

Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD)

- urinary disease is common in cats
- symptoms = **blood in urine, urinating outside the litterbox/in unusual locations, straining to pee (may resemble constipation), crying while peeing, licking at the urinary opening (just under the anus under the tail), trying unsuccessfully to pee (this is an emergency!)**
- **multiple medical causes which should be investigated first**
 - bladder stone, urinary blockage, infection, trauma, cancers
- when no medical cause is present → **Feline Idiopathic Cystitis (FIC)**
 - **50% of cats with FLUTD symptoms** have no medical cause (even higher in younger cats)
 - does NOT mean there's nothing wrong – inflammation, pain is truly present
- not all cats get FIC; **certain sensitive cats = stress → bladder changes → inflammation, pain → one or more FLUTD symptoms**
- symptoms flare up when sensitive cats are faced with a **stressor**, and generally **last 1-2 weeks**
 - **during flares → treat the bladder inflammation and pain**
 - *most do not have an infection = antibiotics not appropriate unless an infection is identified*
- prevention (reduce flare-ups) = best medicine
 - **avoid known stressors** where we can
 - **provide anxiety support** when we can't (eg. pheromones, medications)
 - provide sensitive cats with a **low-stress environment (meet environmental needs)**

Your cat's diagnostic results:

- Urinalysis:
- X-Rays:
- Other:

Treatments to go home:

- Medications:
- Other:

Prevention - your cat's recommendations:

- Medications:
- Diet change:
- Weight loss
- Environmental enrichment
- Other:

Possible triggers for FLUTD flare-ups:

- Human stress (illness, arguments)
- Changes in family composition (new or lost family members, new pets)
- Changes in family routine (home or away more often or at new times)
- Changes in feline lifestyle (feeding/diet, litterbox, scratching areas, resting areas)
- Conflict vs. humans or other pets
- Feline illness
- Changes in the home (new house, new furniture, renovations)
- Nearby construction
- Outdoor animals (free-roaming cats, wildlife)



*International Cat Care -
FLUTD (detailed online
resource)*



*Help! My Cat's Been
Diagnosed with FIC!
(online resource)*



CATS need...



1. SAFE SPACES in Every Room



HIDING SPACES

Hiding is a normal response to being scared or overwhelmed. Don't disturb.



WARM SPACES

sunny spots, heater/blankets



HIGH UP SPACES with more than one way up and down.

CONVENIENT LITTER BOX

scooped clean, in a quiet location with low foot traffic



2. MULTIPLE. Separate Resources



- FOOD:** Feed cats in separate locations. (Cats are solitary hunters!)
- WATER:** Some cats like their food & water in separate areas.
- LITTER BOXES:** One box per cat plus one extra, in separate & accessible locations, not easily blocked by another cat.



3. PLAY & Predatory Behaviors

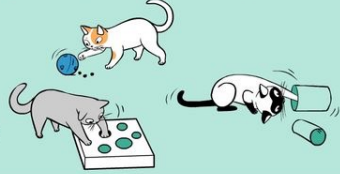


INTERACTIVE PLAY

Cats NEED predatory experiences! Simulate the hunting experience by making toys move like prey. Rotate toys to keep things interesting.

FOOD PUZZLES

Puzzle feeders for foraging and tiny frequent meals.



4. POSITIVE & CONSISTENT Social Interactions



CONSENT + CHOICE

Respect what your cat likes and doesn't like as an individual. * Learn cat body language!



NO FORCE, NO PUNISHMENT



SOCIALIZE

... kittens to positive handling (between 2-7 weeks)



5. FAMILIAR SCENTS for Trust & Security



FAMILIAR BEDDING

USE SCENTS TO INTRODUCE NEW ANIMALS SAFELY

Would you like to smell your new house mate?



SCRATCHING POSTS



FACIAL MARKING on things

DO NOT:

- use scented litter
- use scented cleaners
- clean away all familiar scents



6. REWARD BASED TRAINING for Good Welfare

Use what your cat likes (eg. their favorite treats) to teach new skills & provide positive experiences.



