

MEDICAL CONCERNS FOR CATS

SUN HAZARDS

Just as with fair skinned people, animals with light or white extremities (noses and ears) are subject to solar dermatitis and skin cancer. Although the incidence is low, we recommend that you take the following steps to provide your pet with the best care and most protection.

- Keep your pet indoors
- If you must let your cat outdoors
 - Apply a sun screen (PABA), level 10-15 to the light or white areas.
 - Allow your pet outdoors before 10 AM or after 3 PM

DECLAWED CATS

Cats that have their claws surgically removed are painfully aware that they have been deprived of their first line of defense. They are apt to be defensive and more likely to resort to the next level of defense...their teeth. Many times declawed cats are surrendered because of the adverse personality changes they have undergone. They may overreact to mild stimuli with a hiss, growl, or bite because they lack their claws. They cannot protect themselves with their claws or by climbing trees to escape, they are virtually defenseless against attack by dogs and will need to live exclusively indoors.

Occasionally, the cat's feet will remain tender long after surgery and the cat maybe sensitive to normal touching of their feet during play or grooming.

The declawed cat is SPECIAL, requiring understanding and protection from dogs and rambunctious kids. A quiet household would best suit the average declawed cat.

OBESITY IN CATS

Overweight cats generally have more physical ailments and a shorter life span than those of average weight. Obesity often reduces a cat's enjoyment of life.

OBESITY CAN CAUSE OR WORSEN

- Locomotion problems including arthritis, hip dysplasia, spinal disc problems and ligament rupture
- Lung, heart and liver disease
- Gastrointestinal problems, including constipation, excessive gas and pancreatitis
- Increased surgical and anesthetic risk
- Heat intolerance
- Skin disease
- Mental irritability (related to discomfort)

- Lowered resistance to infectious disease (especially viruses)
- Decreased exercise tolerance (part of a vicious cycle that worsens obesity)

CAUSES OF OBESITY

- Most obesity is caused by the consumption of too much food and too little exercise.
- Boredom, idleness, and nervousness are known to increase food intake in people and may do the same in our cats. Pets fed home-cooked meals, table scraps, treats, and snacks have a higher incidence of obesity than those fed only commercial rations.

CORRECTING OBESITY

- Take your cat to your veterinarian for a medical check-up. Your vet will give you a diet plan for your cat.
- Feed small meals more frequently. Be sure total amount is less than originally fed.
- Use reduced calorie foods.
- Do not feed table scraps.
- Your cat must always have access to fresh water.
- Establish daily play time for exercise.
- No treats.