

CAT TAILS

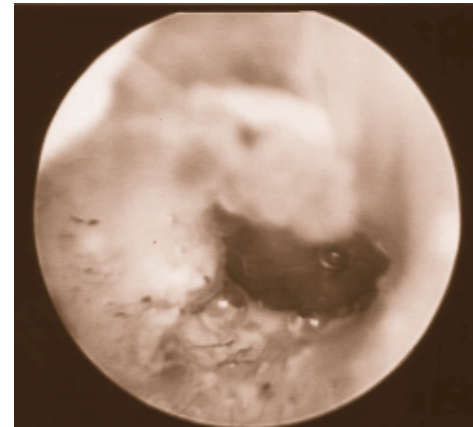
Now Hear This!

Jack, a four to eight year old long haired black neutered male was adopted two years ago from the SPCA. He arrived with a cold, which resolved and an itchy, right ear that would intermittently become very painful for him.

On one occasion, there was a puncture wound at its base, suggestive of cat fight trauma or foreign body penetration. Additionally, his right ear drum looked swollen and opaque. Based on the results of culturing his ear, he was treated with several topical antibiotic preparations and always resolved, only to flare up again. This is a presentation that indicates an underlying cause with bacterial infection being a secondary component. Swabs were taken to look for telltale cells and organisms (cytology) but these didn't tell us much more.

So, we referred Jack to Canada West Veterinary Specialists for a consultation with Dr. Vincent Defalque, the new dermatologist who happens to, not only love cats, but is especially interested in ears!

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Jack's inner ear before treatment

Why We Love Our Cats More Than Our Men

It's official: women who have cats don't need men! New research by British premium cat food brand manufacturer Olli studied the physical responses of women cat owners to a variety of images including their partner, their parents, their cat and pin ups like Daniel Craig. Yet the results revealed that whilst 71% of cat owners showed a significantly higher increase in both heart rate and pupil size when they eyed pictures of their much loved cats, the hearts of a massive 57% of participants failed to race at the sight of their lover.

Aware that the 'thunderbolt' causes a completely automatic physical reaction in

the love-struck including dilated pupils (in constant light) and faster heart beat, psychologist Dr. David Lewis and his Olli cat food research team analysed how women reacted to a dozen different photographs. Monitoring the women in constant light levels, a photographic device then took close-up photographs of their eyes as they were shown the pictures, whilst researchers simultaneously recorded heart rates using a sophisticated medical pulse meter.

On average, the pupils of the women in the study increased by an average of 3 mm when they saw a picture of their much

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loved cat with far smaller increases being produced by the sight of two unfamiliar cats. More worryingly for Casanovas competing for affection this February, the heart rates of almost a third of the women observed became more sluggish when their pin-up shots of their lovers were shown.

Dr. David Lewis says: “The widening of the pupils in constant light is called the ‘pupillary reflex’ and is part of the physical response to ‘love at first sight’. This study shows that the cats have got the cream when it comes to winning the hearts of their female owners, whilst partners and boyfriends may well be the runners up in the love stakes in many households!”

It wasn’t just the physical manifestations of love which gave a woman’s preference for her feline friend away. Olli cat food also commissioned a nationwide survey from market research company OnePoll which showed that whilst 13% of women would part with their partner for £5 million only 5% of cat owners would say adieu to their treasured pet for the same amount. So all you men out there take note, as you will have to work a little harder next Valentine’s Day.

Other reasons respondents said they loved their cat more than any other included: 67% said their cats were more loyal, affectionate and trustworthy than people 40% feel their cats offer them unconditional love which they don’t get from anyone else When it comes to chilling out and talking over problems after a stressful day, nearly one in three women prefer talking to their cat over anyone else! And, almost half of respondents said they would be put off a potential partner if they didn’t like cats.

FemaleFirst, February 2007 🐾

Your Cat’s Whiskers

He can use them to hunt, to navigate his environment and even to convey his moods. Here’s how they work.

The old-fashioned term “the cat’s whiskers” means “the height of perfection” or “first-rate.” Popular in the 1920s, this expression, along with “the cat’s meow,” referred to the daring flappers described as “impossible to shock.”

