



The Scoop

Published by The Cat Practice, Birmingham, Michigan. Open 7 days a week and evenings.

May is Older Americans Month

May 2015

In this issue:

- [Senior cats more prone to illness](#)
- [National arthritis month](#)
- [Heartworm prevention](#)
- [Breed: Ragdoll](#)
- [Trivia contest/win free catnip](#)
- [Cat's Meow: timid cats](#)

May is Older Americans Month

Senior Cats Are More Prone to Illness

Just like humans, as cats age, they become more prone to major illnesses. Fortunately, today, while many serious illnesses are not curable, they are MANAGEABLE with proper veterinary care. Following are leading serious illnesses that can affect your senior cat along with signs and symptoms. [See more on these illnesses here.](#) Also - [Read more about cat chronic condition care.](#)



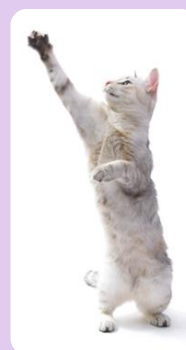
Illness	Signs and Symptoms
Anemia	Tiredness, weakness, pale gums.
Arthritis	(Often subtle) Hesitation to jump up/down, using "steps" to jump, taking longer to lay down/get up, stiff gait.
Bladder Stones	Straining to urinate, inability to pass urine, bloody urine (obvious and microscopic), recurring bladder infections.
Cancer	Weight loss (can be gradual), vomiting, soft stool, not eating well.
Cystitis	Bloody urine, straining to urinate, peeing outside the box, pain.
Dental Disease	Most cats show no outward signs. Detected during exam.
Diabetes	Gradual weight loss despite normal eating (or eating more than usual), increase in thirst and urine output.
Hepatic Lipidosis	Weight loss, not eating well, lethargy, vomiting.
Heart Disease	Is a silent disease that may/may not be associated with a heart murmur. No signs until end-stage heart failure. Diagnosed by an echocardiogram.
Hyperthyroidism	Weight loss despite good appetite, hyperactivity or vocalization, increased water intake and urine output.
Kidney Disease	Not eating well, nausea, vomiting, dehydration (despite drinking), excessive urination, lethargy, weight loss.
Pancreatitis	Vomiting, soft stool, not eating, weight loss, painful abdomen, lethargy.

[Save money on veterinary care with AARC, our senior discount for cats 15 years old and older!](#)

May is National Arthritis Month

Arthritis is a Highly Painful Yet Treatable Disease in Cats

While all pets slow down as they age, arthritis is NOT a normal part of slowing down or of the aging process. Instead, arthritis is a highly painful, yet highly treatable disease. Studies show that 61% of cats age 6 and older have arthritis, and 82% of cats age 14 and older have it. Cats most commonly get arthritis in their hips, lower back and elbows.



Signs of Feline Arthritis:

- Hesitancy to jump up. Cats may still jump, but take extra time.
- Difficulty going up and down / maneuvering stairs.
- Urinating / defecating outside the litter box.
- Constipation, especially in older cats.
- Stilted or awkward gait after a long nap or rest.
- Poor hair coat and reduced grooming.
- Seeking warm areas to lie.
- Limping or favoring a leg.
- Excessively licking possible painful areas.

What to do:

- Talk to your vet about joint supplements like glucosamine-chondroitin. (Your vet may also prescribe pain medication. NEVER give cats Tylenol, aspirin, or any human pain relievers.)
- Provide a heated pet bed to soothe painful joints.
- Place stools or other objects to help your cat jump onto beds or other resting areas.
- Move litter boxes onto the main floor so your cat doesn't have to use stairs.
- Get a lower-sided and larger litter box so kitty can get in and out more easily.
- Consider acupuncture or other homeopathic treatments.

[See more about arthritis in cats on our website.](#)

News and Events:

See Our New Archive of Cat's Meow Tips

Each issue of The Scoop brings you creative and thoughtful ideas to help you best care for your kitty. See ALL of these tips archived at <http://thecatpracticepc.com/catsmeowtips.html>

June 4 is Hug Your Cat Day

Showing Your Cat Affection is Good for Them and for You!

While Hug Your Cat Day on June 4 is intended as a fun holiday for cat lovers, it might be a good time to think about just how much affection your feline favors. While cats may often be seen as aloof, they're very social creatures. The more attention and positive reinforcement you give them, the less likely they are to develop aggressive or destructive behavior.

For humans, physical contact with a pet raises spirits. Hugs release good-feeling endorphins that help chase away the blues. In addition, studies have discovered that the sonic frequency in a cat's purr aids in reducing pain and accelerating healing. From sore muscles to mending bones, holding a purring cat close can actually help alleviate physical pain.

Kitty Camp

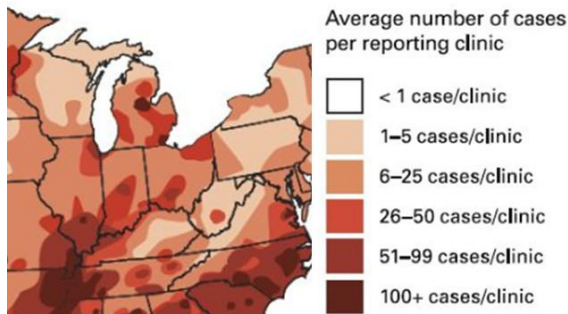
Cats staying in our Kitty Camp get frequent attention and plenty of play and exercise in our Kitty Playroom. Consider boarding your cat while you're away, have guests or are having work done at home. Go to thecatpracticepc.com/boarding.html or call 248-540-3390.



