

Feline Perineal Urethrostomy

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Treatment of the "plugged cat" is often a matter of choices that must be made by the cat's owner in consultation with the veterinarian. Financial considerations play an important role in these decisions for many people and it is our goal to inform you of your options and to give you an outline of a treatment plan and its cost.

Some cats become blocked, are treated by means of a urinary catheter placed while under anesthesia, given medications, fluids and antibiotics and never have an incidence of blockage again in their lives. Unfortunately, these animals are the exception rather than the rule. Many cats will continue to have problems. Each incidence of blockage is expensive and many owners prefer to elect a surgical correction as soon as the condition of their cat will permit it.

A perineal urethrostomy involves removal of the greater portion of the penis where the urethra is smallest, and formation of a urinary system more like the female cats. This does not prevent the formation of the protein crystals that form the urinary calculi (sand plug), but it does dramatically decrease the danger of blockage.

Facts You Should Know:

- Every surgery has a certain amount of risk - especially if the animal is not perfectly healthy.
- Blockage of the bladder may have caused kidney damage. This may not be readily apparent but may result in kidney failure, which is sometimes fatal.
- Each individual animal reacts individually to disease and treatment. We try to predict the outcome based upon the usual responses of the average cat. This makes it difficult to predict the exact cost and outcome of treatment.
- There are possible post-op complications following perineal urethrostomy including bleeding, failure of sutures to hold, and post-operative urinary blockage.
- Long-term complications include stricture or scarring of the new urinary opening necessitating further surgery. The initial blockage of the bladder may have caused bladder damage, which results in the cat being unable to control his urination.

Post-Operative Care

It is imperative that your pet not be allowed to lick or chew at the sutures around the incision until it is healed. Your pet must wear a protective cone or Elizabethan collar at all times to prevent this. It is not unusual for there to be some mild bleeding or scabbing around the new opening. Do not pull this scab off and simply apply light pressure with an ice pack if you notice any bleeding. Have your veterinarian check your pet immediately if the bleeding does not stop or you are concerned. Some mild swelling is also normal.

It will take some time for all the swelling to reduce and a normal urine stream to be produced. On rare occasions, swelling or blood clots can obstruct the new opening so be sure your cat is urinating every day. Be sure to give all the antibiotic medication until it is gone.

Remember, this surgery is only done to prevent obstruction and will not prevent recurrent bladder infections. You can minimize the chances for these infections by following your veterinarian's recommendations on proper diets that are designed to prevent or minimize the formation of crystals in your cat's bladder that cause these infections.

Do not use regular litter in your cat's litter box for the first two weeks after surgery as the clay may stick to the incision and cause irritation. Shred newspaper or use specially designed litter that does not contain sand or clay or dust until the sutures are removed. You may also put a little Vaseline, triple antibiotic ointment or Neosporin ointment on the exposed tissue to keep it from drying out and help it heal properly.

Most of the sutures are not dissolving and will need to be removed in two weeks under a light anesthetic for the comfort and safety of your pet. Do not hesitate to call your veterinarian if you have any questions about this surgery or anything that seems unusual about your pet's recovery.

Follow Up Instructions:

- Elizabethan collar placed to prevent chewing or licking sutures. Leave on until doctor determines it is safe to remove, usually 10-14 days
- Please monitor your pet's ability to urinate over the next 1-2 days. Rarely, patients that had an epidural will have transient urinary retention, straining to urinate but no stream is observed. This can lead to a ruptured

bladder after several days and kidney failure if you do not seek immediate treatment.

- Recheck in three days to evaluate progress
- Recheck in ten days: Sutures/Staples removal / Dissolving sutures
- Start antibiotic tonight
- Start pain medication tonight
- Start special urinary diet as recommended by your doctor