Cat whiskers – also called tactile hairs – are found on your cat’s eyebrows, chin, cheeks and in an area behind its forelegs above the paw. They are two to three times thicker than other hairs and taper to a fine, flexible tip. Approximately 12 of these stiff bristles align in four rows that protrude from either side of the cat’s muzzle. the top row moves independently of the middle row.



“Whiskers are connected to a nerve fiber that relays messages directly to the brain,” says Paul DeMars, DVM of Oklahoma State University, Oklahoma. They sport longer roots than your cat’s other hairs and are imbedded three times deeper into kitty’s body in dermal sacs. At the other end of each whisker is a sensory organ – called a proprioceptor – that sends a message to your cat in response to stimuli.

Whiskers grow in proportion to a cats body. Sylvester, a three-year-old black and white long hair from Burlington, 10 set the Guinness worlds record for whisker length at five-and-a-half inches in 2003.

Environmental Navigation

During the day, a cat does not have as much need to use their whiskers.

When your cat flexes his/her whiskers back and forth throughout the day, the proprioceptors detect subtle changes in air currents or vibrations and translate these into messages that indicate prey movement or the location of objects like trees or furniture.

Facial whiskers are well-developed on most predatory species to enhance hunting abilities, and their location determines their function. The ones located on the muzzle or “whisker pad” augment navigation skills in restricted spaces or in darkness. These whiskers extend approximately the width of the cat’s body. Although legend purports that

cats use their whiskers to decide whether an opening is large enough for their bodies to pass through, this has never been scientifically proven. It is certain, though, that facial whiskers help determine the bite point on a prey’s neck.

Whiskers located on the forelegs collect information about captured prey. Because cats are far sighted, they often cannot see animals in their clutches. The leg whiskers allow cats to estimate size, shape, and position of their prey, as well as their own position relative to it. These whiskers also help detect escape attempts.

continued next page

Used for Communication

Similar to people, who smile and frown to show emotion, cats use their prominent whiskers' position and amount of spread to communicate three distinct moods.

- Shy or afraid: Closely bunched whiskers lying flat against a cat's cheeks make the face appear smaller and less threatening. This look can also mean your cat is angry or feels vulnerable. This position is typical of cats that are feeding or are greeting another cat.
- Tense or excited: Your cat needs to sense all outside stimuli when hunting, playing or walking, so whiskers will be bristling, fully fanned and bending almost straight forward. When the long whiskers are positioned this way, the shorter facial whiskers will bend forward as well to allow your cat to assess prey positions.
- Content or calm: The whiskers will be pushed neither forward nor back, but resting somewhere in between since your cat has no reason to sense its environment.

In the 17th century, people believed that cutting a cat's whiskers eliminated is courage. Certainly clipping whiskers interfere with their senses. In experiments, whiskerless cats repeatedly missed their prey when springing for it. Folding whiskers in to a position counter to their natural alignment causes discomfort and may trigger a swat from a cat with claws out.

As with other types of hair, whiskers are shed periodically and the observant person will discover them occasionally lying about the house. Not to worry, your kitty is still capable of delivering a small rodent at your feet while a replacement grows in. *Janet Lee, Cat Watch August 2007* 🐾

National Cat Day
is October 29

Rules for Stray Cats

1. Stray cats will not be fed.
2. Stray cats will not be fed anything except dry cat food.
3. Stray cats will not be fed anything except dry cat food...moistened with a little milk...maybe.
4. Stray cats will not be fed anything except dry cat food...moistened with warm milk, yummy treats and leftover fish scraps.
5. Stray cats will not be encouraged to make this house their permanent residence.
6. Stray cats will not be petted, played with or picked up and cuddled unnecessarily.
7. Stray cats that are petted, played with, picked up and cuddled...will absolutely not be given a name.
8. Stray cats with or without a name will not be allowed inside the house at any time.
9. Stray cats will not be allowed inside the house except at certain times.
10. Stray cats will not be allowed inside the house except on days ending in 'y.'
11. Stray cats allowed inside will not be permitted to jump up on or sharpen their claws on the furniture.
12. Stray cats will not be permitted to jump up on, or sharpen claws on the really good furniture.
13. Stray cats may be permitted on furniture, but must sharpen claws on new \$359.99 sisal-rope cat-scratching post with three perches.
14. Stray cats will answer the call of nature outdoors in the dirt.
15. Stray cats will answer the call of nature in the three-piece, high-impact plastic tray filled with Fresh 'n' Sweet kitty litter.
16. Stray cats will answer the call of nature in the hooded litter pan with a three-panel privacy screen and plenty of head room.
17. Stray cats will sleep outside.
18. Stray cats will sleep in the garage.
19. Stray cats will sleep in the house.
20. Stray cats will sleep in a cardboard box lined with an old blanket.
21. Stray cats will sleep in the special Kitty-Komfort-Bed with non-allergenic lambs' wool pillow.
22. Stray cats will not be allowed to sleep in our bed.
23. Stray cats will not be allowed to sleep in our bed, except at the foot.
24. Stray cats will not be allowed to sleep in our bed under the covers.
25. Stray cats will not be allowed to sleep in our bed under the covers except at the foot.
26. Stray cats will not play on the desk.
27. Stray cats will not play on the desk near the computer.
28. Stray cats are forbidden to walk on the computer keyboard on the desk when the human is fjhhkl;ljfd. ;oierpuykmm4hbdm9 lo9jmddm, USING IT.

