

NATURAL COMPLEMENTS TO CONVENTIONAL CAT CARE

A clear and simple guide to which alternative remedies and lifestyle changes are appropriate for common feline medical conditions.

by Shawn Messonnier



CONDITION	DEFINITION	CONVENTIONAL TREATMENT	NATURAL REMEDY	DIET CHANGE	LIFESTYLE CHANGE
ALLERGIES	A hypersensitive skin reaction to foreign proteins (allergens) in genetically predisposed cats	Steroids (oral preferred), antihistamines; secondary infection is rare; cyclosporine (use extreme caution)	Fish oil, antioxidants, herbs, homeopathics	Natural canned diet; avoid grains, processing and byproducts	Frequent bathing if possible
ARTHRITIS	Joint inflammation, usually caused by chronic wear and tear; more common in older cats	NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), use extreme caution; analgesics	Chondroitin and glucosamine supplements, hyaluronic acid, acupuncture, fish oil, enzymes, cold laser	Natural canned diet; avoid grains, processing and byproducts	Exercise if possible; prevent obesity
BAD BREATH	Severe inflammation and infection of teeth and gums or any mucous lining in the mouth	Regular dental cleanings, steroids/antibiotics, extractions	Coenzyme Q-10, fatty acids, antioxidants, herbs, homeopathics	Adding a small amount of plain yogurt to the diet might help	Brush teeth at home; provide dental treats
CANCER	Abnormal growth of cells of any tissue in the body; cancer cells lose the ability to die and continue to reproduce; any lumps that persist following vaccination should be removed and biopsied immediately	Chemotherapy, radiation, surgery	Herbs, homeopathics, antioxidants, fatty acids	Improved diet; lowered carbohydrates and increased proteins and fats, especially omega-3 fatty acids	No vaccines
DIABETES	Increased blood sugar due to variety of factors, including decreased insulin production and insulin insensitivity; approximately 50 percent of cats have Type 2 diabetes, which does not require insulin and can be controlled through canned diet, exercise and natural remedies	Insulin; rarely, oral medications that lower a cat's blood sugar	Herbs, supplements made of extracts from glands; homeopathics	Increased protein/fat, reduced carbohydrates	Increased exercise; small, frequent meals
DRY SKIN, COAT	Can be benign or a sign of a more serious condition	Depends on cause; often none	Fatty acids, antioxidants	Natural canned diet, increased omega-3s	Baths with an organic hydrating shampoo formulated for frequent bathing; bathing as needed if possible; humectant/moisturizing sprays
EAR INFECTIONS	Infections of the outer ear canal, caused by mites, bacteria or yeasts	Medicated drops, oral medications like antibiotics and steroids	Herbal ear drops, antibacterial and antifungal herbs, olive leaf extract	Natural canned diet	Clean ears regularly

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EPILEPSY	Epilepsy, which results in seizures, is diagnosed when other causes of seizure disorders are not discovered; rare in cats, more likely to be caused by infections	Phenobarbital, Valium	Choline, B vitamins, herbs, homeopathics	Natural diet	No vaccines; eliminate seizure triggers, if possible
FLUTD (feline lower urinary tract disorder)	Is of unknown cause; crystals and/or mucus commonly develop in the bladder, true infections are rare	Sedatives (antibiotics are often incorrectly prescribed for this condition)	Herbs, homeopathics, pheromones, flower essences	Natural canned diet	No specific changes
HIP DYSPLASIA	Looseness or dislocation of the hip joints; rare in cats	NSAIDS (careful), surgery	Chondroitin and glucosamine supplements, hyaluronic acid, acupuncture, fish oil, enzymes, cold laser	Natural canned diet; reduced calories, if needed	Weight control, encourage exercise
HYPERTENSION	Elevated blood pressure; may be associated with hyperthyroidism, heart disease or kidney disease	Antihypertensive medications, diuretics	Homeopathics, herbs, fatty acids	Natural canned diet (possibly reduced sodium)	Encourage exercise
HYPERTHYROIDISM	Increased output of thyroid hormones, usually caused by benign thyroid tumors (thyroid cancer is seen in approximately 10 to 15 percent of cats with hyperthyroidism)	Methimazole, surgery, radioactive iodine (preferred treatment as it is the only one that cures the condition)	Herbs, homeopathics, fatty acids	No specific changes	No specific changes
IBD (inflammatory bowel disease)	Inflammation of any part of the gastrointestinal tract diagnosed by biopsy of the affected part; chronic and untreated IBD can become lymphoma cancer	Steroids, antibiotics	Enzymes, probiotics, glutamine, herbs, homeopathics	Natural canned diet	Eliminate possible causes, such as food intolerances, allergies, infections
INAPPROPRIATE URINATION	Behavioral problem as cat eliminates outside of its litter box	Behavior modifying medications	Feline pheromones, herbs, homeopathics, flower essences	Natural canned diet	Behavioral training to encourage resumed use of litter box
KIDNEY OR LIVER DISEASE	A decline or breakdown in function of either organ; Acute: Usually from infection or toxins; Chronic: Common result of aging; require early and aggressive treatment to ensure the best outcome; overweight cats that refuse to eat can easily and quickly develop fatty liver disease; kidney disease is a common cause of death in older cats	None usually available; antibiotics or corticosteroids if indicated; fluid support, phosphorous binders	Herbs, homeopathics, fatty acids, antioxidants, probiotics	Natural canned diet; reduced phosphorous and proteins, if needed	Fluids administered at home, as needed
UTI (urinary tract infection)	Bacterial infection of the urinary tract, usually the bladder; stones and tumors in the bladder can also cause urinary-tract disorders; true infections are rare in cats and can only be diagnosed through culture urine; FLUTD is much more common	Medicated diet, antibiotics; surgery for stones; chemotherapy for tumors	Herbs, homeopathics, olive leaf extract	Natural canned diet	Feed a moist diet to encourage frequent urination

Shawn Messonnier, a doctor of veterinary medicine practicing in Plano, TX, is the award-winning author of The Natural Health Bible for Dogs & Cats; his latest book is Unexpected Miracles: Hope and Holistic Healing for Pets. Visit PetCareNaturally.com.