



TREMAIN VETERINARY GROUP

Treating your pet like one of the family

Advice Note 11.0

IDIOPATHIC CYSTITIS

Cats are very prone to cystitis. This is inflammation of the bladder and the cause is often unknown and hence is referred to as idiopathic.

What are the symptoms?

- Straining to urinate
- Increased frequency of urination
- Blood in the urine
- Dull and miserable with a hard, tense abdomen if the bladder is blocked

The condition is more serious in male cats because the urethra is long and narrow and can be easily blocked by crystals and cells. If blockage occurs this can be very serious and kidney damage can occur; left untreated the cat will die.

What causes this condition?

Stress seems to be the most important factor in many cases. Cats may be stressed for many reasons such as a new cat in household or neighbourhood, changes in home life- eg new baby, house move, multi-cat household, cold weather.

How is it diagnosed?

Diagnosis is difficult. First we need to rule out other possible causes of cystitis, such as bladder stones/crystals, infection and cancer. This involves urine sample collection and x-rays of the bladder.

What is the treatment?

- Antibiotics - we will usually give your cat a course of antibiotics to start with, though many cases of cystitis are not caused by bacteria.
- Wet food - it is very important to feed wet food to help flush out the bladder as much as possible, also to encourage drinking.
- Provide several litter trays indoors - make sure your cat likes the cat litter and has a choice of trays in a multi-cat household

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What is the treatment? continued...

- Cystease capsules - we often prescribe these after a bout of cystitis; they help the lining of the bladder to settle down.
- Diet - special urinary diets are available. These help to reduce the number of crystals forming in the urine.
- Feliway- a pheromone which helps to calm stressed cats down - available as a spray or plug in.

If the bladder is blocked your cat will need an anaesthetic and a catheter will be passed to empty it. Blood tests will be done to check the kidney function. Your cat will need to be hospitalised until normal function returns, this could be for several days.

The typical "bladder cat" is an overweight neutered male, living in a multi-cat household. Autumn is the peak time, the onset of colder weather seems to trigger it, as cats are less inclined to go out.