

Do The Kittens Appear Healthy?

If kittens are healthy when found, this means the mom is taking care of them. Nursing kittens that are safe and healthy should be left with their mom. Once they are eating solid food, they can be rescued and rehomed.

Cold

Young kittens cannot control their own body temperature, and rely on mom, their siblings, and nesting material to keep them warm. They may lose some heat when mom is not with them, so unless they ALSO fit any of the other descriptions below, leave them and check again in 2-4 hours to see if mom came back.

Dirty

A good mother cat keeps her babies meticulously clean. Kittens that need your help may have dirt, poop, or crusted urine on their bodies. They may be wet. Their back end may be red and inflamed.

Thin

Kittens with a mom should be nursing frequently. Their bellies will typically have a full, rounded appearance. Sunken bellies, visible bones, and pale skin can indicate that the kittens need help, aren't being properly fed and need help.

Noisy

Orphaned and hungry kittens will cry loudly. But loud kittens alone does not indicate that they are orphaned. Mom does not stay with the kittens all day long, and might be on her way back. She might even be watching you in the shadows, waiting for YOU to leave her babies alone. Leave these kittens alone for 2-4 hours, then check on them again. If they are quiet when you return, that means mom has probably been back to care for them, and you should let her keep up the good work.

Sick/Hurt

Sick kittens might have discharge from the eyes and nose. Their eyes may be crusted shut. They may have wounds or open sores.



These kittens are clean, quiet and dry. They are plump and have full bellies with light pink coloring, showing that they are warm.

**They do NOT
need your help!**



This kitten is noisy, dirty, and sick. It has nasal discharge and crusted-shut eyes.



These kittens are thin, wet, and cold. You can see their backbones.



This kitten is thin, wet, and cold, and has discharge from the eyes.

**These kittens DO need your
help!**

The information in this document was developed by Operation Catnip.