



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 6, ISSUE 8 • AUGUST 2014 NEWSLETTER

THE IMPORTANCE OF CHECKING YOUR KITTY'S BLOOD PRESSURE

A comprehensive feline wellness plan encompasses every aspect of your kitty's health—overall well-being, vaccinations, dental care, heartworm prevention, flea and tick control, parasite testing and control, and good nutrition.

A regular wellness exam is an important tool for monitoring your kitty's health. An exam provides an opportunity to detect symptoms and prevent diseases in their early stages, or avoid them altogether. It also offers your veterinarian the ability to check your kitty's blood pressure.

Hypertension (high blood pressure) can be a primary disease or a secondary disease associated with other metabolic disorders such as kidney insufficiency, hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid), or heart disease.

If left untreated, high blood pressure can lead to serious problems. Hypertension can place excessive strain on the heart and other organs. It can also cause retinal detachment of the eye, resulting in acute blindness, and cause cerebral incidents (stroke-like episodes or seizures).

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

Hypertension is diagnosed by measuring blood pressure. To obtain the measurements, we place a small blood pressure cuff around your kitty's tail or leg. We prefer to check blood pressure upon arrival to keep your kitty as stress-free as possible.

We typically take 3-5 blood pressure readings to obtain an average, and to let the kitty get used to the cuff. Sometimes interpretation of the blood pressure readings may be skewed if a kitty is very aggressive or nervous during the check, so taking multiple readings gives time for the kitty to adapt to the experience.

If hypertension is diagnosed, treatment typically consists of oral medications that lower blood pressure; these are given in small doses to ensure that blood pressure does not become too low too fast. Additional medications or special diets may also be recommended. If heart disease is suspected or diagnosed, we may recommend meeting with a board-certified cardiologist to discuss a treatment plan to best address both the heart disease and hypertension.

We recommend that your kitty's blood pressure be checked each time he or she comes in for a wellness exam. Regular monitoring of blood pressure can help guard against the sudden onset of serious symptoms related to hypertension.

Please ask for a copy of our wellness care plan handout for complete recommendations based on your kitty's age.

Regular exams can help keep your furry family member healthy and greatly extend his or her life. If your kitty hasn't had a wellness exam in more than a year, please contact us to schedule an appointment. And please see our special offer below.

NATIONAL TAKE YOUR CAT TO THE VET DAY

Did you know that Friday, August 22 is National Take Your Cat to the Vet Day?

This nationwide campaign was developed to help raise awareness that cats need

annual wellness examinations just as much as dogs do, and to educate cat owners about the importance of annual veterinary visits for their pets.

If your kitty is due (or overdue) for a wellness exam, we invite you to support this campaign by scheduling an appointment with one of our veterinarians. Your kitty will thank you for it!

FELINE FLEA CONTROL

The summer's extreme high temperatures often bring a rise in flea infestations. In addition to giving painful, itchy bites on furry and human family members alike, fleas are carriers of a number of diseases that can affect your kitty—or you. This includes tapeworms, Feline Infectious Anemia, and Feline Bartonella (also called Cat Scratch Disease). Some kitties suffer a severe allergic reaction to flea bites, causing them to scratch themselves raw in bitten areas.

Fortunately, there are a number of easy-to-administer monthly topical medications to help control these pests. Please ask us for more details.

AUGUST SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR READERS

Through August 31, receive a **free blood pressure check** when you bring your kitty to the Sacramento Cat Hospital for a wellness exam. Please stop by our front desk for more information.

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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