



TREMAIN VETERINARY GROUP

Treating your pet like one of the family

Advice Note 10.0

HYPERTHYROIDISM

What is hyperthyroidism?

The thyroid glands are located on either side of the neck, next to the animal's trachea (windpipe), and produce thyroid hormones which help control the body's metabolism.

Hyperthyroidism is a condition seen in cats when the thyroid gland is producing too much thyroid hormone and consequently the animal's metabolism becomes overactive.

What are the symptoms?

The signs are multi-systemic and reflect the overall increase in metabolism:

- weight loss
- increased thirst
- ravenous appetite
- increased heart rate and breathing
- vomiting
- hyperactivity
- diarrhoea
- aggression

How is hyperthyroidism diagnosed?

If your cat is suspected of suffering from this condition, a blood sample can be taken to measure the thyroid levels and confirm the diagnosis.

How is it treated?

If your cat is found to be hyperthyroid **treatment** options are:

- Anti-thyroid drugs – daily dosing with a tablet for the rest of your cat's life.
- Surgical removal of the overactive gland. No further treatment would be needed after this procedure.

If the tablet treatment is chosen, then we would recommend blood samples initially every 3 weeks until your cat is stabilised at the correct dose for a normal level of thyroid hormone in the blood. Then blood samples would be taken at regular 6 monthly intervals. Once your cat is stable we would expect a reduction in its appetite, normal level of thirst, weight gain, improved coat condition and demeanour.

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If hyperthyroidism is left untreated possible complications are congestive heart failure, intractable diarrhoea, kidney damage, retinal detachment (due to raised blood pressure) and death.