



Exclusively
for cats

329 Penshurst St.
Willoughby NSW
2068

The **CAT** Clinic Catalyst

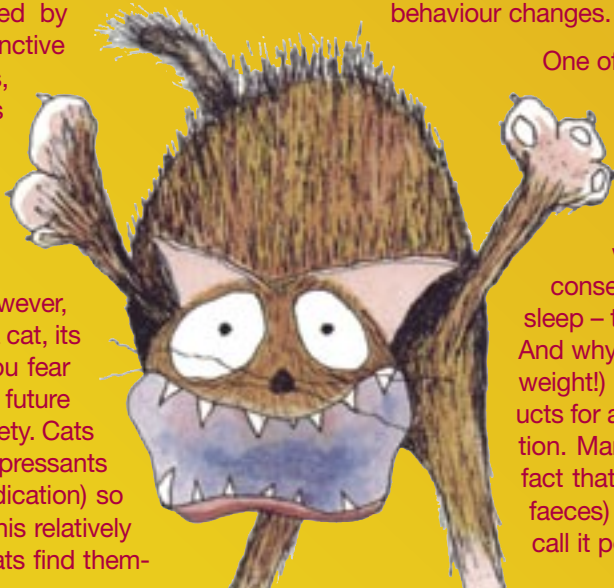
East Chatswood Cat Clinic Ph: 9417 6613 November 2005

Anxiety and CATS' bladders

When you think about it, a behaviour change is the first thing that gives you a clue that all is not well with your feline friend. Limping, not eating, fussier, quieter or becoming clingier or more distant. All these are behavioural signs, and your cat uses them to indicate what or where the problem is. Sometimes there is an obvious swelling or painful area. Or there is a change in urine, faeces or vomiting. However, cats most often indicate a problem by doing something different to usual. That is, by unusual behaviour.

We have changed cats' environments substantially over the last 5,000 years since they domesticated us, and they have adapted by changing a great deal of their instinctive behaviour. Wild cats avoid humans, totally, and the true wild cats (*Felis sylvestris sylvestris*) cannot be tamed just by raising them in a human household. Our moggies have self-selected over the generations to tolerate, and now even seek out, human company. However, when something goes wrong for a cat, its 'default emotion' is fear. And if you fear something that might happen (ie a future event), that is the definition of anxiety. Cats are smart enough to need anti-depressants (I prefer to call it anti-anxiety medication) so it is not surprising to find that in this relatively feline-unfriendly world in which cats find them-

selves (no mice, no desert sand, too many cats and way too much noise) that many get stressed and anxious. And their behaviour changes.



One of the most noticeable changes is when a cat 'internalises' its fears and ends up with cystitis. I call it the feline migraine. Felines are a very conservative species – they conserve water well (make very strong urine), conserve energy (that is why they sleep – they are not just being bone idle! And why it is so hard to get them to lose weight!) and use their elimination products for a second purpose – communication. Many of you have experienced the fact that they use urine (and sometimes faeces) for messaging. You could even call it pee-mail!

continued on page 2

news & views

BOARDING at Cat's Pyjamas for CHRISTMAS is already FULL

Please phone us now to discuss your options. We can still look after your cat in your own home (Home Service) or help you find another solution. If you wait till the week before Christmas, no one is going to be able to help you!!



Phone 9417 6613 and BOOK NOW!

Why does my Cat do that?

BOOK NOW FOR THE BEHAVIOUR SEMINAR

A Cat's Eye View of the Human World – presented by Dr Kim Kendall with a demonstration of cat training by Steve Austin and the PUURRRFECTLY trained cat Batman. These presentations have been very well received in the past – do not miss out this time!

When and where: Tuesday 22 November 6 pm – 8 pm at the Dougherty Centre, 7 Victor St Chatswood. \$35 per person (non refundable)

PHONE 9417 6613 AND RESERVE YOUR PLACE NOW

www.catclinic.com.au

Anxiety and

CATS' bladders (cont.)



