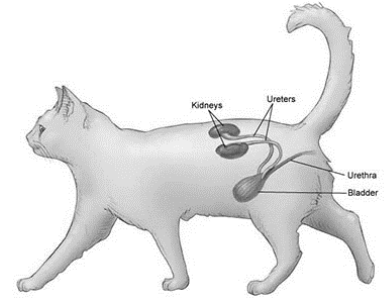


Blocked Bladder Post-Care Handout

Thank you for choosing Avonhead Vets to look after your cat, whilst he underwent treatment for a blocked bladder. We can assure you, we have taken every precaution to ensure he has received the best care and treatment, while they have been with us today 😊

Urinary blockage is a painful and life-threatening condition that typically affects male cats. If your male cat has urinary blockage, it means their urethra — the tube that drains urine from the bladder to the penis and out of the body — is blocked by inflammatory material. When the urethra is blocked and urine can't exit the body, the bladder becomes overfilled or "hyperextended". If the blockage goes on too long, the kidneys may start to swell and become damaged, leaving the bladder to potentially rupture or tear.

Male cat urinary blockage is extremely common, especially among neutered male cats; therefore, it's critical for pet parents to know the signs of the condition. The sooner a cat receives proper treatment, the more likely they are to have a healthy recovery.



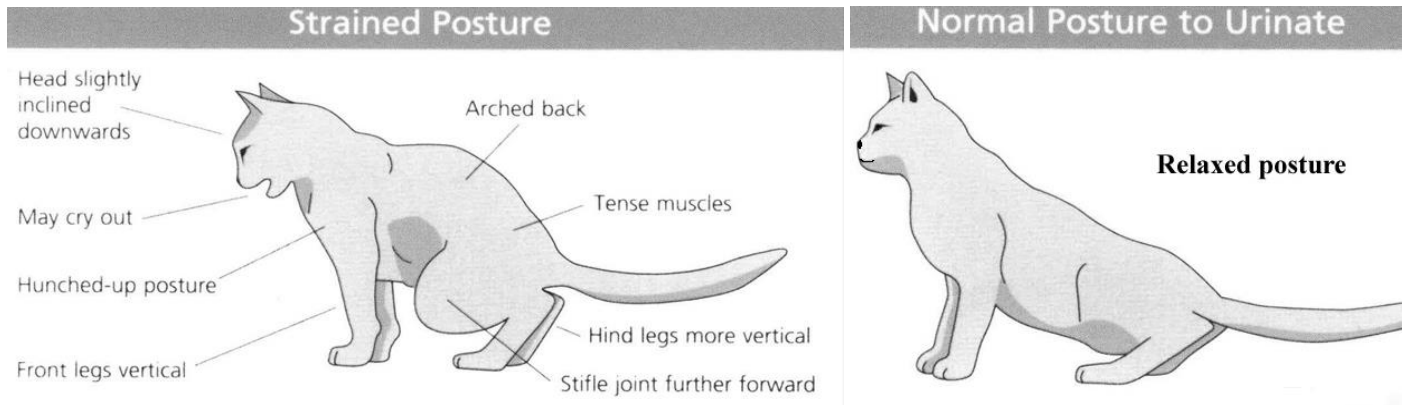
Signs of Blocked Bladders?

A cat with urethral obstruction will usually show the following signs:

- Repeated attempts to urinate that are unproductive
- Crying or discomfort when straining to urinate
- Increased agitation, and there may be some vomiting

Depending on the underlying cause, you may also have noticed some other changes in your cat's urinating behaviour over the preceding few days such as increased frequency of urination, straining, discomfort or even some blood in the urine.

What causes blocked bladders in cats?



Neutered male cats are especially prone to urinary blockage because they may have narrow urethras — so narrow that involuntary urethral muscle spasms can block the flow of urine. Several underlying conditions can cause obstruction of the narrow urethra of a male cat, including:

- A 'plug' in the urethra — this is usually an accumulation of proteins, cells, crystals, and debris in the bladder that accumulates and lodges in the urethra
- A small stone (urolith) or an accumulation of very small stones — these form in the bladder but may become lodged in the urethra
- Swelling and spasm of the urethra — during inflammation of the bladder and urethra, whatever the cause, the inflammation may cause swelling of the wall of the urethra which may contribute to blockage, and in several cases the inflammation and irritation causes the muscle around the urethra (the urethral sphincter muscle) to go into spasm — this too can cause obstruction if the cat is not able to relax the muscle.

How do we treat a blocked bladder?

