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Foster Cat Journal: Three Months and Counting

Wed, 2011-01-26 13:57 — Robin Olson

The day before Halloween 2010, we rescued Mazie and her babies, Polly, Cara and Chester. They were tiny and already incubating a URI the day they were picked up. Within a few days, all the kittens were sick.

If we hadn't rescued them when we did, they would have been put to sleep for getting sick. Shelter rules, as many of you know, do not allow for sick cats to be in the shelter. There's no quarantine. To prevent the spread of disease (but it doesn't), they kill the sick animals. It's heartbreaking that they have to do this.

For the first month, Polly and Cara were hit hardest. I don't know how our foster Mama kept her sanity. I wasn't sure Polly would survive she was so congested, her eyes were sealed shut. She and her siblings had to be syringe fed, too.

I didn't know if they'd ever be well enough to make it to Connecticut.

And here we are. The family has been with me for a month. I'm still doing, at least a weekly Vet run. These cats have been chronically ill, to the point of which I wonder if they will ever shed their illness.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. Mazie and Polly have a nappy on the electric blanket.

Through all of this, Mama Mazie has been almost completely unaffected. She's spayed, has her shots and is ready to be adopted. I've been moving at a snail's pace to make this happen—partly because I hate separating Mamas from their babies and partly because I thought her being there would comfort the kittens.

It's not really fair to her. She's put on a nice chunk and I do mean, chunk, of weight. She's bored. She isn't very invested in the kittens, but when I take them to the Vet she cries and cries. I know I need to find her a great home. The kittens are 15 weeks old now—ready to be on their own.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. Cara warms up on her sister, Polly.

With all that's been going on with my own cat, Bob, it's hard to focus on any one thing. A further complication is that about six weeks ago I was in a car accident with Sam. We were rear-ended by a moron, while we were stopped at a traffic light. Sam is okay, but I don't know what is going on with me. The Dr. said "sprained back and sprained neck." That it would get better over time and to do some light exercises to stretch out the muscles.

My back is basically fine, but my neck is not. I've had a very bad headache every day since the accident. We just lost our health insurance right before the accident happened, so I've been trying to deal with the pain on my own. I haven't been able to think clearly, my head hurts so badly. I also thought I might have a sinus infection, so I waited until I couldn't take it any more and I dragged myself to my GP last week.

I'm on heavy duty pain killers and a muscle relaxant. My head is finally starting to feel better and I can focus on tasks, instead of sit here like a zombie. Once I'm off the meds, hopefully I won't get the headaches again. There is so much to be done. I need to get these kittens ready to be adopted, but if they won't get better, I'm in a holding pattern that could last another few months.



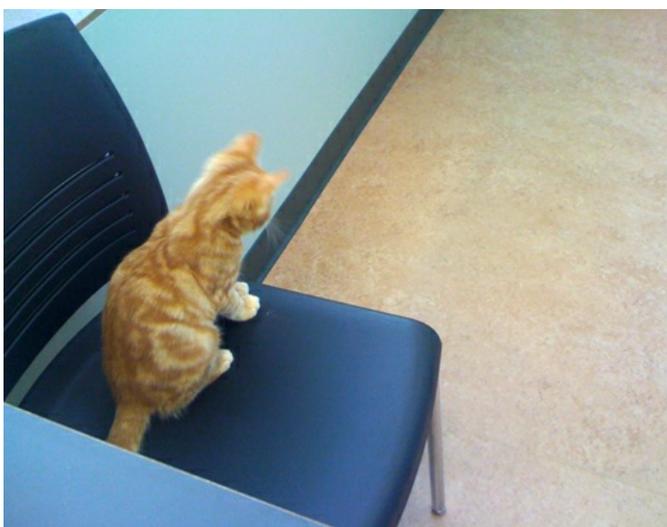
©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. Chester, lookin' fine!

As far as Chester is concerned, he's just about ready to go now. He weighs a whopping 4 lbs., 1 oz.! One of his eyes is a bit runny and once in awhile I hear a sneeze, but that's about it. He was never seriously effected-not the way his sisters were.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. Back at Dr. Larry's office, Chester now bored with the wadded up napkin for a toy, waits for a chance to chase Polly around the exam room.

Then there's Polly. She's finally gaining weight and is at 3 lbs, 6 oz.-quite a bit smaller than Chester, but not too bad. She's still got a visible third eyelid, but it's not serious. She's still sneezing. Her left eye, the one we thought she would lose the vision in, still has some cloudiness to the pupil. She doesn't have any uclers, but we're not 100% sure she will have perfect vision in that eye. I may have to take her to an ophthalmologist if she doesn't improve in the next few weeks. What's nice to see about her is that she's growing. Her coat is like satin (yes, from the grain-free food). The pattern is more defined now. She has the same mackerel pattern on her back as her mother. She likes to snuggle, but she's still a bit too mouthy as I learned last night when she climbed on my chest, purring away, then turned and BIT my cheek, then ran off! Guess she's not feeling too badly.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. Still waiting to pounce.

