world differently than humans. They rely a lot on their sense of smell and hearing. The familiar smell and noise level of your home are comforting to your pet. All the new smells and sounds a baby brings can be stressful and may cause unwanted behavior. Additionally, new parents are usually busy with the new baby and the pet may experience less attention than before.

HOW CAN I HELP MY PET DEAL WITH THE CHANGES?

Before the baby arrives:

- Help your pet become comfortable with baby items by slowly introducing them in a positive way. Train your pets how to behave around baby furniture so they will know what to do before baby arrives.
- Rub baby lotion or powder on your hands and let the pet investigate. Praise and give your pets a delicious treat, such as cut-up hot dog or chicken, while they are experiencing the new smell.
- Play baby sounds in your home for your pet to listen to.
- If you can, spend some time with your pet around other babies. Praise and treat acceptable behavior while around the baby.
- Make necessary changes to your pet's routine before the baby arrives. This includes retraining your pet to any areas that will be off limits once the baby comes. Examples might include your lap or the

nursery.

- A few days before the baby arrives, apply a calming (pheromone) collar to your pet. This will help reduce the stress your pet will experience.

Once the baby has arrived:

- Don't exclude your pet. Let your pet be around when you are feeding, bathing or changing the baby.
 - Teach your pet to sniff the baby's feet instead of the head to avoid accidental bumps.
 - Smile and talk happily to your pet. If all the pet hears around the baby is negative, like **"NO, DON'T"** or **"GET DOWN,"** the pet will associate negative things with the baby's presence.
 - Schedule interactive playtime with your pets to avoid them getting lost in the commotion. This time should be without the baby.
 - Provide a special place for your pet to retreat to like a comfy crate or room. Place soft bedding material and some fun toys in there.
- With a little time and effort, your new arrival will be exciting for everyone involved!