With thanks, from Dr. Adele Lafleur 🐾

NOW HEAR THIS!

continued from page 1

Under anaesthesia, Dr. Defalque examined Jack's ears using video otoscopy. He found the thickened, opaque ear drum as well as a pedunculated mass (on a stalk). He was able to remove most of the mass to send to the pathologist as well as perforate the ear drum to drain the built up discharge, which he submitted for culture. He flushed the inner ear to cleanse it of all of the debris that had accumulated behind the ear drum. (See *icky photo*.)

Jack was a little off balance for a few days, which is a normal consequence, but otherwise seemed fine. The mass turned out to be a polyp, benign with the exception that it may recur. The inner ear infection (otitis interna) may have been a result of the original upper respiratory infection (cold) travelling up the eustachian tube or have spread from the bacterial and yeast infections of the outer ear infection (otitis externa and media). Based on the culture and sensitivity pattern, we now have Jack on a long course of both oral and topical medications. If the polyp doesn't regrow, there is a good chance for complete cure. Here's hoping! 🐾

About Anemia

- Abnormally low concentrations of either red blood cells, hemoglobin or both may indicate anemia.
- Signs include extremely pale gums, apparent weakness, reluctance to exercise and rapid respiration.
- Anemia is recognized as being either regenerative or non-regenerative, both warrant immediate attention.
- Treatment options (including blood transfusions) vary according to cause.

Cat Watch August 2007 🐾

Interesting and informative websites to purrruse at your leisure

www.mr-lee-catcam.de

Follow the adventurous Mr. Lee on his daily prowls.

www.liveleak.com/view?i=036_1186245897

Renewing acquaintances—in a big way.

www.dailymail.co.uk/pages/live/femail/article.html?in_article_id=452820&in_page_id=1

Christian's story.

www.smithsonianmagazine.com/issues/2007/july/brief-cats.php

A brief history of house cats.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buttered_cat

Buttered_cat

You must take time to read this article on one of life's greatest mysteries.

www.petsafe.net/pet_doors/cat_veranda.php

The PetSafe Cat Veranda, the first window-mounted cat flap that includes an open-air patio with covered roof and indoor lounging platform.

www.vancouverhumanesociety.bc.ca/resources/cat_find

Our local lost and found site.

When Spending a Little Saves a Lot

A wide range of serious, perhaps life-threatening health disorders can be diagnosed by running blood tests. Blood reflects the circulating red and white cell composition (complete blood count/CBC), from their birth in the bone marrow to their use in circulation to their removal by the spleen and liver. Numbers of these cell types reflect function in each of these compartments and external impact, such as infection or inflammation.

Enzymes and by-products produced by organs, such as the liver and the kidneys, the pancreas and muscle are normally present in the blood. Changes in their amount indicate changes in organ function. We also are able to measure hormones (to diagnose diabetes, hyperthyroidism or adrenal gland disorders) and exposure to such viruses as Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV) or Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV).

Analysis of urine also tells us about the workings inside your kitty. Infection, stones and inflammation alter the composition of this liquid. If the urine is inappropriately dilute, there may be a decline in kidney function. Sugar in the urine usually leads to a diagnosis of diabetes.

