



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 5, ISSUE 3 • MARCH 2013 NEWSLETTER

FELINE ALLERGIES

Have you noticed your kitty sneezing, scratching incessantly, or rubbing itchy eyes? He or she may be suffering from an allergy. Just like you, your kitty's immune system can experience an allergic reaction to usually harmless substances in the environment. These common substances can include:

- Food
- Fleas
- Mold, dust, mildew, pollen
- Cleaning products (such as window, counter, toilet bowl, and floor cleaners)
- Cigarette smoke
- Perfume
- Rubber and plastic materials (such as collars or pet bowls)
- Feathers and fabrics
- Plants

These substances (or allergens) can trigger an inflammatory response that may manifest in a number of ways, including:

- Sneezing, wheezing, or coughing
- Increased or incessant scratching, usually around the neck, head, or base of the tail
- Itchy, red, or swollen paws
- Itchy, runny, or red eyes
- Itchy ears and ear infections
- Runny, itchy, stuffy nose
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea

Feline food allergies typically require a change of diet for resolution. A number of prescription diets are available; your veterinarian will send you home with appropriate samples.

Flea saliva (from flea bites) is a common allergen, causing your kitty to itch and scratch incessantly, typically along the back or at the base of the tail. The best treatment for flea allergies is prevention; your veterinarian will recommend a once-monthly topical flea preventative medication for your kitty.

Often, addressing an allergy can be as simple as replacing one substance in your environment with another, or removing it entirely. For example, replacing plastic bowls with glass ones, or using only feline-safe household cleaners such as ammonia or vinegar. If your veterinarian feels your

kitty's litter may be an issue, there are several hypoallergenic alternatives to try. Cleaning your pet's bedding with hypoallergenic detergents and products each week and vacuuming frequently will help remove dust or pollen from the environment.

Depending on the severity of your kitty's allergies, your veterinarian may recommend medications or supplements. These can include steroids, antihistamines, eye drops, and fatty acid supplements.

If your kitty is exhibiting any of the symptoms noted above, please bring him or her in for a thorough examination. If allergies are diagnosed, we will suggest a treatment plan to help ease your furry family member's symptoms.



MARCH SPECIAL OFFER FOR OUR READERS

This month, we are offering a number of great deals to help protect your kitty against fleas, intestinal parasites, and heartworm. **The cost may be as little as \$8 per month!** Please speak with us about the parasite prevention program that's best for your furry family member.



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