



FELINE IDIOPATHIC CYSTITIS

Feline idiopathic cystitis is a common syndrome in male and female cats and part of the feline lower urinary tract disease (FLUTD) complex. It usually occurs in middle aged, overweight, indoor cats on a dry diet which have often had recent stress. We are currently unsure of the cause however several things are thought to contribute.

- Defective bladder lining – Disruption to the glucosaminoglycan (GAG) layer off the bladder wall.
- Inflammation of the nerves in the bladder wall
- Abnormal response to stress

Clinical Signs

- Straining to urinate
- Spending a long time in the litter tray
- Urinating more frequently
- Urinating in inappropriate places
- Blood in the urine
- Excessively licking genitalia

In male cats the inflamed urethra can cause mucus and crystals to get stuck creating a blockage. This is very serious and life threatening and if you have a male cat who is trying to urinate and can't you must call the surgery immediately.

Usually though in both male and female cats their bladder is empty and they are able to urinate normally. However the degree of inflammation means it feels like they need to urinate constantly even though their bladder is empty.

Diagnosis – In 95% of cases cystitis in cats is due to FIC and we will instigate the appropriate treatment and management protocols based on the history and physical examination. Where possible we like to test a urine sample initially to check for any abnormalities. If the episodes are recurring or not improving then we would need to collect a urine sample for analysis in a sterile manner and perform an ultrasound scan of the bladder and possibly x-rays to ensure there is no evidence of any other disease.

Treatment

- **Increase water intake** – It is important to encourage your cat to drink as much as possible. Ensure there are multiple litter trays around the house and in quiet locations. Ensure there are multiple shallow ceramic water bowls around the house away from the litter trays. Cats often like drinking running water and pet drinking fountains encourage this.
- **Diet** - It is important your cat is fed on wet food to ensure adequate water intake. Equally if your cat is overweight a suitable diet will need to be chosen to encourage weight loss. We recommend Royal Canin Urinary S/O pouches in normal or reduced calorie form depending



on the weight of your cat. If your cat doesn't have a problem with crystals and only has cystitis occasionally then the Natures Menu pouches are a very natural diet to promote overall health.

- **Anti-inflammatories** – In the short term cystitis is very painful and the bladder is very inflamed. We will use a drug called meloxicam to reduce the inflammation in the bladder and relieve any discomfort.
- **Reducing stress** – Cats are easily stressed, they are very territorial and do not like change. It is important to ensure they have their own area of the house where they feel safe and that it's free from other cats, even their siblings. They are easily stressed by changes to the people in the household or any changes to the house interior or exterior so try and minimise this where possible. Try and play with your cat as much as possible and provide plenty of scratching posts and high up hiding places. **Pet Remedy** is a very effective and natural product which works on GABA receptors in the brain to reduce stress and anxiety and it will be effective on all pets in the household. It comes as a spray or diffuser. If your cat normally lives in one area of the house we recommend you buy a diffuser which works immediately and lasts 8 weeks. If they move around we recommend you use the spray 3 times daily to their bedding or collar.
- **Bladder health** – Nutracys+ contains natural and human pharmaceutical grade compounds to strengthen the bladder wall, reduce inflammation and reduce stress in your cat. It is a capsule which is given orally by opening it up and sprinkling it on the food. We recommend you use this product long term. In severe or recurrent cases injections can also be used.

Ongoing management

Your cat will need lifelong support to ensure they are a healthy weight, drink as much as possible and lead a stress free life. As with all our chronic conditions you are entitled to a free 3 monthly check with the nurse to ensure you are managing all of the above!