



THE FELINE

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A MAGRANE PET MEDICAL CENTER INSERT FOR CAT LOVERS, SUMMER 2014



by Vikky Warner

Dear Opie,

My cat is not using the litterbox to urinate. I've found cat urine in different areas of my house.

Help! What can I do about this?

Desperate Cat Lover

Dear Desperate,

This can be a really tough nut to crack! Inappropriate elimination is the number one behavior problem of cats. This can lead to indoor cats being turned outside or given to a new home.

To be sure the problem does not stem from a medical condition, it's a good idea to have the cat examined by one of the veterinarians at Magrane Pet Medical Center. Feline lower urinary tract disease might be the cause. Symptoms include frequent straining to urinate in different places, bloody urine, and vocalization while urinating. This is only one possible medical cause; your veterinarian can advise you about others.

In order to properly diagnose the problem, a urinalysis needs to be performed. You can bring in a sample freshly collected at home, or else bring in your kitty so that we can collect the sample at MPMC. You could try to confine the cat in its carrier for a couple of hours before the visit, or else drop the cat off at Magrane in the morning to allow the bladder to fill with urine that we can test.

However, inappropriate urination can also be caused by behavioral issues. If no physical disease is found by your veterinarian, it's time to consider your cat's surroundings as a cause.

Cats can use urine to mark their territory. It's one way they communicate with other cats. Have you introduced a new cat to the household? Is a stray outdoor cat hanging around your house? Your cat may be letting the newcomers know that the space has been claimed.

Stress can also trigger this unwanted behavior. Have you changed the cat's environment? Moved the furniture? Changed the brand of litter or moved the litterbox? Has the cat's primary caregiver been absent for a long period of time? Any of these scenarios could be the cause.

At Magrane, we have anti-anxiety medications and can advise you on use of a pheromone spray to calm your cat. We have literature that may help you, and our behavior specialist, Neika, gives expert advice about cat care.

*Call us. We can help!
Opie*

Cat Grooming Tips

Unlike dogs, cats do not usually need baths and are great at keeping themselves clean. However, sometimes they need a little help, especially the long-hair breeds.

Bond with your cat and make brushing a daily experience. Cats tend to be more sociable when brushed and petted often.

Use a blanket or towel on the grooming surface to avoid slip offs. Groom cats in an area they prefer, such as their usual resting spot or bed, or on your lap.

Use the correct grooming tools, a comb for long-hair cats, a soft baby brush for short-hair cats. Use upward strokes. Lift the hair, don't pull. For short-hair cats, try brushing against the hair grain to stimulate the skin. Then brush with the grain to finish.

Take it slow. Don't hold the cat down. Let the cat tell you when it has had enough.

Give a treat before and after grooming.

Use a soft baby brush for kittens, and get them used to a daily routine of brushing.

Be very careful when cutting mats. It is easy to mistake skin for a clump of hair.

If your cat hates to be groomed, and gives you more resistance than you can manage, call Magrane Pet Medical Center.

We can sedate your kitty and groom him or her for you!

NEW - CHEWABLE FLEA AND TICK PREVENTATIVE IS AVAILABLE!

The makers of Frontline Plus and Heartgard have released **NexGard Chewable!**

The soft, beef-flavored NexGard chew makes it easy to protect your dog from fleas, and it kills ticks too! It's easy to give and there is no worry about it washing off or of touching the oily fur where the topical preventative is applied.

NexGard works the same as Frontline Plus by killing existing fleas. It kills new adult fleas before they can lay eggs, kills ticks (American Dog ticks, Lone star ticks, and Deer ticks), and stays strong ALL month long! When given consistently, year round, it is much more effective and safer than anything else for preventing diseases carried by ticks and fleas. It is better than the Lyme vaccine for preventing Lyme disease.

Please call Magrane Pet Medical Center if you have questions about the new NexGard!

PUPPY TIP SHEET THE BASICS OF CRATE TRAINING

Crate training is teaching your puppy that he has a safe and secure place of his own. A crate is a valuable tool for house training, preventing destructive behaviors and keeping your puppy safe when you cannot watch him. A crate also gives your puppy a safe area to go to when his environment is too overwhelming. Your puppy's crate is comparable to a crib or playpen for a young child.

KINDS OF CRATES

Wire and plastic are the two most common types of crates. The fold up wire crate is very easy to transport but many puppies prefer the closed in-den like area that a plastic crate offers. It is useful to cover a wire crate with a blanket to help give this effect. The crate should only be large enough for your puppy to stand, stretch out and turn completely. If your puppy will be a large dog, it would be a good idea to purchase a crate that will be the correct size to accommodate him as an adult. Your puppy may eliminate in a crate that is too large, therefore, block the rear area of the crate off with a milk crate until he is fully housebroken. To prevent entrapment, **never** leave a collar on your puppy while he is in his crate.

WHEN TO BEGIN

A dog can be crate trained at any age, although it is much easier at a very young age. The best situation is to have your puppy's crate waiting for him when he arrives at his new home.

WHEN TO USE THE CRATE

Your puppy should only be in his crate when you cannot watch him, when you must be gone or when it is time to quiet down. Just as it would be difficult for a child to settle down in a high traffic area of your home, it would also be difficult for your puppy. Find a quiet, but not secluded, area to keep his crate. You must remember your puppy is not a toy that you can put away when you are tired of playing with it. Your puppy is a social animal and must be with his family as much as possible. If your puppy is too rambunctious, even after intense play time, allow him to settle in his crate, then permit him back with you. You should **never** use your puppy's crate as punishment. Resist the temptation to send your puppy "to his room" when he has misbehaved. Your puppy needs to learn that going to his crate is good and that he wants to go to his crate.

“CAN I GO TO MY CRATE NOW?”

THE FIRST STEP

The first step in crate training is to teach your puppy to like his crate. Your puppy should not be forced into his crate, but should go in with his tail wagging. Begin by leaving your puppy's crate door open. Place his food bowl in his crate at meal times so he can enter and leave the crate when he wishes. Lure him into the crate by throwing food pieces, treats or toys into the crate. Anytime you see your puppy voluntarily enter his crate reward him with praise and a treat. Begin closing the door for short periods of time as your puppy becomes more comfortable with his crate.

Purchase a few special toys that your puppy is only allowed to play with when he is in his crate with the door closed. The Kong Toy is an excellent choice because it is hollow and therefore can easily be packed with treats. Your puppy will spend hours trying to get to the goodies inside. A Kong Toy in your puppy's crate is comparable to a Play Station in your child's bedroom!

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