

Northern Illinois Cat Clinic, P.C.

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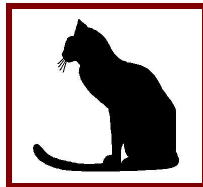
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HOW WILL OUR CAT FEEL ABOUT THE NEW BABY?

Congratulations! You are introducing a new baby human to your household. You may have some concerns, doubts and possibly some misconceptions concerning how your feline family member is going to accept this new one.

In most cases there is very little to be concerned about. Your cat will be naturally curious about the new things in the house (blankets, beds, diapers, etc.). It is important to let him/her check them out (smell, touch). Once the baby arrives, most cats avoid it like “the plague” (It smells “funny” and makes “disagreeable” noises).

Some cats do remain curious, though. Let’s dispel an old myth – cats do not “suck the breath” out of babies. However, I do suggest that the cat not be allowed to sleep with the baby until the baby can roll over easily, lift its head, etc. Your personal feelings and the personality of your cat will determine whether you will allow your cat to sleep with the baby at that point. The claws often are extended when the cat is startled and could cause unintended injury. Keeping all claws clipped is highly advisable (even the rear ones).

If you do not feel comfortable with the cat in the baby's room, the best way to keep him/her out is to install a screen door on the baby's room with a latch. The screen door allows you to observe and hear your baby easily. Your cat can see and smell but not touch.

The most important concept to keep in mind is that your cat has mixed feelings over this:

1. Curiosity: it is important to satisfy this feeling or it could turn to fear and feelings of rejection.
2. Jealousy: over your attentions to baby and your decreased attentions to your cat.
3. Feeling threatened: by this new "creature" in his/her house taking over what may have been his/her territory (baby's room).

Find some time to spend with your cat. Try not to change to many other things. For instance:

[Location of litter box](#)

[Location of cat's bed](#)

[Location of feeding station, etc.](#)

Talk in soothing tones to your cat.

Avoid "shooing" him/her away

Be patient.