



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1 • JANUARY 2013 NEWSLETTER

THE IMPORTANCE OF REGULAR BLOOD PRESSURE CHECKS

It's important to regularly have your kitty's blood pressure checked, for the same reasons yours is checked. Just like people, animals can suffer from hypertension (high blood pressure) as both a primary disease or a secondary disease associated with other metabolic disorders. These disorders can include renal (kidney) insufficiency, hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid), and heart disease.

Possible signs of feline hypertension include dilated pupils, disorientation, head tilt, howling (especially at night), irritability, seizures, or sudden collapse. During physical examination, your veterinarian may see evidence of hypertension in the form of small blood hemorrhages or retinal detachment when looking at the back of the eyes, or a new heart murmur.

If left untreated, hypertension can lead to serious problems, including retinal detachment of the eye, resulting in acute blindness; cerebral incidents (stroke-like episodes or seizures); and excessive strain on the heart and other body organs.

Hypertension is diagnosed by measuring blood pressure. To do this, a small blood pressure cuff is placed around your kitty's tail or leg to obtain measurements. We prefer to check blood pressure when your kitty first arrives to keep him or her as stress-free as possible.

We typically take 3 to 5 blood pressure readings to obtain an average, and to let your kitty get used to the feeling of the cuff on a limb or the tail. Sometimes interpretation of the blood pressure readings may be skewed if a kitty is very aggressive or

nervous during the check; taking multiple readings gives time for the kitty to adapt to this new experience.

Treatment for hypertension typically consists of oral medications to lower blood pressure; these are given in small doses to ensure that blood pressure does not become too low too fast. If a secondary disease is suspected or diagnosed, other treatment plans may be recommended.

We recommend that your kitty's blood pressure be checked every 6 months during a wellness exam. Regular monitoring of blood pressure can help guard against the sudden onset of serious symptoms related to hypertension.

If your kitty is due for a wellness exam, now's a great time to schedule your appointment! Please see our January special offer for our readers.



WINTER KITTY CARE

During the cold winter months, when the heater is keeping your home toasty warm, the heated air can cause dry skin for both you and your kitty. Fur that is normally fluffy may become dull and flat, and you may see flakes under the fur; your kitty may also be scratching more because of dry, itchy skin.

When you spot dander or loose fur, your instinct may be to bathe your kitty. However, bathing may actually make the problem worse, as it will remove oils from your kitty's skin and fur. Instead, regularly brush your kitty to remove loose hair and dander. Brushing also encourages circulation and will help distribute oils throughout the skin and fur.

Good nutrition is also important. A high-quality diet will help improve the condition of your kitty's skin and coat. Nutritional supplements may also help soothe dry, itchy skin.

Please ask us for more information about the diet that is best for your kitty.

JANUARY SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR READERS

Through January 31, receive a free blood pressure check when you bring your kitty to the Sacramento Cat Hospital for a wellness exam.

Please speak with us for more details or to schedule your appointment.

Don't miss an issue of our newsletter! Sign up to receive each month's issue by email. To subscribe, just go to www.sacramentocathospital.com, or speak with one of our team members.

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