

# URINARY BLOCKAGE: KNOW THE SIGNS

CAC COMMUNITY EDUCATION • PET PARENT SERIES

Repeated straining with little or no urine may mean a urinary blockage: a life-threatening emergency requiring immediate veterinary care.

## **DON'T ASSUME IT'S CONSTIPATION**

Straining to urinate can look like straining to have a bowel movement. If your cat repeatedly strains, check whether urine is actually being produced.

## **WARNING SIGNS**

- Repeated litter-box trips or straining
- Little or no urine
- Crying, pain or genital licking
- Blood or urinating outside the box
- Hiding or decreased appetite
- Vomiting, weakness or severe lethargy



## **WHY MALE CATS?**

Male cats have a longer, narrower urethra, making blockage more likely. A blockage prevents urine from leaving the bladder and can quickly cause dangerous complications.

You cannot safely distinguish a blockage from other urinary problems at home.

**SUSPECT A BLOCKAGE? DO NOT WAIT! SEEK EMERGENCY VETERINARY CARE.**

## **DO NOT:**

- Wait overnight when little/no urine is produced
- Give human medications or leftover antibiotics
- Press or squeeze the bladder
- Assume straining is constipation or behavioral

## **HELP YOUR VETERINARY TEAM**

Report when your cat last urinated normally, urine amount, litter-box frequency, blood, vomiting, appetite/energy changes, and previous urinary problems.

Cats that have blocked can block again; follow discharge instructions and seek prompt care if signs return.

## **REMEMBER**

Repeated straining + little or no urine = URINARY EMERGENCY until a veterinarian determines otherwise.

References: Merck Veterinary Manual; AAHA feline urinary-obstruction education.

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