

Owner Perspectives on Feline Diabetic Management

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In the Literature

Albuquerque CSC, Bauman BL, Rzeznitzek J, Caney SMA, Gunn-Moore DA. Priorities on treatment and monitoring of diabetic cats from the owners' points of view. *J Feline Med Surg*. 2019. doi.org/10.1177/1098612X19858154

FROM THE PAGE ...

Cats are commonly affected by diabetes mellitus,^{1,2} which can have a significant impact on pet owners due to the time commitment and costs associated with its management.³ Diabetic cats require a structured plan for feeding and insulin administration that owners must follow; aggressive monitoring and treatment are typically needed if diabetic remission is a goal of therapy.^{4,5} Most owners of recently diagnosed diabetic cats will be experiencing drawing up and administering injections for the first time, which can be a source of fear and anxiety. Many concerns can be alleviated, though, by providing good owner education in the clinic and resources owners can access on their own (eg, handouts, videos, websites, online support groups).

In this study,* owners were surveyed regarding their perceptions about treatment and monitoring of diabetic cats. A total of 748 questionnaires predominately from the United States (43%) and United Kingdom (36%) were submitted. As compared with prior studies in which diabetic remission rates were reportedly $\leq 84\%$,^{5,6} remission in this study was only reported in 18% of cats alive at the time of questionnaire completion. Fewer than 50% of owners reported their veterinarian discussing diabetic remission, use of home blood glucose monitoring, or how to recognize unstable disease. Of concern, 25% of owners reported not being taught how to draw insulin, and 27% were not taught to administer insulin. Owners also noted that websites they found on their own were the most useful resources. When owners were asked what influenced their treatment decision, the answer options "what is best for my cat" (almost 100% of

*This study was partially supported by Vet Professionals and MSD Animal Health.

respondents) and “veterinarian recommendations” (86% of respondents) were selected as the most important factors.

Approximately 70% of owners chose home blood glucose monitoring as a preferred method of monitoring; of these, 53% learned about the method online, 27% learned from their veterinarian, and the remaining 20% learned from other sources or had personal/previous experience with home blood glucose monitoring. Many owners used home blood glucose monitoring several times a day as part of a tight regulation protocol; some owners reported checking blood glucose as often as every 2 hours and ≤ 20 to 30 times daily. Overall, owners reportedly felt that caring for a diabetic cat had less of an effect on their daily life and relationship with their pet than they had thought it would prior to starting treatment.

... TO YOUR PATIENTS

Key pearls to put into practice:

- 1** At the time of diagnosis, clinicians and staff members should dedicate time to discuss all aspects of care and monitoring of diabetic cats with owners. This should include demonstrating and having owners practice proper insulin administration.
- 2** Owners are likely to seek information online. Clinicians should be ready to direct owners to accurate and useful websites.
- 3** Many owners may be interested in home glucose monitoring to help manage their diabetic cat and reduce the cost of care. This may be accomplished with blood glucose meters or continuous glucose monitors.

References

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Research Note: Novel Protoparvovirus in Cats

In 2016, a novel protoparvovirus similar to human bufaviruses was identified in dogs with respiratory signs and termed *canine bufavirus*. Considering the ability of canine parvovirus type 2 variants to infect and cause clinical signs in cats, the authors of this study investigated whether canine bufavirus could do the same. A total of 574 archival feline nasal and oropharyngeal swabs and enteric samples from 2 universities in Italy were analyzed. Canine bufavirus DNA was identified in 9.2% of samples. DNA was most commonly identified in samples from the respiratory tract. The role of this novel virus in feline respiratory disease complex warrants further investigation.

Source

Diakoudi G, Lanave G, Capozza P, et al. Identification of a novel parvovirus in domestic cats. *Vet Microbiol.* 2019;228:246-251.

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