

Kidney Failure in Cats.







Chronic kidney failure is a common disease usually affecting older cats, the cause of which is usually unknown.

The kidneys have several roles in the body, particularly getting rid of waste products in urine. Sadly kidney function will worsen with time, although the rate of decline varies between cats.

While we cannot reverse or cure kidney failure, there are changes we can make to slow the disease progression.

What signs suggest my cat has kidney failure?

Any of the following signs can be seen in cats with kidney failure:

-  Increased thirst
-  Passing more urine than normal
-  Loss of appetite
-  Lethargy or weakness
-  Vomiting
-  Bad breath




How is kidney failure diagnosed?


Usually a blood sample and urine test tell us how well the kidneys are working. We look at your cat's urea and creatinine values on the blood test. If these values are raised it tells us that the kidneys are not getting rid of the bodies waste products effectively. This is confirmed if your cat also has urine which is more dilute than it should be.


Changes in electrolyte balance, phosphorus levels and anaemia can also occur with kidney failure; we check all these values on the same blood test.

We may also advise further tests to check the protein content of your cat's urine. High blood pressure is also commonly seen alongside kidney failure, so we usually would like to check your cat's blood pressure too.

Treatment

-  **Diet:** Changing your cat's diet is the most effective way to slow kidney failure. Prescription diets are available that have restricted protein content and restricted phosphate, with supplemented omega-3-fatty acids and antioxidants, all aimed at protecting the kidneys.
-  **Hydration:** Cats with kidney failure need to take on more water than normal to avoid becoming dehydrated. It is advisable to feed your cat a wet diet to increase their water intake. Make sure your cat has plenty of water bowls around the house too. If your cat is unwell and dehydrated, we may advise hospitalising them, so they can have intravenous fluids.
-  **Phosphate binders:** These can be added to your cat's food if they still have a high blood phosphate level despite having a low phosphate diet.

 **Controlling blood pressure:** if your cat has high blood pressure this can be controlled with daily tablets.

 **“ACE-Inhibitors”:** if your cat has protein in their urine, a daily tablet or liquid may be prescribed. These help support the blood flow through the kidneys which reduces the amount of protein lost, which may improve survival times.

What is the prognosis for my cat?

Sadly, kidney disease will gradually worsen, and you are likely to eventually need to consider euthanasia once your cat has a poor quality of life. The speed of deterioration is variable between individuals and can be from just a few weeks to several years (especially if diagnosed early).

We will advise regularly monitoring your cat's health at regular check-ups, alongside repeated blood tests, urine tests and blood pressure checks to ensure we are providing the right level of treatment and support to your cat.

Thornbury Veterinary Hospital
515 Bradford Road,
Thornbury,
Bradford,
BD3 7BA.

24 HOUR EMERGENCY - 01274 663301

Armley

236 Tong Road
Armley
Leeds
LS12 3BG

0113 2791576

Birkenshaw

744 Bradford Road
Birkenshaw
Bradford
BD11 2AE

01274 651115

Horsforth

1 Station Road
Horsforth
Leeds
LS18 5PA

0113 2591196

Meanwood

52 Green Road
Meanwood
Leeds
LS6 4JP

0113 2758329

Morley

Topcliffe Lane
Morley
Leeds
LS27 0HL

0113 2383823

Shadwell

143 Shadwell Lane
Shadwell
Leeds
LS17 8AE

0113 2698889