Cats use pheromones and fatty acids in their urine to give other cats information, mainly about their time of arrival or departure, and sexual status. Cat urine actually DOES SMELL WORSE the longer it is outside of the cat – the amino acids breakdown to make the urine smellier (and the fatty acids make it very sticky) at a constant rate. This then acts as a time marker and the message is usually 'I was here at 4pm today and I don't want to meet another cat here tomorrow'. This is very effective where there are few cats in a large area like a desert. However, in the crowded urban environment, it may prevent another cat from peeing at their appointed time and location.

Cats are creatures of habit, and to disrupt that routine is very stressful – so a cat's bladder may go into spasm, sometimes badly enough to rupture small blood vessels and bleed into the urine making it red. For the cat, this is a bit like the 'stress headaches' we humans suffer when we get fraught and overwrought. The stress can also prevent the bladder from filling, so the cat is going to urinate more frequently and in different places, desperately looking for somewhere that it finds comfortable to relieve itself. After all, to a cat's mind, urine cannot itself hurt, so it must be the place they are peeing that is causing the hurt. Hence they look for another place to pee. This is often the start of the difficult syndrome of a cat 'peeing everywhere around the house'. If we pity the cat rather than punish it we can help resolve their problem and pain quickly and with less mess for the owner. Try to remember – peeing SOLVES a cat's problem: there is no moral issue or comment. Peeing IS the cat's coping mechanism. To solve the owner's problem, however, we are going to have to understand the problem from the cat's point of view and make some changes to the environment.

Other coping mechanisms for cats include hiding, running from aggressors (especially cats), chasing other animals (humans, dogs and other cats again), yowling for attention and hissing to prevent unwanted attention. Remember, these are coping mechanisms. It does not mean the cat is uncomfortable in its environment. The underlying triggers for any of these behaviours are as varied as the personalities of the cats and the environments their owners put them in. But they are nearly all based in anxiety. If your cat is showing stress by using any of these coping mechanisms, the two things to remember are: it is unlikely that the cat will solve the problem on its own so it will get worse, and the earlier the intervention the more likely the treatment will resolve the problem. Once the activity is a habit, it will take much longer and need much more medication and behavioural interven-

tion to resolve it. Act fast and restore your kitty to emotional equilibrium - talk to us now.

Kidneys are a cat's weak point.

Where humans have heart attacks and get pneumonia, cats get kidney failure. 50 percent of old cats die of kidney failure, and the other half die of cancer or heart problems (and a few other rare things).

The good news is that over the last few years there has been considerable research and progress in the area of feline renal failure (cat kidney problems). Lo and behold it turns out that cats' kidneys are NOT like those of dogs, rats or humans which explains why previous attempts at treating cat kidney failure was pretty unsuccessful. So what happens these days?

Cats have kept some metabolic secrets from us for some time, and these are now being unravelled. The main one is that in many cats, as the kidneys become damaged, their blood pressure increases - just like ours. The trick has always been how to measure blood pressure because cat arteries are so small. At the Cat Clinic we use a sophisticated Doppler Flow Ultrasonic Detector that picks up arterial wall movement and turns it into noise. This means we can read your cat's blood pressure measurement with a cuff just like in humans (well, babies anyway!). Treating the high blood pressure keeps the kidneys functioning for longer.

In addition we test your cat's urine to see whether the kidneys are filtering the toxic wastes properly by checking the urine specific gravity with a refractometer and the protein, blood and other components using the same dipsticks that are used on humans. Interestingly, cat urine has a couple of special aspects. One is that normal cat urine is much more concentrated than human urine, as befits an animal that evolved in the desert. And the other is that there are bacteriostatic components in normal cat urine that prevent bacteria growing once the urine is formed. This makes it difficult to culture for bacteria unless the urine is very diluted as it is in the later stages of kidney failure. However, we can check the sediment of the urine to see if there are any bacteria visibly lurking there and treat with antibiotics as necessary. A finding of glucose in the urine is enormously significant as cats can get diabetes, the same as humans.

