

# HEALTHY HABITS, HEALTHY CATS



## FELINE URINARY TRACT DISEASE

**Did you know that there are multiple causes of urinary tract disease?** **Stones** and **crystals** can form when minerals in the urine aren't being flushed or voided regularly. This can cause pain, inflammation and infections inside the bladder. **Feline idiopathic cystitis** is an inflammatory condition that occurs within the bladder, with or without crystals, stones or infection. Risk factors include obesity, stress, multi-cat households and an indoor lifestyle.

While the diagnosis, treatment and management of urinary tract disease in cats is best done by your veterinary team, there are some things that can be done to reduce the risk of urinary tract disease, especially in cats that are at a higher risk.

## HOW CAN NUTRITION HELP?

### ENCOURAGE WATER INTAKE

Cats that take in more water will produce larger volumes of less concentrated urine, which will encourage them to empty their bladder more frequently. This will reduce the risk of crystal or stone formation. Adding canned food, or offering diets with a moderate increase in sodium, and feeding more frequently can help encourage water intake.

### CONTROL THE BALANCE OF MINERAL LEVELS AND PH

This creates an environment less favorable for the formation of crystals or stones. Veterinary therapeutic urinary diets can even encourage certain types of stones to dissolve!

### REDUCE INFLAMMATION

Omega-3 fatty acids such as EPA and DHA can help manage the inflammation caused by urinary tract disease.

### MANAGE RISK FACTORS

Diets that promote an optimal body weight will be helpful in reducing the risk of urinary tract disease; for cats that are already overweight, starting a veterinary-supervised weight loss plan is important. To reduce stress, some diets are formulated with calming supplements to help cats feel less anxious.



### DOES YOUR CAT HAVE A HIGHER RISK OF URINARY TRACT DISEASE?

- Spayed or neutered cats
- Light drinkers
- Sedentary cats
- Overweight or obese cats
- Indoor lifestyle
- Multi-cat households
- Nervous, anxious cats
- Recent household changes (move, renovations, addition of new pet or family member)

# HOW ELSE CAN WE REDUCE THE RISK?

## MEET THEIR ENVIRONMENTAL NEEDS

Cats require key things in their environment. If they are missing, stress-related illness can occur.

- Safe & secure places (cat condos, boxes)
- Elevating climbing opportunities (shelves, windowsill seating)
- Safe outside access (catio, harness and leash)
- Scratching posts or mats (vertical/horizontal, various materials)
- Interactive toys (including puzzle feeders)
- Healthy activity
- Separate and individual food and water stations (one per cat)
- Positive interactions with humans and other pets
- Stimulating smells (cat nip, cat grass)



## FEED THEM RIGHT

While diet plays an important role in the prevention of urinary tract disease, how to feed is just as important.

- Healthy portions to promote optimal body weight (gram scales for precise measuring)
- Puzzle feeders to encourage predatory behavior and activity
- Own feeding station, visually separate from other cats and animals
- Feeding stations that are separated from other resources, such as the litterbox
- Clean dishes (should be cleaned daily, even when feeding dry)
- Mixed feeding (canned and dry)
- Nutrition that is tailored to your cat's individual needs

## CARE FOR THE BOX

It should come as no surprise that appropriate litterbox care is essential for all cats!

- Scoop at least once daily, replace litter and wash boxes with soap and water at least once weekly
- Provide one litterbox per cat, plus an additional one
- Locate in multiple areas throughout the house, ideally one on each floor
- Locate in a quiet area, where cat won't get startled or ambushed by a person or another animal
- Provide low-step boxes for kittens, older cats or cats with reduced mobility
- Consider that uncovered (open) boxes are generally preferred by cats
- Ensure multiple entrances or access points; single entrances such as a narrow doorway or staircase can be blocked by other animals or objects



**ANY CAT WITH AN ACTIVE OR PREVIOUSLY DIAGNOSED URINARY TRACT CONDITION SHOULD BE SEEN AND CARED FOR BY A VETERINARIAN.**

NEED HELP? **Contact us at [royalcanin.com](https://royalcanin.com)**