



705 N. Main St. • Lodi, WI 53555 • (608) 592-3232 • (608) 255-4727 • 800-729-3231

Website: lodivet.com E-mail: lodivet@charter.net

Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease and Urinary Obstruction

Feline lower urinary tract disease describes the following group of clinical signs:

- Bloody urine
- Straining to urinate
- Urinating in unusual places
- Urinary blockage
- Licking the urinary opening

A cat with lower urinary tract disease may exhibit one or more of these symptoms. The cause of this disease is variable, but can include:

- Bladder stones, crystals in the urine, urinary tract infection, trauma to the urinary tract (hit by car, etc.), urinary tract cancer.

Diagnostic testing is important in helping to sort out the cause of a cat's urinary tract disease. These tests often include:

- Blood work
- Urinalysis and urine culture
- X-rays and/or ultrasound of the urinary tract.

In 50% of the cases, a cause cannot be determined despite extensive testing, this clinical syndrome is termed "idiopathic cystitis".

Urinary obstruction/blockage

If the cat experiencing lower urinary tract disease is a male, he is at risk for a life-threatening complication of this syndrome: the urinary blockage. Mucus, crystals and bladder stones can form a plug that clogs the urethra preventing urine from passing from the bladder to the outside of the body. If this blockage persists, it can lead to changes in the blood that can result in severe illness and even death.

Initial treatment involves placing a urinary catheter to allow the bladder to empty. This procedure will require sedation/anesthesia to allow the cat to relax and provide pain relief. The urinary catheter may be left within the urethra to allow for continued urine passage for 24-48 hours allowing for oral medications to treat the inciting cause of urinary tract disease.

In some situations a cat that has blocked once will be at a significantly higher risk for re-blocking in the future. When urinary blockage becomes recurrent in a male cat, it becomes medically necessary to consider surgical reconstruction of the genitalia to create a more female-like opening to allow for easy passage of urine. This surgery is called the perineal urethrostomy or "PU" for short. If this procedure is needed for a male cat, your veterinarian will discuss the details of this procedure with you.