

Caring for your Cat with Hyperthyroidism



What is Hyperthyroidism?

The thyroid gland is a gland at the upper end of the wind pipe which makes a hormone called thyroxin. Cats may get hyperthyroidism as they get older, and when a cat has hyperthyroidism, the thyroid gland makes too much thyroxin. This makes its metabolism work more so cats with hyperthyroidism often lose weight, become very hungry (and sometimes grumpy). In severe cases, the heart muscle can thicken and the cat can become prone to blood clots. [This is the opposite problem to the one which humans get with their thyroid].



How is hyperthyroidism diagnosed?

A blood sample is taken to check the level of thyroxin (T4) in a cats blood. We also check kidney and liver function because how these organs function, affects what treatment we can use.

Does hyperthyroidism affect the long-term health of my cat?

How your cat's health is affected will depend on how severely your cat is suffering from the disease and whether there are any other concurrent illnesses such as kidney disease. Many cats can be well controlled with medication and live for years once diagnosed with the illness. Your vet will discuss the results with you and run through any concurrent illnesses at the time of diagnosis to help you understand how your cat is affected.

How often should I bring my hyperthyroid cat for check-ups?

Once your cat has been on medication for 4 weeks we need to run a blood test to check the dose of medication is correct for your cat. This is because the dose of medication needed varies from cat to cat so we need a repeat blood check to fine tune the dose to suit your pet.

Providing we have the problem under control, we will then need to repeat this test every 6 months because most hyperthyroid cats tend to need a gradually increasing dose as they get older.

Contact Information

Telephone (24 hours Emergency Line): 01472 347054
Telephone (Office hours): 01472 362821
Telephone (Office hours): 01472 240422

PATIENT DETAILS

Name of patient:

How is hyperthyroidism treated?

For most cats, a daily dose of medication (either tablets or liquid) controls the problem. When cats with hyperthyroidism have the problem well controlled they gain weight, their heart rates and appetite reduces and they return to their normal character. Once on life-long medication most cats will live well for a long time. For cats who don't like medication or who have other problems which make the medication unsuitable, there is an operation called a thyroidectomy which removes the overactive thyroid tissue to return thyroid activity to normal.

Medications to control hyperthyroidism:

Vidalta – This form of medication is a 'prolonged-release' tablet, so it is not suitable to be broken or crushed before giving it to your pet. Ideally it should also be taken on an empty stomach (however, a small amount of food to take the tablet with is fine).

Thyronorm - The total daily dose should be divided into two and administered morning and evening. In order to enhance stabilisation of the hyperthyroid patient the same dosing schedule relative to feeding should be used daily.

FOLLOW UP APPOINTMENT/BLOOD RETEST

Please bear in mind when making the appointment that we will need to test the blood thyroid levels 4-6 hours after the dose of Thyronorm is given. If your pet is on Vidalta, the blood test can be taken anytime.

Please let us know if you are unable to attend the above appointment and we will arrange an alternative day/time.