Measuring blood pressure is helpful in older cats as high BP (hypertension) occurs commonly in cats with hyperthyroidism or renal insufficiency. (In anaesthetized cats, it is essential for maintaining a safe plane of anaesthesia.) These tests, blood work, urinalysis and (in the older cat, blood pressure). For about \$250-300 we can pick up conditions before your kitty becomes sick by regular screening or use them to help us make a diagnosis in someone who is ill. 🐾

EXPANDED CLIENT PARKING

Yes! We now have additional parking spaces available off the lane abutting the clinic.

SPECIALS

SEPTEMBER: Sept \$50 off Dental Hygiene
OCTOBER: 10% off Hill's Prescription Diets
NOVEMBER: 10% off Royal Canin Prescription Diets
DECEMBER: \$10 off Annual Exam
JANUARY: 10% off weight loss diets

What Might Changed Behaviour Mean?

Often, it's the first sign of a health condition.

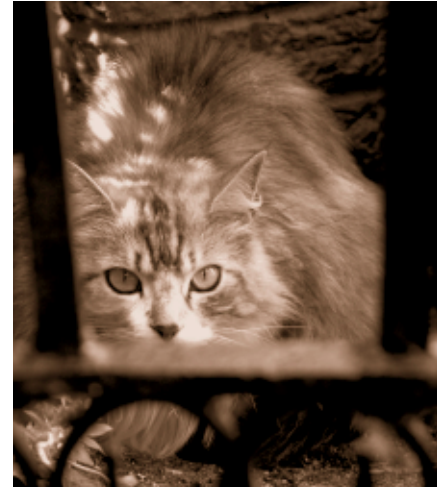
When a cat is not doing well, for whatever reason, she depends upon her special person to take notice. Usually some behavioural change will be observed. The behavioural change is the critical sign that drives a person to consult with a veterinarian.

Veterinarians receive complaints ranging from the very specific "My cat is sneezing" to the very elusive "My cat is just not herself." These behavioural changes are the indicators that a cat needs attention.

Many of the behavioural changes that bring cats to the veterinarian actually have an organic basis. That is to say, the veterinarian will be able to discover an underlying medical condition that caused the problem. We expect our veterinarian to tell us why our cat is limping or not eating.

Yet, sometimes, the diagnostic protocol is overlooked when it comes to the behavioural sign of urinating outside the litterbox. The frustration of cleaning urine spots drives many people to simply label the cat as behaving badly. A workup is needed to be sure that the soiling cat is not suffering from an underlying medical condition. An uncomfortable infection or inflammation in the urinary tract may be responsible for this frustrating behaviour change.

Once the physical examination and lab work reveal that the cat is indeed healthy, the workup must still continue. Remember, urination out of the box is a clinical sign, not a diagnosis. It is a behaviour change that – no different from sneezing – can have many causes. Your veterinarian must determine the



diagnosis so that the appropriate treatment strategy may be determined. A very careful and detailed behavioural history will be needed. Be prepared to answer a lot of questions, as there are many behavioural conditions to consider. *Cat Watch August 2007* 🐾

Test Your Kitty IQ

(Answers on page 6)

1. Which of these is not a member of the cat family?

- Cheetah
- Tapir
- Ocelot

2. How many whiskers do cats have?

- An average of 24
- An average of 12
- An average of 6

3. What does it mean when a cat rubs against you?

- Trying to get rid of an itch
- She is leaving her scent on you
- She wants to be stroked

4. Can cats see colour?

- Not at all
- Barely
- Perfectly

5. Humans can hear noise up to 20,000 hertz. What is the cat's range?

- Up to 40,000 hertz
- Up to 100,000 hertz
- Over 250,000 hertz

6. How many kinds of hair do most cats have?

- Two kinds
- Three kinds
- Four kinds

7. Which country had a history of death sentences for anyone caught killing a cat?

- Egypt
- France
- Rome

8. What is ailurophobia?

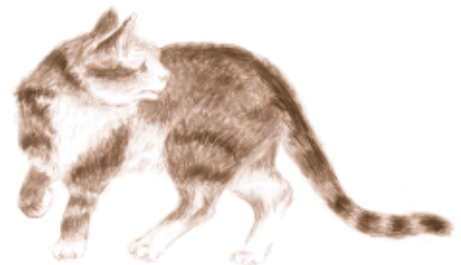
- Love of cats
- Fear of cats
- Allergy to cats

9. What does it mean if a cat's tail swishes furiously from side to side?

- Sign of anger
- Greeting
- Sign of submission

10. In Britain, a black cat means...

- Good luck
- Bad luck
- A change of luck



What's She Up to Now?

