

Urethral Obstruction/Feline Lower Urinary Disease

Because the male feline urethra is very narrow, especially at the end, microscopic debris, cells and mucous can cause an obstruction. This condition can be life-threatening due to elevation of potassium that can cause heart problems, as well as elevation of kidney enzymes. Causes include urinary tract infection, stone and/or crystal formation, sterile cystitis (non-infectious inflammation of the bladder that can sometimes be brought on by stress) and in rare cases masses. Testing will determine the cause and help guide treatment specifics. Blood work, urinalysis, urine culture and abdominal radiographs may be recommended. Typical treatment involves correcting life-threatening electrolyte abnormalities, relief of the obstruction by means of general anesthesia and urinary catheter placement, IV fluids, antibiotics and pain management. In some cases, surgery is recommended as well. Long term prevention may include diet change and increase in water intake.

If you notice your cat is straining to urinate or not producing any urine despite repeated attempts, please bring your pet for immediate evaluation.