And finally we can check the blood test values of toxic waste products in the cat's system by checking your cat's blood levels of urea, creatinine and phosphate. These values give us a good idea about how sick a cat feels from its lack of kidney function.

BUT CAN I DO ANYTHING TO HELP MY CAT IF YOU DO FIND A KIDNEY PROBLEM?

This is the exciting because yes now we can. There are drugs to control high blood pressure and also to improve blood flow through the kidneys. And, one of the most effective treatments is a change of diet. The newer kidney diets are greatly improved and much more palatable to cats. The food helps cats feel better while preserving remaining kidney function.

The ultimate assistance comes from a kidney transplant (yes, it can be done in Brisbane) however, if we can detect kidney problems early, then we can help the cat use what it has more effectively.

YOU CAN HELP YOUR CAT A GREAT DEAL MORE BY FINDING OUT EARLY WHETHER THERE IS A PROBLEM, AND THEN PRESERVE THE KIDNEY THEY ALREADY HAVE!

TRIVIA...

Does your kitty seem to sulk after you have scolded her? Well she is not actually she has dismissed you and your problems by turning her back. If she cannot

DO YOU REALLY KNOW WHAT WE DO HERE?

Veterinary work:

Treatment for illnesses (sudden or longstanding), allergies, skin problems and trauma, Senior Cat Medicine especially kidney problems, Feline Dentistry, General Surgery especially for desexing and abscesses, Xrays for chest, abdominal and bone problems, ultrasound for heart problems, behaviour counselling for kittens and adults to make your cat easier to live with.

Boarding:

Low stress and local, your cat is kept indoors in air conditioned comfort. We talk to them all day and feed them three times a day. They live in flea free comfort and cannot see another cat (so your cat can think it is the only one here!). They all do yoga exercises in the few hours they are not asleep and they give us the benefit of their opinions when they are awake!

Grooming:

Clipping knots and cleaning up cat's coats, washing their skin (their tongue is so small for all that washing!) and clipping their nails.

Cat Care Supplies:

If your cat wants it, we have it (or will get it!). Food, effective flea and tick control, litter, trays, odour control sprays, scratching posts, TOYS, beds, shampoos, wormers, TREATS.

Cat Art and Books:

Especially for Christmas! Ornaments, mugs, ceramics, clocks, cards and anything you can think of with a cat theme.

Alternative Therapies:

At the Cat Clinic we can now offer in house access to Acupuncture (especially effective for chronic arthritis) and Reiki to help balance the inner energies and reduce emotional and physical stress. We have seen some wonderful relaxation effects from both techniques.

What do cats do that dogs don't?

Oh, you mean aside from climb trees, scratch furniture and resolutely ignore you except at mealtimes? Yes, we're talking about PURRING.

The modern facts of the purr are now reasonably well-documented. The sound is due to air vibrating at about 25 Hz (= 25 pulses per second), with different decibels (loudness) depending on the individual.

The resonance is felt as vibrations all over the cat's body. Cats can purr even when their diaphragm (the muscle which divides the chest from the abdomen and whose movement provides some of the 'pull' to bring air into the lungs) doesn't work, but the diaphragm gives the air more pressure and movement so the purr is more distinct.

Researcher Elizabeth von Muggenthaler of the Fauna Communications Research Institute in North Carolina (FCRI), a specialist in the field of bioacoustics, recorded and then measured the purr of forty-four felids (members of the cat family) including cheetahs, ocelots, pumas, domestic cats, and servals.

Cats, from your house pet to lions and tigers in the wild, generally purr in the range of 20 to 140 Hertz (Hz). Some are as high as 150 Hz but the average housecat comes in at about 25 and 50 Hz.

So doesn't that just make all cats PUURRFECT!



Many Thanks

MANY THANKS to the wonderful clients who voted for us in the recent North Shore Times Business Awards! We were truly honoured to have been in the top 6 on the Lower North Shore! It was a fun night and great to have our work with cats recognised.

BOOKS TO TREASURE

www.rayzorsharpedesigns.com.au

Immortalise your favourite pet in one of our beautifully bound photo books.