Margie's Mews

The travelling, speaking and writing continues! She spent a very nice week with her husband Jim in PEI, where he is doing a six month stint as a pathologist at the vet school in Charlottetown. She still prefers living here, though. Her duties and responsibilities serving as President of the American Association of Feline Practitioners are keeping her very busy. She is trying to restructure the organization and is learning how much people appreciate change. Ha!

In September she will attend the European College of Veterinary Internal Medicine meeting in Budapest before attending and speaking at the European Society of Feline Medicine conference in Prague. Both are places she has wanted to visit. Additionally, this Fall brings presentations in Irvine, CA, Atlantic City, NJ, Reno, NV, Toronto, and Jacksonville FL. The Fall AAFP conference will be in Austin, TX...where she will learn more about Feline Dentistry and Diseases of the Head and Neck. Our own Dr. Judy Rochette, who we are privileged to call on for complex cases, will be speaking at this meeting!

For those of you who are wondering, yes, the rumours are true. Dr. Margie no longer owns Cats Only, but continues, with Dr. Janet and the whole team (Colleen, Michelle, Tamara, Kris and Amanda) to work here. We are excited about the changes that Dr. Michael Bratt has made in updating the interior as well as providing better parking. Look forward to more positive improvements including getting the music on hold up and running again!

Meanwhile, the writing, editing of the *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery*, teaching online on the Veterinary Information Network (VIN, for short) as well as consulting for such programs as Healthy Cats for Life: <http://www.catwellness.org/> continue. I urge you to check the website out. Read up on the "10 Subtle Signs of Sickness." Cats...they are such masters of disguise. 🐾

Is My Cat in Pain?

If a condition is painful for us, it is for our kitties. Cats are especially subtle and hide pain. Your observations of abnormal behaviours including hiding, a decreased appetite and lethargy are often associated with pain. Please call us if you think your companion is hurting!

A site with a short video can be found at: www.cvmb.colostate.edu/ivapm/animals/cats.htm 🐾

ALL-A-BOARD

Please be sure to book your holiday boarding soon! Space fills up quickly and we want to be sure we have room for your special purrrson!

Answers to Kitty IQ Quiz

1. Tapir
2. An average of 24
This is quite variable, but < 24 would be unusually few.
3. She is leaving her scent on you.
4. Barely
- They can see colour within their central visual field but black and white for movement in peripheral vision.
5. Up to 100,000 Hz
6. Four kinds
Fur fibre, guard hairs, awn hairs, whiskers (vibrissae).
7. Egypt
8. Fear of cats
9. Sign of anger
Tail flicking, is conflicted behaviour.
10. Good luck

MOUSELLANY



Cats Only Hours

Monday, Friday: 9:00 am to 6:00 pm
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday:
9:00 am to 8:00 pm
Saturday: 9:00 am to 5:00 pm

Contact Information



2578 Burrard Street
Vancouver, BC V6J 3J7
Phone: 604-734-CATS (2287)
Fax: 604-734-8011

Please Call Ahead 🐾

Call ahead for medication refills and to ask us to set aside your kitty's special diet. This will ensure that we have it ready and that you don't make an unnecessary trip if we don't have it in that day!

Our Policy Regarding Emergencies 🌸

We will always make room for the kitties of our existing friends (i.e.: YOU!) first. For emergencies and urgencies call us and we will ask you to drop your cat off to stay with us for observation. that way we will be able to examine him sooner than if you book an appointment.

If the emergency is after hours, or sounds imminently life-threatening, with your kitty's best interests in mind, we'll refer you to the Vancouver Animal Emergency Clinic at the SE corner of 4th Avenue and Fir Street. 604-734-5104.

Are You Moving? 🐟

Please let us know if you and your kitty are moving. It's especially important that we have your correct address and phone number if your friend has a tattoo for identification purposes. So, give us a call and we'll update your file so we can continue providing care for your kitty.