

FIC:

Feline Idiopathic Cystitis

This cat has been diagnosed with a condition called feline idiopathic cystitis (FIC). FIC is a term describing a group of clinical signs stemming from inflammation of the urinary bladder, including bloody urine (hematuria), straining to urinate, urinating in unusual places, licking of the genital region, crying out when urinating, and urinating more often. This cat has shown us one or more of these signs while under our care. Idiopathic means “of unknown cause”, and FIC acts as a catch-all term to categorize cases where no known cause for these signs is seen on diagnostics. Other conditions causing the above signs aside from FIC include urolithiasis (stones in the urinary tract), urinary tract infection, and urethral obstruction. We have performed several diagnostic tests to look for the cause of these signs, and found no evidence of any of these problems. These problems can, however, overlap.

A cat with FIC can be at risk of developing an emergency condition called a urethral obstruction (also referred to as a “blocked” cat). This is when the cat is unable to void any urine, which quickly becomes a life-threatening condition that requires immediate veterinary attention. This is primarily an issue in male cats due to their anatomy.

Stress is the most important factor in development of FIC. Cats may feel stress even if we don’t recognize it; even changes in food schedule, their home environment, weather, number of animals in the household, and daily routine can cause this to occur. There is unfortunately no way to predict how any individual cat will do with this condition. Many cats will completely clear their FIC when taken out of an environment that they find to be stressful, or be entirely manageable simply with a special diet or behavioral medications. Other cats will have intermittent problems throughout their entire lives, including discomfort when urinating and blood in the urine.

Steps to help control this condition include feeding small meals on a frequent basis, keeping them at a lean weight, feeding an appropriate diet recommended by your veterinarian, providing multiple clean litter boxes, and minimizing any changes in routine. Ensuring your cat can express their natural behaviors is highly important. This website (<https://indoorpet.osu.edu/cats>) provides excellent resources on keeping your cat engaged and comfortable.

This link provides more information on FIC:

<https://www.vet.cornell.edu/departments-centers-and-institutes/cornell-feline-health-center/health-information/feline-health-topics/feline-lower-urinary-tract-disease#FLUTD>

Please see your family veterinarian regarding monitoring and treating this condition soon after adoption.

Thank you,

Oregon Humane Society Veterinary Staff

Urethral Obstruction

This cat came to us with a urethral obstruction. This is a life-threatening emergency where they are completely unable to urinate, causing a very painful distention of the urinary bladder. If the obstruction is not treated in a timely fashion, life-threatening sequelae can occur such as electrolyte imbalances, rupture of the urinary bladder, and cardiac abnormalities. This can be caused by several different reasons, including crystals or urinary stones, mucous plugs, infection, or spasms of the urethra.

After the obstruction was relieved, he was treated for this condition while at OHS with a urinary catheter, pain medications, intravenous fluids, a special urinary diet, and medications to decrease stress and help him urinate. At this time, he is urinating and eating well.

Cats that have a history of obstruction are at higher risk of having another episode. A low-stress home and routine are important for these cats as stress plays an important role in this process. If at any time you see him making frequent trips to the litterbox, straining, blood in the urine, vocalizing while in the litterbox, or inappropriate urination around the house, please bring him to your family veterinarian immediately. This can be a life-threatening condition if not treated quickly.

It is important to establish a relationship with your family veterinarian shortly after adoption. They will be able to guide you in keeping his urinary system as healthy as possible.

Thank you,
Oregon Humane Society Veterinary Staff