Pet memories
Holidays Portfolio
New family member
Wedding Albums Birthdays

Pop into the Cat Clinic to see our book samples or phone us directly on:

Ph: 9869 3664



ally sulking when she turns and walks away - see you, then there is no problem!

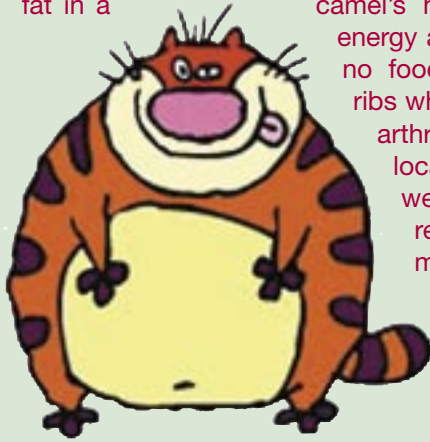
Order immediately for the Purrrfect Xmas gift

Fat Cats facts and fictions

The results are in - unlike humans, rats and dogs, there is no downside to being a Fat Cat until you become a diabetic...

Recent studies have indicated that obese cats are more likely to get arthritis, skin problems and diabetes. What does it really mean and what might you need to do about it?

Obese refers to cats who are 40 percent over the normal weight - which means you can't feel your cat's ribs even with deep prodding! The fat pad that hangs below the belly is a special type of fat, like the fat in a



camel's hump, which produces energy and water if the cat has no food. It is the fat on the ribs which is the problem. The arthritis is unspecified as to location and responds to weight reduction and pain relief. Skin problems are mainly due to a physical inability to reach around and groom themselves so weight reduction and owner assistance can resolve that too.

Fat Cats - those who still have ribs - also get arthritis and are still prone to diabetes. However, neither group has an increased incidence of cancer, kidney or bladder problems,

high blood pressure, respiratory problems, heart problems or allergies.

Diabetes is the difficult problem to live with, so prevention is better than having to look after a cat who needs injections twice a day. One of the most interesting recent developments is that diabetic cats respond quite well to dietary management and there are new commercial diets developed to help. The key change in thinking is to replace carbohydrates (CHO) with protein in the diet and to have a moderate amount of fat and fibre. This is a departure from recommendations only a few years ago as we have realised that while most cats can use CHO for energy, some cats have a metabolism that is 'tricked' into diverting CHO straight into fat! Thus modern diets are once again starting to be more like mice - high protein, no carbohydrate and moderate fat!

It is usually very hard to live with a cat on a diet - we have even had some felines go feral on their owners and attack them when their calorie intake was restricted! However, the new diet recommendations are working very well for cats who need to lose weight. Clients are now telling us that their cats aren't demanding food as vociferously as they have on other reducing diets!

So if your cat is starting to waddle instead of walk - talk to us about helping them get a more svelte feline form again!

the litter kwitter

New Litter Tray Concept: The LITTER KWITTER. This system is designed to allow you to teach your cat to use a human toilet - except the cats will never flush! Various methods have been used for many years to get cats to perform their duties over the toilet bowl, especially in New York City. This training system makes it easier. However, bear in mind, that climbing UP, and peeing or defaecating INTO water is not what a cat expects to do to eliminate, although most can be trained to do so with the LITTER KWITTER.

For further information contact the local inventor and manufacturer info@litterkwitter.com



I'm sorry we ever trained that cat to use the toilet

If you want to receive these newsletters and other items of interest by email, please send your cat's name and your name in an email to catclinic@catclinic.com.au All seminar and other information goes out electronically first!

East Chatswood Cat Clinic Ph: 9417 6613

329 Penshurst St. Willoughby NSW 2068

EASY PARKING - REAR LANE W22 ACCESS OFF VICTORIA AVENUE AND OPEN 7 DAYS



Produced by Rayzor Sharpe Designs

Ph: 02 9869 3664 • Email: rayzor@bigpond.net.au • 7a Park St. Epping NSW
If you like the look of this Newsletter, then contact Ray and let him do it for you too!