



## **Kitten Tutor™: How to Care for a Pregnant Queen?**

Kittens are here and so are a lot of pregnant or nursing mother cats – “queens.” A broad question that we often get is: What should we do for momma kitty?

It is important that pregnant queens have a safe and comfortable environment. Keep things as stress-free as possible for momma. Get her into a quiet foster home or have a separate room in the shelter that is just for pregnant and nursing queens. Barking dogs and even other cats – especially tomcats – can cause her extreme stress.

Provide her with good nutrition and plenty of water. Gradually mix in kitten food with her adult food.

Remove all clumping litter as this can be very dangerous for kittens during and after the birthing process.

After delivery, be sure to examine the kittens and weigh them every day. It may look like they are nursing, but that doesn't necessarily mean that they are getting milk. Momma might not be producing enough – especially for large litters, she may be ill, or the kitten might not be able to latch on appropriately to take in enough nutrition.

Weigh momma at least twice weekly to ensure that she is also getting enough nutrition. She will need a lot of calories and water to produce milk for her kittens.

Put momma's water bowl in a safe place so it does not tip or fall onto a kitten or so kittens can't accidentally fall or crawl into it.

Check momma for mastitis (infection of her mammary glands) or other signs of illness (her twice weekly weigh-ins are a good time to do this). An infection is not only bad for her, but it can also cause illness or death for the kittens.

If momma is sick or not producing enough milk, the kittens will need to be bottle fed.

---

NKC offers Kitten Tutor™ handouts free to anyone interested in saving kittens. We are a 501(c)(3) and teach shelters, rescues, foster families and the veterinary community how to save more kittens. To learn more, visit: [www.kittencoalition.org](http://www.kittencoalition.org). © 2020 National Kitten Coalition