Heartworm Disease on Rise in Michigan Cats

Incidents of heartworm disease in Michigan cats have been steadily rising. Heartworm is spread by mosquitoes and enters an animal's bloodstream as tiny, invisible larvae. They can reach lengths of more than 12 inches at maturity. While cats that go outside are more vulnerable, it's estimated that **40% of heartworm-positive cats are indoor-only.**

Cats cannot be treated for heartworm disease like dogs can, which is why prevention is important. In addition, the disease often goes undiagnosed. In cats, heartworms cause a condition known as heartworm associated respiratory disease (HARD), which causes permanent lung damage and chronic coughing, asthma-like attacks, vomiting, lack of appetite and weight loss. Occasionally an affected cat may have difficulty walking, experience fainting or seizures, or suffer from fluid accumulation in the abdomen. Unfortunately, the first sign in some cats is sudden collapse or death.



Heartworm Prevention

Preventive measures are recommended year 'round in Michigan since mosquitoes can survive in colder temperatures. Options include:

- Giving monthly Heartgard® treats by themselves or in food.
- Monthly application of topical liquid medications Advantage Multi® or Revolution®. (Applied to the back of your cat's neck.)

A Cat's Not Just a Cat!

Breed Profile: Ragdoll

The Ragdoll is a relaxed, happy cat and, like a child's ragdoll, many of these cats will go limp in your arms and flop like a stuffed doll when cuddled. They are often compared to dogs because of their friendliness and intelligence.

Ragdolls have beautiful blue eyes and come in 3 patterns: colorpoint, bicolor and mitted. The Ragdoll's medium length, silky coat has a soft rabbit-like texture that should be brushed or combed weekly.

One of the largest cat breeds, Ragdolls take up to 4 years to fully mature. Males can weigh from 15 to 20 pounds and females from 10 to 15 pounds.

Ragdolls experience high rates of occurrence of Hypertrophic Cardiomyopathy (HCM) heart disease. A genetic test has been developed to help breeders screen the cats prior to breeding. These cats should still have echocardiograms performed by a veterinary cardiologist since a negative genetic test does not eliminate the risk.

[See our comprehensive list of cat breeds and related health conditions.](#)



Cat Trivia

True or false: Heartworm disease can safely be treated in infected cats with the same medication that is used to treat dogs.

Be **FIRST** to email us with the **RIGHT** answer at Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com and win a free bag of organic catnip! See next month's issue for the answer!

March trivia answer:

True! All parts of the plant have toxic potential but is usually limited to ingestion in large quantities

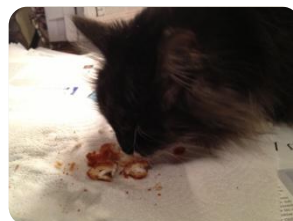
Congrats to **Meghan Hedrick of Troy** who was first to reply with the correct answer and claim the free bag of catnip!

Cat's Meow Tip: Make sure timid cats get enough food at mealtime

My 20-year old cat, Flash, is timid around my other cats and walks away if they hover around when she is trying to eat. After trying to shoo the others away countless times, I finally decided to set up a special eating spot for Flash in the first floor half bath. She has her food and water bowls in there and knows exactly where to go for mealtime. An added plus – Flash loves the fact that there is a heat vent right next to the toilet – so that has become her new favorite perch!

-- **Contributed by: Linda Wasche, Sylvan Lake**

Do you have a cat care tip that is just the Cat's Meow? Email Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com. If we run it, you get a FREE bag of organic catnip. Limit to 75 words. See past [Cat's Meow Tips](#).



Flash

Important

Contact information:

The Cat Practice Hospice and End of Life Care. Contact hospice nurse Laura Kramek for a consultation at 248-540-3390.

Nurse hotline. Get answers to questions about your kitty's health. Email: Nursehotline@Thecatpracticepc.com

AARC wellness exam savings for senior cats. Go to thecatpracticepc.com/aarc.htm

Adoptable cats and kittens. Visit our lobby and [Facebook page](#).

Story ideas for The Scoop. Contact Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com



Wi-Fi available
Ask at our front desk

Are You Getting The Scoop?

To sign up, send us an email at meowmail@thecatpracticepc.com or call 248.540.3390

Follow Us in the News!

Check our website regularly for updates on our recent news coverage.

thecatpracticepc.com/press.htm.

Our Hours:

Monday - Thursday: 8 am – 9 pm
Friday: 8 am – 8 pm
Saturday & Sunday: 8 am – 6 pm

A cat has absolute emotional honesty: human beings, for one reason or another, may hide their feelings, but a cat does not.

- Ernest Hemingway



Follow us:

Wellness/early detection

Chronic conditions

Medical/surgical care

Geriatrics/hospice

Kitty camp boarding

The Cat Practice commitment to cats and their people:

- Spot health conditions early to avoid more costly care later.
- Treat the whole patient looking out for physical and emotional wellbeing.
- Respect each cat as an individual with his/her own distinct personality & heredity.
- Avoid surgery at all cost. (The exception: all cats should be spayed or neutered!)
- Provide alternatives for care whenever possible.
- Partner with cat families through knowledge sharing.
- Make oral hygiene and preventive dental care a priority.

The Scoop is published monthly by The Cat Practice.



875 South Worth
Birmingham, MI 48009
248-540-3390

www.thecatpracticepc.com
meowmail@thecatpracticepc.com

©Copyright 2015

[Click here to unsubscribe](#)