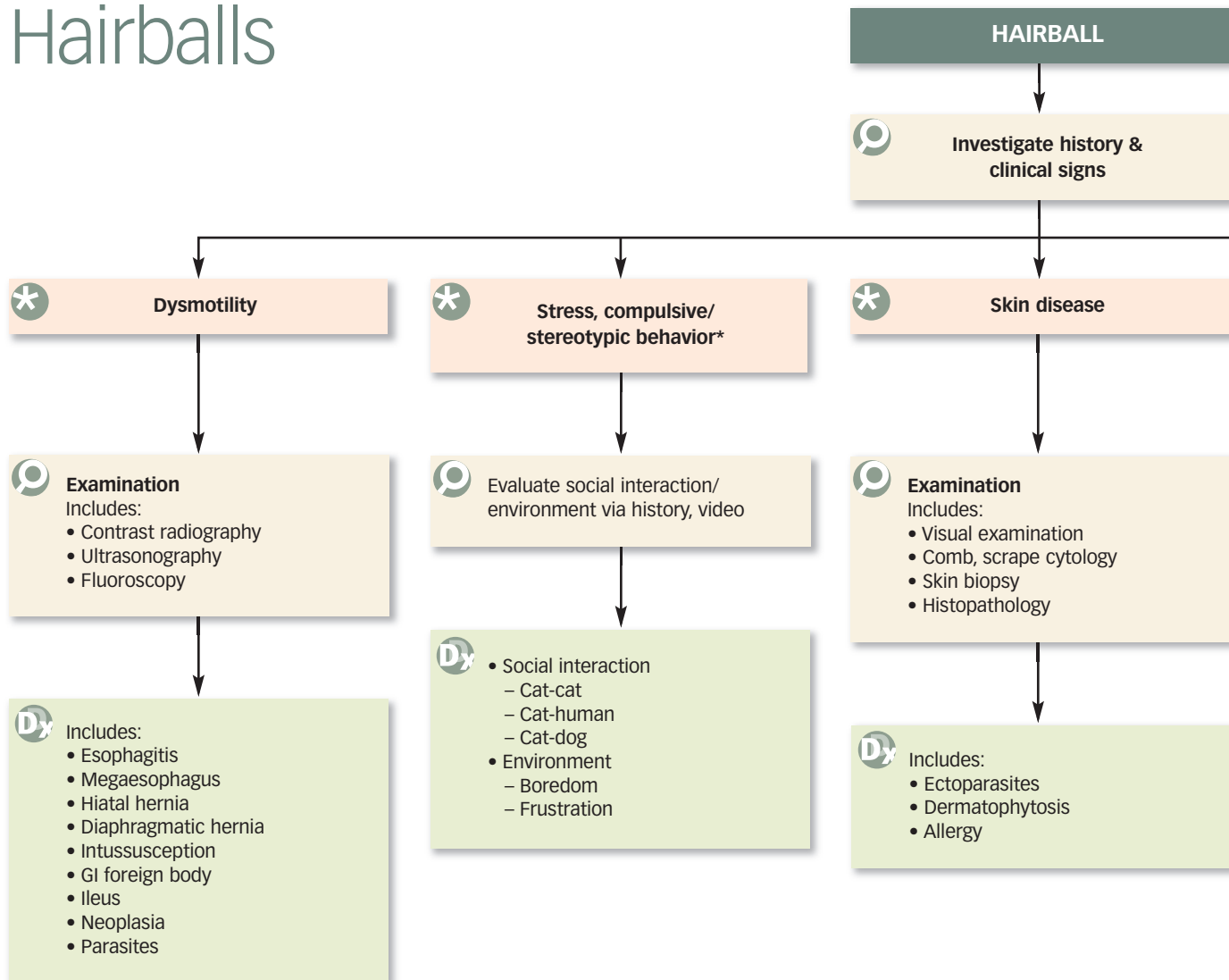


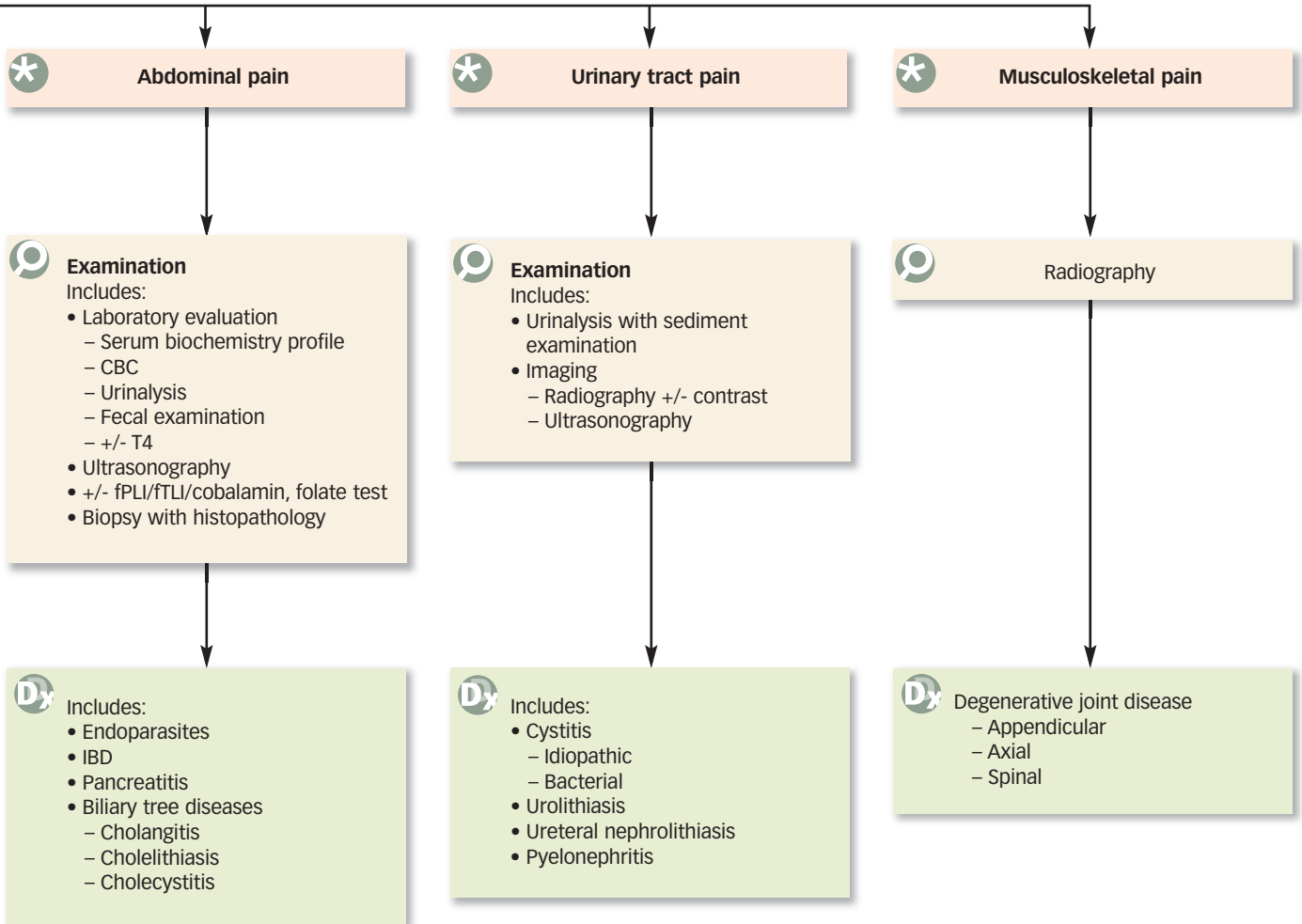
Hairballs



HAIRBALLS AT A GLANCE



- Clients may use the term *hairballs* (ie, tubular wads of ingested hair) to describe loose strands of hair in vomitus or regurgitated/vomited food; it is important to clarify what they are defining before determining diagnostic and therapeutic approach.
- The extreme hairball is a trichobezoar—a hard concretion of hair lodged in the stomach that is too large to vomit or pass through the pylorus and intestines.
- Cats normally ingest small amounts of hair that pass in feces; increased hair ingestion (eg, skin/coat problems) or abnormal passage of hair (ie, changes in GI motility) may result in hairballs.
- Hairballs signify disease and, although common, are not normal.



Dx Differential Diagnosis

Investigation

Results

* Stress can result in overgrooming, especially when a cat has obsessive/compulsive tendencies and is unable to stop the behavior once initiated.¹

See **Aids & Resources**, back page, for references & suggested reading.

fPLI = feline pancreatic lipase immunoreactivity, fTLI = feline trypsin-like immunoreactivity, IBD = inflammatory bowel disease, T4 = thyroxine