



Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD)



This Brochure
courtesy of
Hollyoak
Veterinary Surgery
IMPINGTON
01223 232111

What is Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD)?

FLUTD consists of a group of conditions, many of which cause inflammation of the lower urinary tract. Affected cats frequently show signs similar to those of cystitis in humans. In some cats the formation of crystalline material in the lower urinary tract can result in obstruction to the passage of urine. This is more common in male cats, because the male urethra (the tube that carries urine from the bladder to the outside) is much narrower than in the female. Complete obstruction can cause irreversible damage to the kidneys, unless quickly treated.

There is no single cause of FLUTD, and therefore diagnostic tests are usually recommended.

Risk factors that have been shown to be significant are:

FOOD

High levels of certain minerals in food can increase the chance of crystal formation in urine. The minerals magnesium and phosphorus are components of a common crystal type – struvite, therefore it is helpful to keep the levels of these minerals as low as possible in the food. The food a cat eats also influences the acidity of its urine. Struvite crystals tend to form in more alkaline urine, and other types such as calcium oxalate in association with more acidic urine. Therefore feeding a food that results in the proper urinary pH is essential to reduce crystal formation.

BEHAVIOUR

Lack of exercise, an indoor lifestyle, reduced water intake, and even dirty litter trays may cause your cat to urinate less often. Low frequency of urination can play a role in encouraging the development of FLUTD.

BODY CONDITION

Excessive weight, because of a combination of dietary and environmental factors, also predisposes towards FLUTD.

SEX

Although both sexes are equally likely to develop signs of FLUTD, urinary obstruction, because of plug formation, is almost always in neutered male cats.

Recognising the signs of FLUTD

FLUTD can be uncomfortable, and, if a blockage occurs, extremely dangerous. Recognising the typical signs is critical. Sometimes even subtle changes in behaviour may indicate a serious problem.

Be aware of the warning signs of FLUTD, and contact your veterinary surgeon without delay if you notice any of the following.

Signs of FLUTD:

- Abnormal urination, including blood in the urine, abnormal colour of urine, excessive straining to urinate, or passing urine frequently in small amounts (little and often).
- Behavioural changes such as restlessness, listlessness, hiding away or refusal to eat.
- Changes in the pattern of urination such as urinating indoors, or in unusual places.



IMPORTANT

A male cat which is not urinating freely requires immediate veterinary attention, because a urinary blockage may be the cause.

Diagnosis

Because there are several causes of FLUTD your vet may perform a number of diagnostic tests, such as urinary pH measurement. Your veterinary surgeon can collect a urine sample, but it could be helpful if you are able to take a fresh urine sample from your cat to the surgery with you.

In some cases the urine may be sent to a laboratory for a detailed examination, including identification of any microscopic crystals present. Urine crystals can be successfully managed by feeding an appropriate food; however the specific treatment will depend on the crystal type that is present. Cases that do not respond to treatment may require further procedures such as radiography (x-rays), to identify the cause of the problem.



Management and control of cats with FLUTD

Hill's has a range of Prescription Diet products that are designed to be fed, under veterinary supervision, to cats suffering from FLUTD, and to help prevent its recurrence. These include Prescription Diet™ Feline s/d™, Prescription Diet™ Feline c/d™, Prescription Diet™ Feline w/d™ and Prescription Diet™ Feline x/d™.

The appropriate food will result in the correct degree of urinary acidity (urinary pH) and the correct intake of minerals for your cat, based on the vet's diagnosis.



Hill's™ Science Plan™ pet foods are specially formulated to minimise dietary risk factors that influence the development of struvite-related FLUTD, by controlling the levels of magnesium and phosphorus and causing urine of a normal acidic pH to form. Feed the appropriate Science Plan feline lifestage product, either canned or dry as recommended by your vet, and ensure a plentiful supply of fresh, clean drinking water at all times. One of the range of Hill's Prescription Diet products may be recommended if your cat is overweight or clinically affected by FLUTD.



Owner's checklist

HollyOak
Veterinary Surgery
IMPINGTON 01223 232111
www.HollyOakVets.co.uk

- ✓ Feed only the food recommended by your vet
- ✓ Do not give any extra treats, food scraps or vitamin supplements
- ✓ Provide lots of clean fresh water at all times
- ✓ Encourage exercise whenever possible
- ✓ Keep the litter tray clean and fresh
- ✓ Once a cat has suffered from FLUTD, a food specifically designed to prevent crystal formation should be fed for life to prevent recurrence
- ✓ Ask your vet when the next urine test is due

FEEDING GUIDE

All Hill's products are extremely palatable foods that are eagerly accepted by most cats. However, when suffering from FLUTD your cat may have a reduced appetite or be less willing to eat. If your cat does resist a change of food, the following tips may help:



- Introduce the new food gradually – mix it with your cat's usual food, adding more of it each day until you have completed the change-over
- Warm canned food to body temperature – but no hotter – before feeding
- If your cat refuses to eat for more than 48 hours, discuss the problem with your vet

Remember our food is 100% Guaranteed – we promise complete satisfaction or we buy it back.

Hill's Pet Nutrition Ltd.

Wingfield Court, Croxley Business Park, Hatters Lane
WATFORD WD18 8YL

Helpline Tel: 0800 282438/1-800-626002 (ROI) Fax: 01923 814401

www.HillsPet.co.uk

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