

How to Tell if Your Cat is in Pain

Cats often disguise the fact they are in pain. That may be because in the wild, cats that appear sick or injured are vulnerable to predators.

Cat pain can be caused by such things as arthritis, dental problems, urinary tract infections, bone disease and cancer. Pain is also common following a surgical procedure.

You are in the best position to look for the subtle changes in behavior that may indicate your cat is suffering. It's important to stay alert, because the sooner your cat's pain is diagnosed and treated, the sooner he or she can heal and resume a normal, happy life.

If your cat exhibits one or more of these behaviors and you suspect it may be due to pain, notify your veterinarian immediately.

DAILY HABITS:

- Withdraws from social interaction
- Decreased appetite
- Changes in sleeping or drinking
- Fails to use the litter box
- Urinates frequently
- Won't groom or grooms less, looks unkempt
- Sleeps more

FACIAL EXPRESSION:

- Grimaces, furrowed brow, vacant stare
- Glazed, wide-eyed or looks sleepy
- Enlarged pupils
- Flattened ears
- Pants when at rest

ACTIVITY LEVEL:

- Restless
- Reluctant to move
- Has difficulty getting up from a laying position
- Repetitively gets up and lies down
- Trembles or shakes
- Limp
- Can't leap as high
- Seeks more affection
- Avoids being petted or handled
- Hides

POSTURE:

- Generally lays with feet underneath
- Arches back or tucks in abdomen

SELF-MUTILATION:

- Licking
- Biting
- Scratching a particular part of its body

SELF-PROTECTION:

- Protects a part of its body

- Doesn't put weight on a limb
- Doesn't want to be held or picked up

AGGRESSIVE:

especially a previously friendly cat

- Acts out of character
- Growls, hisses, bites
- Pins ears back

VOCALIZING:

- Meowing
- Purring
- Hissing
- Growling

Don't Treat Your Cat's Pain by Yourself

NEVER administer pain medications to a pet without consulting your veterinarian. Many human pain relievers, such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen, are poisonous to and can be fatal to cats.

Different types of pain require different types of treatment. After diagnosing the problem, your veterinarian will explain the benefits, risks and costs associated with each option. That way, you and your veterinarian can choose the treatment plan that best meets the needs of you and your cat.

Whenever you have a question or concern about your cat's health, please call us!

Healthy, Happy Pets are Our Business!