

Fading Kitten Protocol

Fading Kitten Syndrome: Fading Kitten Syndrome is a life threatening emergency in which a kitten, often one that was previously healthy, “crashes” and begins to fade. This can occur with kittens who have a mother as well as those who do not. For kittens with moms, watch out for the mother pushing away a kitten and not caring for it, as this kitten may need bottle feeding and extra warmth to prevent Fading Kitten Syndrome. If not dealt with immediately, Fading Kitten Syndrome can result in death.

Symptoms:

- Low body temperature- the kitten feels cool or cold to the touch
- Extreme lethargy- not getting up, unable to stand, not responding when pet
- Gasping for breath
- Meowing/crying out

Causes: Hypothermia (being too cold) and/or hypoglycemia (not enough blood sugar)

What to do:

Take immediate action, AT HOME.

1. Get them warm.

- Immediately wrap the kitten up in a towel like a burrito. Their whole body should be in the towel, with only the face exposed. **Do not take the kitten out of the towel to adjust them or check on them.** Every time you take them out you will make them cold again, even if only for a second.
- Wrap a heating pad set on low around the burrito towel (to avoid burns) as an extra source of heat. Secure it around the towel so it stays in place.
 - If you don't have a heating pad, place a towel in your dryer for a few minutes and wrap that around the burrito to function as a heating pad. Repeat as needed.
- The kitten's body cannot warm itself with only a towel; you'll have to apply extra heat. Your own body heat won't work because your temperature is lower than what a kitten's should be.

2. Raise their blood sugar

- Sugar sources: warm sugar water; Karo Syrup; Nutrical
- Provide 3 drops every 3 minutes
- If kitten isn't swallowing, try rubbing the sugar on its gums and tongue
- Take care not to contaminate anything by double dipping syringes

Please do not rush your kitten to the shelter or emergency care. Performing the steps above right away will be their best chance of survival. An emergency veterinarian will not be able to provide this type of attentive care. Once stable, an appointment can be made to bring the kitten in for a temperature check and fluids, if needed. E-mail Foster@spca.org to schedule.

Keep in mind, it can sometimes take hours for kittens to recover and start acting normally again. Also know that even if you follow these instructions perfectly and provide all the love and attention possible, many of them still won't make it.