

**Disclaimer:** This guide is for quick reference and early detection. It is not a substitute for professional veterinary care. Always consult your veterinarian for a proper diagnosis and treatment plan.

## Common Nursery Ailments

AILMENT	KEY SIGNS TO LOOK FOR	COMMON TREATMENT PROTOCOL	SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS
Eye Infections (Conjunctivitis)	Squinting, redness, clear or colored (yellow/green) eye discharge.	A vet may suggest a simple antibiotic ointment like Terramycin.	For mild discharge, gently wipe with a warm, damp cloth, using a separate cloth for each eye to prevent cross-contamination.
Ear Mites	Dark, dry, crumbly discharge ("coffee grounds"). Frequent head shaking and aggressive scratching.	A veterinarian will prescribe medicated ear drops or a topical parasite medication.	A proper diagnosis from a vet is essential before treatment. Can lead to secondary bacterial/yeast infections.
Bacterial & Yeast Ear Infections	Foul odor, redness, swelling, moist or pus-like (yellow/brown) discharge. Kitten may cry when ears are touched.	Requires prescription antibiotic or anti-fungal ear drops from a veterinarian.	A vet needs to take a swab (cytology) to identify the specific organism causing the infection.
Ringworm (Fungal)	Circular patches of hair loss, often with scaly or crusty skin on the head, ears, and front paws.	Multi-faceted approach: medicated baths/dips, topical creams, and sometimes oral anti-fungal medication from a vet.	Isolate the kitten immediately. Highly contagious to other cats and humans. Rigorous environmental decontamination is necessary.
Flea Allergy Dermatitis (FAD)	Frantic scratching and overgrooming on the back half of the body. Tiny red bumps or scabs may be present.	A kitten-safe and effective flea preventative medication from your veterinarian.	It is critical to treat all animals in the household simultaneously. Daily vacuuming and washing bedding is key.
Feline Acne	Looks like "blackheads" or a "dirty chin." Can progress to red bumps or pimples.	Gently clean the chin with a mild antiseptic wash recommended by your veterinarian.	Switch to ceramic or stainless steel bowls and wash them daily, as bacteria on plastic is a common trigger. Never squeeze the pimples.
Flat-Chested Kitten Syndrome (FCKS)	A distinctly flat feel to the kitten's chest and sternum. Kitten may lie flat with front legs splayed out.	Supportive care for mild cases. Severe cases may require splinting or bracing from a specialist.	A veterinary diagnosis is essential to determine severity. Encourage the kitten to sleep on its side, using rolled towels for support.

## CRITICAL RED FLAGS: Emergency Vet Visit Required Immediately

The following signs indicate a potential medical emergency. Do not hesitate to act.

- **Difficulty Breathing:** Gasping, open-mouth breathing, or labored breathing.
- **Lethargy or Collapse:** A kitten is unresponsive, extremely weak, or unable to stand.
- **Pale Gums:** Gums that are white, very pale pink, or bluish can be a sign of shock.
- **Non-Stop Vomiting or Diarrhea:** Especially if it contains blood.
- **Straining to Urinate:** Frequent trips to the litter box with no result, or crying in the litter box (a critical emergency, especially in males).
- **Fading Kitten Signs:** A combination of lethargy, disinterest in nursing, constant crying, failure to gain weight, and a cold body temperature (below 96°F).
- **Seizures or Severe Trauma:** Any seizure activity or obvious severe injury from a fall or accident.