



CARLA MURPHY
BVMS MRCVS
&
MELANIE BROAD
BVMS MRCVS

Getting Old and Grey?

Like us, our feline friends are living longer and longer. But age never comes alone and so, as we see our cats moving into their teenage years, we are also seeing them develop many geriatric diseases. One of the commonest cat geriatric diseases is Chronic Kidney Disease (CKD) with 10% of cats older than 10 years and 30% of cats older than 15 years suffer from it.

The kidneys play many roles in the body, but are mainly there to eliminate waste products from the blood stream and out into the urine. Unlike some other organs such as the liver, the kidneys cannot be repaired and the signs of CKD are usually only seen once at least 70% of the kidney tissue has been irreversibly damaged. There is no cure for CKD but it is possible to tailor a variety of medical treatments to each cat to maintain a really good quality of life for them.

- **Diet** – Specialist Veterinary diets restrict proteins to reduce the amount of waste products. They have increased B-vitamins and are high in calories. It is important to remember that these diets should be introduced gradually, over two weeks. If a cat completely refuses to eat a special diet, then a senior diet might be a good compromise. It is important that cats with CKD keep eating and therefore any food is better than no food!
- **Maintaining hydration** - Since urine concentrating ability is reduced in these cats they are at risk of dehydration. It is therefore important to ensure that they have access to fresh water at all times. A good way of achieving increased fluid intake is feeding a wet rather than a dry food or adding additional water to the normal food. For cats that prefer running water a water fountain might be helpful in encouraging them to stay hydrated.
- **Medications** – These can be drugs to increase filtration rates, phosphate binders or appetite stimulants. Each cat is an individual and medication plans reflect that.

Cats suffering from CKD should have regular health checks at the vet every 3-6 months, and often blood and urine tests are required.

If your cat is a teenager and has started to drink more water or lose weight, then please pop a urine sample in to your nearest branch and we will check your cat's urine concentrating power free of charge during the month of December. Remember – the quicker you notice a kidney problem, the better chance we have of helping the rest of the kidney along.

Carla & Mel

Galashiels Veterinary Surgery

Gala Terrace, Galashiels. TD1 3JT

01896 752 156

www.bordervets.co.uk

Office: Weekdays 8.30 - 6pm, Sat 8.30 - 12noon

Consulting times:

Weekdays 9 - 10am and 5 - 6pm, Sat 9 - 11am

Gala Life - Be A Part Of It.....01721 729 314 info@galalife.co.uk