

# Vets Park

for the pets in your life - your vet for life

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## Renal Failure in Cats

Your cat has been diagnosed with renal failure. This means your cat's kidneys are not working properly

Renal failure cannot be cured but by following our advice many cases can be well managed. Management of cats with renal failure requires a considerable amount of financial and emotional commitment from you the owner. It is vital that we work as a team. You play an important role in ensuring your cat receives the prescribed diet and medication.

### **Treating Cats with Renal Failure**

We will recommend some or all of the following treatments:

- Dietary Modification – this is the single most important factor in preventing deterioration in this disease. Feeding a special Prescription Diet has been proven to increase survival and reduce the severity of illness. We recommend Hill's Prescription Diet Feline k/d which comes as a dry food, cans or in pouches. In many cases these diets work out less expensive than your cat's current food.
- ACE inhibitors – these are tablets which help reduce the loss of protein into the urine and will be recommended for all cats with significant urinary protein loss and also cats with an elevated blood pressure.
- Oral Phosphate Binders – the early addition of this medication to the food has been shown to help control blood phosphorus levels which improve quality of life, weight gain and appetite.
- Other treatments which may be required include antibiotics for urinary tract infections, dietary supplementation of potassium if low potassium is found on blood tests and drugs to treat anaemia or encourage appetite if indicated.
- It is vital that all cats with renal failure have free access to unlimited amounts of fresh clean drinking water at all times. Additional water can be supplied in the form of wet food, additional water bowls (try using water fountains) and flavouring the water the prawns or tuna.

- A new treatment is available for those clients who wish to do absolutely everything they can for their cat with kidney failure. It involves inserting a small device under the skin to allow you to administer subcutaneous fluids painlessly at home. This is generally very well tolerated by cats and is a useful way to prevent dehydration especially in more advanced cases.

### **Monitoring Cats with Renal Failure**

Long term accurate monitoring is important to allow us to guide you towards the most appropriate treatment for your cat. Renal failure is inevitably progressive and so we will need to add in differing treatments over time. We advise monthly weight checks as this can be a very good indicator of how well your cat is coping. These monthly weight checks are free of charge. Generally we recommend more intensive monitoring every 3-6 months depending on your cat's body weight, initial presentation and our perception of how things are going. Our standard monitoring programme involves:

- Blood tests (including a full blood count and full biochemistry)
- Urine tests (including urine concentration test, sediment examination and protein levels). Regular urine testing is important because cats with high levels of protein in their urine tend not to do so well and urinary tract infections are common in cats with renal failure.
- Blood pressure measurement

Written estimates can be given for each test or course of treatment that may be needed.

Our approach is the gold standard for diagnosis, treatment and monitoring of cats with renal failure. We understand that some of these procedures may be difficult for individual clients to afford. If this is the case please discuss this with the veterinary surgeon so we can tailor a bespoke programme for your cat.

see [www.icatcare.org/advice-centre/cat-health/chronic-kidney-disease-cats](http://www.icatcare.org/advice-centre/cat-health/chronic-kidney-disease-cats)