If your cat has urinary blockage, they will be admitted immediately for emergency treatment. We place your cat on intravenous fluids to deliver fluids and medicine to your cat. Your cat will then be under a heavy sedation or anaesthesia, a urinary catheter will be placed to relieve the obstruction and empty their bladder. The catheter is then left in place for several days to let the urethra heal and let your cat recover. Most blocked cats are with us for several days. We run an inhouse blood test, to check your cat's renal (kidney) function - as blocked bladders cause acute kidney failure. Any damage to the kidneys may be completely reversible, but cats will often have to receive intravenous fluids for several days if the kidneys have been affected. In addition to intravenous fluids, other drugs commonly used to help manage cats include:

- Drugs to help relieve spasm of the urethra (spasmolytics)
- Anti-inflammatory drugs to relieve the swelling in the urethra

Once your cat is urinating normally, you'll be able to bring them home. The vet will likely prescribe them antibiotics, pain medicine and/or medicine to relax the urethra, as well as recommend a therapeutic food formulated for urinary health.

Prevention of blocked bladders

Unfortunately, once a male cat has a urinary blockage, there's a **higher risk of it happening again**. Cats are susceptible to stress-related lower urinary disorders, including cystitis (FIC) and urethral spasms, which can result in blockage.

Water consumption is an important part of flushing debris from your cat's system and preventing blockage; try offering them water from a drinking fountain instead of a bowl and switching/adding canned food if they currently eat dry food.

Nutrition can also play an important role in preventing blockage. If your cat already experiences urinary health issues, then a therapeutic cat food may help dissolve your cat's crystals or make it less likely they form new ones and maintain a healthy urine pH that contributes to overall urinary health. Anti-stress diets help reduce anxiety, preventing stress caused cystitis and bladder issues.

Cystaid Plus is a capsule nutritional supplement for the management of lower urinary tract function in cats to help maintain a healthy bladder.

Feliway provides an effective way to control and manage unwanted behaviours such as urine marking, scratching, stress and anxiety. It mimics the facial pheromones produced by cats, resulting in emotional calming, which reduced a cat's impulse to mark its territory.

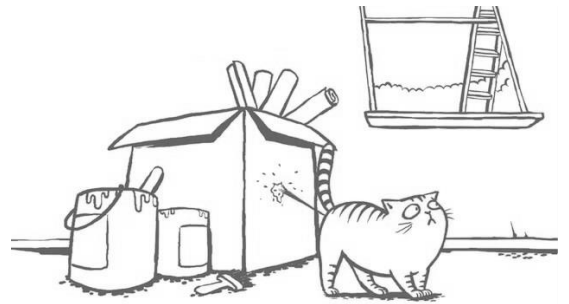
Maintaining stress & Anxiety in cats

Stress is thought to be most significant cause of FIC (Feline Idiopathic Cystitis) in cats. Reducing your cat's stress may lower their chance of lower urinary tract diseases (LUTD), including urethral blockage. FIC is thought to account for around 2/3 of all cases of LUTD. 1 in 5 cats may be stressed.

Stress plays a very important role in triggering FIC. Modifying the environment to help reduce stress and encourage cats to drink and urinate more frequently are key goals in the management of FIC. Thus, helping to prevent reoccurring blocked bladders.

Your cat could be stressed if:

- The household has too many cats and they must compete for resources (i.e., alone time at the litter box or competing for food and water)
- Other cats bully them, including your cats or neighbouring cats
- Their litter box is dirty
- Sometimes, having out-of-town visitors, moving furniture or renovating can stress a cat out as well. If your cat is having issues with urinary blockage, consider whether there's anything that could be causing them stress, then try to eliminate those stressors.



Here are a few tips on how to eliminate stress for your cat:

- Provide your cat with plenty of toys to engage them.
- Make sure to keep at least one more litter box in the home than you have cats, so they can have some privacy to do their business. Make sure to separate these litter boxes throughout the house. Also, be sure to clean the litter boxes daily.
- Give your cat something to scratch, which releases pheromones and makes them happy.
- Also, make sure to have one bowl per cat. Think about it: do you want to share a plate with someone else?
- Provide your cat with a cat perch or condo. Cat's love to be up high where they can see things and it gives them the privacy they want.
- Finally, talk to your vet about certain therapeutic diets that are formulated to manage stress response in cats – **Royal Canin Calm** and/or **Hills C/D Stress**

Should you have any enquiries or further concerns about the post-operative care of your cat, please do not hesitate to phone us at (03) 358 4407 to discuss. We hope they have a smooth recovery and get well soon!

Warmest wishes, the team at Avonhead Veterinary Clinic