The most fragile of the bunch, is Cara. She only weighs 2 lbs 8 oz. She is just TINY. She has tons of spunk, for such a small and sickly cat. She's been vomiting and/or retching every day. We're trying to figure out why-some of it has to do with the amount of mucus in her sinuses that drains down her throat, into her stomach, but we're not clear on if the underlying problem is that she has a stricture of her esophagus ⁽¹⁾.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. *It's a bird! It's a plane! It's super-cat!*

I'm going to water down her food, so it's easier to digest and so she gets some fluids back in her system. She's had 2 rounds of sub-q fluids at Dr. Larry's office to make sure she doesn't dehydrate. She always has this "owly" look about her green eyes. Her coat is crazy. She is BROWN, chocolate brown. I have never seen this color on a cat that wasn't a purebred Burmese ⁽²⁾. Her coat pattern is classic tabby, a bit fluffy, but her tail is almost black and skinny with short fur. She is truly a mixed bag.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. *Givin' some sass to his sis.*

Cara's always cold. I have a space heater running in her room 24/7. She still likes to sit on the top of it as it rotates back and forth. She prefers it to the electric blanket on the bed, but that's there for her, too. I've done everything I can think of to help them get better. The rest is up to them.



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. *Polly and Chester preparing for their next "Battle Royale."*

I'm not happy that I haven't been able to rescue any other cats. I have to slow down-partly due to Bob being sick, partly due to the kittens being sick and partly due to the fact that we need to get our basic operating expenses worked out for Kitten

Associates. I can't foot the bill for it any longer. Until things get straightened out, I'm going to do my best to help get the word out on cats in need, but I won't be able to take any into my rescue for awhile. I really hate it. I have faith that we will sort this out and ramp up our rescue efforts as soon as we can (*and as soon as we lock down some additional foster homes, too!*).



©2011 Robin A.F. Olson. Meanwhile, Cara goes to sleep after making Dr. Larry clean up her vomit. Poor sweetie (Cara, not Dr. Larry!) (Okay, Dr. Larry, too!).

I also have to have faith that all of this will work out. Bob's on his path. We'll do what we can for him. The kittens will either get better and get into homes or stay here awhile longer. I never thought "Santa's Team" would leave (*okay, technically, ONE of them, Blitzen stayed behind*), but they did. I just need to focus-get some work done-get Kitten Associates ramped up and keep on savin' more kitties!

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Comments

Wed, 2011-01-26 14:28 — Phil Velasquez (not verified)

[Cara](#) ^[16]

When my cat lulu, she was a few months old at that time when she started to vomit almost every day, I was very concerned and took her to the vet, its an all cat clinic. She was pretty much a little thing too.

The vet told me that lulu might have gotten into the habit of vomiting. The vet recommended Pepcid original strength.

Instructions: I cut the tablet into four pieces and gave lulu one in the morning and one at night. About 2 weeks later her vomiting had just about stopped.

Ask your vet about this.

Wed, 2011-01-26 14:46 — [Robin Olson](#) ^[17]

[Pepcid](#) ^[18]

Yep, we know about it and use it, but the goal here is to not put more into her belly. Plus, I'm not convinced it IS her stomach and neither is the vet. I have injectable pepcid here so I can give it to her if needed. Thank you for your suggestion!

Wed, 2011-01-26 14:57 — Cindy (not verified)

[Whiplash](#) ^[19]

You can get whiplash in slow or high speed rear end collisions. It requires chiropractic/physical therapy treatment. It should be

paid for either via your auto insurance or the driver who hit you. See if you can find out if you can pursue treatment. I was rear ended 11 years ago and still have problems to this day. It's not fun.

Wed, 2011-01-26 18:35 — [Robin Olson](#) ^[17]

!!!! ^[20]

OMG Cindy, I'm SO sorry to hear that. I will certainly pursue this as I do not want to be in pain like this forever. I never used to get headaches at all and having them 24/7 has made me loopy.

Thank you for your suggestion and I hope you have some way to stay pain free!!!

{{{{HUGS}}}}

Thu, 2011-01-27 09:22 — Ivy (not verified)

Cara ^[21]

How about adding enzyme to Cara's food to help with digestion and make the nutrients in the food more readily absorbable? I sprinkle some Prozyme on Sydney's food at every meal, as recommended by his holistic vet.

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