



YOUR CAT'S HEALTH, OUR PASSION • VOLUME 2, ISSUE 6 • JUNE 2010 NEWSLETTER

FELINE METABOLIC DISEASES

There are several metabolic diseases that can arise throughout your kitty's lifetime. As our cats age, they may develop metabolic changes; the onset of these changes most often occurs between the ages of 5–7 years. Some of the most common metabolic disorders are hyperthyroidism (overactive thyroid), chronic renal (kidney) insufficiency, and diabetes mellitus (high blood sugar).

Hyperthyroidism occurs when your kitty's thyroid gland becomes overactive and produces too much thyroid hormone. Symptoms include rapid heart rate, heart murmur, weight gain or loss, a hearty (or even voracious) appetite, hypertension (high blood pressure), increased water intake with excessive urination, behavioral or personality changes, and increased vocalization (especially at night). Hyperthyroidism is diagnosed with lab work; sometimes an enlarged thyroid gland will be noted during physical examination. Treatments for this disease include medication, radioactive iodine (I-131) therapy, and surgery.

Chronic renal insufficiency, also known as CRI, is a medically-managed disease that occurs when your kitty's kidneys begin to lose function. This may occur due to genetics, aging, infections, and environmental sources such as food and toxins. Symptoms of CRI include weight loss, loss of appetite or thirst, vomiting, excessive thirst and urination, dull coat, and difficulty with urination. CRI is diagnosed with lab work; x-rays and ultrasound of the kidneys may be recommended. Kitties diagnosed with CRI need supportive care that typically includes:

- Diet changes
- Medications such as appetite stimulants, electrolyte supplements, and red blood cell stimulators

- Subcutaneous fluid therapy; your cat may drink a lot of water but cannot resorb much of the fluid because most of it will be urinated out

More advanced treatment methods include hemodialysis and kidney transplantation.

Diabetes mellitus (DM) is a disease in which kitties develop resistance to their own insulin, and their body fails to respond to the sugars brought into their bodies, or they may not produce appropriate amounts of insulin. Symptoms of diabetes include excessive thirst, dehydration, weight loss, weakness, vomiting, and inappetence. Cats may also experience a neurological disorder associated with DM where they walk "down on their hocks." DM is diagnosed with lab work. Treatments include injectable insulin, oral insulin replacements, diet changes, and other oral supplements. DM patients must be monitored very closely to avoid blood glucose levels that are too high or too low.

All of these metabolic diseases are manageable disorders when treated and monitored with guidance from your veterinarian. However, if left untreated, these diseases can become life-threatening.

It's important for your kitty to have an annual wellness exam, where standard lab work may detect signs of these metabolic diseases before your cat shows symptoms. (The American Association of Feline Practitioners recommends twice-yearly wellness exams for kitties beginning at age 11.)

If your kitty shows any of the above signs or symptoms, please don't wait to schedule an examination with your veterinarian.

MICROCHIPS SAVE LIVES!

No matter how careful you may be, it's a fact of life that pets get lost. Statistics show that one in three pets will become lost during their lifetime, and only 2 out of 100 lost, unidentified cats will find their way home.

A special kitty named Magic owns Kristin Harvey, the Office Manager at the Sacramento Cat Hospital. Magic is a strictly indoor cat, but last December, he got out of the house and disappeared for 6 weeks. He eventually ended up at the Sacramento County Animal Control. The day before Magic was going to be put down, he was checked for a microchip. Because he was microchipped, Animal Control was able to contact Kristin, and Magic returned home. Magic is living proof that microchips work!

June Special Offer for Our Readers

During the month of June, the Sacramento Cat Hospital is offering a 40% discount on the placement of an Avid microchip. **The regular cost is \$61.50; the discounted price is just \$36.50!** After the microchip has been placed, we will rescan it each time your cat receives an exam. Should the chip fail, we will replace it free of charge.



CAT'S MEOW FAIR

We had a great time at our Arts & Crafts Fair on Sunday, May 23. The weather was lovely (except for the occasional wind gust) and there were many special, handmade items to purchase from vendors.

Proceeds from the fair will benefit the Sacramento Cat Foundation Benevolent Fund, which provides medical treatment for injured, sick, and feral cats.

Thank you for your support, and we look forward to seeing you at next year's fair!



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 staff members.