CARRIER TRAINING for travel, vet visits, & emergencies



HEALTH EXAMS



DENTAL CARE



TAKING MEDS



TAKING WEIGHT



NAIL TRIMS



BRUSHING/ GROOMING

TRICKS + GAMES for fun and bonding



ILLUSTRATION: Lili Chin doggiedrawings.net/freeposters

REFERENCES: "PURR: The Science of Making Your Cat Happy" by Zazie Todd (2022)

"AAFP and ISFM Feline Environmental Needs Guidelines" by Sarah Ellis & Colleagues (2013)

Feline Environmental Needs Checklist

- Safe spaces in all accessible rooms
 - Hiding spots – boxes, kennels
 - Raised areas – cat trees, raised shelves
- Multiple resource stations
 - Includes food, water and litterbox
 - MOST cats prefer unscented clumping litter, in open litterboxes (at least as long as your cat nose-to-tail) placed in well-ventilated locations, which are scooped once to twice daily and cleaned with soap/water weekly
 - Ideal number of litterboxes is # cats + 1 – *multiple litterboxes in the same room count as a single box*
 - In safe, quiet locations where cats cannot be surprised or snuck up on and where cats cannot prevent others from entering or leaving
- Opportunity to express play and predatory behaviours
 - Toys available and are rotated to maintain interest
 - Interactive play with humans is offered
 - Avoid frustration during play (food toys that are too difficult, laser play that doesn't end on an object a cat can "catch")
- Positive, consistent social interactions
 - Do not use punishment on your cat
 - Consider training your cat as you would with a dog – cats like training (and treats!) too
 - Respect how your cat wants to interact – some cats seek petting, while others want interaction to be on their terms
- Familiar and non-offensive scents
 - Have stable scratching posts available
 - Avoid excessive cleaning of rest areas, which removes familiar scents/facial marking
 - Avoid strongly scented cleaners



*Purr – The Science of
Making Your Cat Happy
(book)*



*Cat Friendly Homes
(online resource for
cat caregivers)*

Feline Urinary Obstruction (FUO)

- almost exclusively a **MALE CAT DISEASE**
- urine outflow slowed/blocked by a **stone, mucous plug, or spasm of the urethral muscles**
- **symptoms = licking at the urinary opening (just under the anus under the tail), straining to pee (may resemble constipation), crying while in the litterbox, trying unsuccessfully to pee**
 - may have a history of blood in urine, urinating outside the litterbox/in unusual locations
 - vomiting, reduced appetite, reduced energy, and other signs of illness may also be seen
- potassium (normally removed from the body in urine) increases when urine is retained → toxic to the heart → **dangerously slow heart rate, arrhythmias, death**
- prolonged obstruction can also result in **kidney damage**, which may or may not be reversible
- **cats who have obstructed previously are at risk of doing so again**, particularly in the ensuing 1-2 weeks – close monitoring of urination habits at home is essential
- cats who repeatedly block require a surgical procedure to shorten and widen the urethra (perineal urethrostomy = PU)

Your cat's diagnostic results:

- Bloodwork:
- Urinalysis:
- X-Rays:
- Other:

Treatments received in hospital:

- Intravenous fluid therapy – to support kidneys, correct electrolyte imbalances (potassium)
- Unblocking of the urinary tract – placement of a urinary catheter under deep sedation or general anesthesia +/- a local anesthetic is required in order to re-establish normal urine flow
- Hospitalization, with urinary catheter kept in place to ensure urine flow is maintained
- Medications to relieve pain, relax the urethra, and control inflammation
- Other:

Treatments to go home:

- Medications:
- Other:

Prevention - your cat's recommendations:

- Medications:
- Diet change:
- Weight loss
- Environmental enrichment
- Other:



*International Cat Care –
Urethral Obstruction in
Cats (online resource)*