



# The Scoop

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## September is Pain Awareness Month

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### September is Pain Awareness Month

## Facts About Pain and How to Tell if Your Kitty is Hurting

Started by the American Chronic Pain Association, Pain Awareness Month raises public awareness of the debilitating effects of untreated pain and promotes pain management in humans. In cats, pain can affect physical health, and cause severe stress, loss of appetite, withdrawal and more.



Unmitigated or uncontrolled pain is a major biologic stressor and affects numerous aspects of feline physical health, including wound healing and resistance to infectious disease. In studies, animals whose pain is prevented or controlled recover faster and better from surgery than animals whose pain is not properly treated. If sudden-onset pain, such as that experienced during surgery, is not managed properly and aggressively, it can lead to pain that can last for months or longer.

### Types of feline pain

There are four main types of pain in cats and all can affect your pet's overall health:

- **Injury/trauma** (The most obvious.)
- **Surgery** (ALL surgeries cause considerable pain.)
- **Neuropathic** (Damage to tissue and nerves; most common causes are diabetes and hyperesthesia syndrome.)
- **Chronic disease** (Often overlooked due to lack of obvious signs; can be caused by pancreatitis, arthritis, dental disease, interstitial cystitis, cancer and, kidney disease.)

### Signs of pain in cats:

Signs of pain in cats can be subtle. Watch for:

- Changes in eating habits or loss of appetite
- Hiding or withdrawal from human contact
- Sensitivity to touch, or hissing/growling when touched
- Licking/biting particular areas of the body
- Lack of grooming
- Not using the litter box
- Reluctance to jump
- Sitting on top of paws in sphinx-like position (not stretching out or sleeping in normal position)

We take pain management very seriously, and want your cat to be comfortable before, during and after any procedure.

[See our website for more information on pain management at The Cat Practice.](#)

## Good Poop & Bad Poop – What to Look for in Your Cat's Litter Box

You might think this is a strange topic – but your cat's poop can tell you a whole lot about their overall health and how they are feeling.

Cats should have regular bowel movements if they are eating well. Some cats poop every day, while others go every other day. Just like people, it can depend, but it should be regular and with a normal consistency. That's why it's a good idea to be mindful of what's in the litter box. We recommend that you check at least weekly. Look for:

### Normal stool:

- Compressible but with some shape
- A log-like shape

### Abnormal stool:

- Too hard:
  - small balls or nuggets
  - hard or dry
  - may have blood on it from being difficult to pass
- Too soft:
  - Consistency of soft-serve ice cream, or completely unformed "cow pie" or diarrhea
  - Abnormal color: black, tarry stool can be a sign of upper GI bleeding



If you notice abnormal stool in your cat's litter box, call your veterinarian right away to make an appointment for a thorough examination. They may ask you to bring a sample.

[Find out what other unusual litter box behavior to watch for.](#)

## September 2015

### News and Events:

### See Our 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>

### 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](http://thecatpracticepc.com/boarding.html) or call 248-540-3390.



### 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](mailto:Nursehotline@Thecatpracticepc.com)

**AARC wellness exam savings for senior cats.** Go to [thecatpracticepc.com/aarc.htm](http://thecatpracticepc.com/aarc.htm)

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

**Story ideas for The Scoop.** Contact [Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto:Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com)

Wi-Fi available  
Ask at our front desk



## Autumn Can Mean Allergies for Many Felines

Cats can have seasonal allergies just like people. You might notice symptoms flare up at certain times of the year, fall being a common time for many cats. Symptoms, which can range from mild to severe, include:

- Red, watery eyes
- Increased eye discharge
- Sneezing
- Itchy skin
- Excessive licking/grooming
- Scabs or lesions on the skin
- Chin acne
- Ear infections
- Bacterial infections of the feet



**Orange and white cats** are more susceptible to allergies than other colors of cats, though any cat can be affected at any point in his or her lifetime. If left untreated, allergy symptoms can make your cat miserable and uncomfortable. Affected areas can become infected and require more treatment.

If you notice any of the above allergy symptoms, contact your veterinarian. Treatment usually includes prescription antihistamines and sometimes antibiotics.

### A Cat's Not Just a Cat!

#### Breed Profile: Somali

The Somali is a semi-long-haired Abyssinian. It has the same expressive face but with a shaggy ticked coat, ear tufts and a fox-like tail. The Somali is the stunning long-haired descendent of the Abyssinian and is named for Somalia which borders Ethiopia, formerly Abyssinia, to represent their connection to each other.

Abyssinians and Somalis are loyal, affectionate, highly intelligent and interactive with their owners and environment. Not usually considered a lap cat due to their high energy and curiosity levels, Abyssinians and Somalis occasionally make visits to your lap or find a way under the covers to spend time near their beloved people. While exceedingly social, they are not always content in large cat populations where they have to share attention.

They are a medium-sized cat with males weighing 8-10 pounds and females 6-7 pounds. Colors include ruddy, chocolate, cinnamon, blue, lilac and fawn.

The breed is generally healthy, with no serious genetic predispositions.

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



### Cat Trivia

**True or false:** FIV only affects small domestic/feral cats, and not large wild cats (like tigers, etc).

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

#### Last month's trivia answer:

True! It's very important to keep your contact info up to date – you never know when you might need it!

### Cat's Meow Tip: Baby Scale is Purr-fect for Weighing Kitties

If you have a sick or geriatric kitty, you might be watching his or her weight. I found the PURR-fect answer in this baby scale that I found at a garage sale. The weight limit is 25 lbs. – so ideal for most cats-- and the curved top really makes it easy to position kitty in place. This one was made by Sears. I have seen the same model on eBay.



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

Do you have a cat care tip that is just the Cat's Meow? Email [Tabitha@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto: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](#).

## Are You Getting The Scoop?

To sign up, send us an email at [meowmail@thecatpracticepc.com](mailto: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](http://thecatpracticepc.com/press.htm).

### Our Hours:

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

*As every cat owner knows, nobody owns a cat.*

*- Ellen Perry Berkeley*

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.



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