

## *Staying Sane in a New Scene*

- Before bringing your new pet home, have a quiet room ready with a bed, food, water dish and a litter pan (if a cat). A bedroom is usually a good place.
- Plan to bring your new pet home when you are off from work for a few days. Avoid bringing your new pet home during a high stress time such as the holidays.
- Let your new pet adjust to his or her new environment under supervision, but away from other pets.
- Let your new pet and existing pets smell each other under the door.
- Feed pets on opposite sides of the doorway so the smell and sound of the other pet is associated with a positive atmosphere.
- Exchange your pet's bedding so they can smell each other without meeting face to face.
- If both pets are showing curiosity about the other, try having them switch rooms. This is not a face to face meeting. For example, put your pre-existing pet in a bathroom and bring the new pet into the other's territory. Let your pre-existing pet into the new pet's territory. Start with a shorter amount of time, and then increase the length of time in each other's space.
- When meeting face to face for the first time, have your pets separated by a baby gate. Expect some agitated behavior at first. If they get too stressed, separate them into their own rooms for some quiet time. In the beginning, introduce pets for shorter periods of time, then longer intervals after that.
- Once adjusted, let your pets meet face to face under direct supervision, preferably with two people present, and with dogs on leash.
- In the beginning, make sure pets are supervised until you are sure they can be trusted together.
- Remember-Take it slowly with each step. Relationships take time. Some pets adjust quickly, others may take more time. Some could take as long as a few months to be completely at ease.
- There are dog and cat pheromone products available that might make the transition easier. Look for Feliway® for cats and D.A.P.® for dogs. We carry these products here at Mountain Veterinary Hospital.



3413 Mount Baker Highway Bellingham, WA. 98226

Phone: (360) 592-5113