



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 3, ISSUE 10 • OCTOBER 2011 NEWSLETTER

FELINE HEPATIC LIPIDOSIS

Hepatic lipidosis, also known as fatty liver disease, is one of the most common liver diseases in cats. With this disease, the liver accumulates and stores an excessive amount of fat; when this happens, the liver can no longer function normally. Hepatic lipidosis is a very serious life-threatening illness, and must be treated immediately.

The onset of hepatic lipidosis most often stems from a deficiency in caloric intake (typically from a lack of protein, though a lack of carbohydrates can also come into play). This caloric deficiency causes the body to begin sending fat cells to the liver for conversion into usable energy. Much of the fat, in turn, is stored in the liver; if an excessive amount of fat accumulates, it can quickly lead to liver failure.

Other potential causes of hepatic lipidosis may include insulin resistance, diabetes mellitus, pancreatitis, inflammatory bowel disease, kidney disease, cardiologic diseases, cancer, or viral and neurological diseases. Regardless of the cause, anorexia is typically a beginning or contributing factor to the development of hepatic lipidosis.

Typically, kitties diagnosed with hepatic lipidosis are older, overweight, and display signs of stress (such as a new pet or person in the household, abrupt dietary changes, or a concurrent disease).

Symptoms of hepatic lipidosis include lack of appetite, weight loss, vomiting, jaundice (yellowing of the skin or mucus membranes), dehydration, seizures, drooling, or coma.

Diagnosis typically begins with blood tests, which may show elevated liver enzymes, elevated bilirubin values, anemia,

or abnormal levels of fasting serum bile acids. Ultrasound and radiographs may provide further evidence of liver disease, and may also show possible underlying diseases such as pancreatitis. A more definitive diagnosis may be obtained with a fine needle aspirate (a small liver tissue sample) and cytology (examination of cells), or with a biopsy (removal of a larger liver tissue sample) and histopathology (tissue review and interpretation by pathologists).

Treatment for hepatic lipidosis consists of aggressive nutritional support and addressing other concurrent illnesses if they exist. Nutritional support may include syringe feeding, placing of a feeding tube, or IV (intravenous) nutrition. IV or SQ (subcutaneous) fluids may also be necessary for fluid and electrolyte restoration. Use of liver antioxidants, antibiotics, and appetite stimulants may aid in recovery.

Although prognosis is guarded for kitties diagnosed with hepatic lipidosis, the sooner they are treated, the greater their chance of recovery.

Any time your kitty's appetite has decreased or weight loss is noted, it's imperative to seek immediate medical attention.

SAVE THE DATE: SACRAMENTO CAT HOSPITAL'S THIRD ANNUAL PET FOOD DRIVE

On **Saturday, November 19**, we will host our Third Annual Pet Food Drive, benefiting Titanic's Pantry (the Sacramento Pet Food Bank).

Pet food drive hours will be 9:00 am to 4:00 pm at the Sacramento Cat Hospital.

Providing enough pet food to meet the need is an ongoing challenge for shelters, charitable organizations, and animal rescue groups. This large-scale pet food drive is an effective way for our community to help animals across our city. Our economic climate means that the need is greater than ever. Many people in our city are faced with the difficult choice of feeding themselves, or feeding their pets.

Your donation of unopened and unexpired cat and dog food, canned or dry, will benefit pets throughout our city. Donations of leashes, collars, cat litter, bedding, and other pet supplies are also welcome.

If you're unable to make it to the pet food drive on November 19, you can still help pets in need. Just drop off your donation of cat food, dog food, or pet supplies at the Sacramento Cat Hospital anytime between now and November 19.

Thank you for helping animals in need!

OCTOBER SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR READERS

Through October 31, receive **\$20 off general health check bloodwork** when you bring your kitty to the Sacramento Cat Hospital for a wellness exam.

Also through October 31, receive **free trial antioxidant samples**. To be eligible for these samples, your kitty must have received a physical exam at the Sacramento Cat Hospital within the last year.

Please ask us 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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