

**Renal & Urinary Disorders**

FELINE IDIOPATHIC CYSTITIS



Studies report that between 3–5% of cats presented to veterinary clinics have feline lower urinary tract diseases (FLUTDs).

FLUTDs are a group of diseases affecting the bladder and urethra with many contributing factors, including stress, low water consumption, excess body weight, low levels of exercise, and confinement, and are prone to recur. Idiopathic cystitis is the most common FLUTD, accounting for 55–65% of cases. Nutrition can be part of a multimodal strategy to both manage this complex disease and reduce the risk of recurrence.

Key Messages

- Therapeutic urinary diets can help manage idiopathic cystitis and reduce the risk of recurrence by increasing water intake and urine volume, promoting a more dilute urine.
 - A more dilute urine contains a lower concentration of substances that are irritating to the bladder lining. A higher urine volume may also increase frequency of urination, helping eliminate these substances before they can cause irritation.
 - Promotion of a more dilute urine is recommended for the management of any FLUTD.
- For cats with idiopathic cystitis or other FLUTDs, it may be helpful to increase water intake:
 - Feed wet diets or add water to dry food.
 - Provide different water sources (still water, moving water, e.g., a fountain) and use different containers (avoid plastic) in case the pet has an individual preference.
 - Provide a specially-formulated, nutrient-enriched, flavored water supplement.

(continued on next page)

Key Messages (continued)

- Resources that reduce stress and associated risk factors for FLUTDs should be provided to cats with idiopathic cystitis, such as:
 - Activity with toys and play sessions, including providing food in puzzle feeders, which can also help maintain ideal body condition and, possibly, decrease other risk factors.
 - An adequate number of resources (e.g., food and water bowls, clean litter boxes, toys, space) in multi-pet households and easily accessible resources (e.g., a senior cat can comfortably climb into and out of the litter box).
- In cats, nutritional management of anxiety, as may be associated with stress, has been explored on a limited basis.

Additional Resources

Sparkes, A. (2018). Understanding feline idiopathic cystitis. *Vet Record*, 182(17), 486. doi: 10.1136/vr.k1848

Hostutler, R. A., Chew, D. J., & DiBartola, S. P. (2005). Recent concepts in feline lower urinary tract disease. *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice*, 35(1), 147–170, vii. doi: 10.1016/j.cvsm/2004.08.006

Westropp, J. L., Delgado, M., & Buffington, C. A. T. (2019). Chronic lower urinary tract signs in cats: Current understanding of pathophysiology and management. *Veterinary Clinics of North America: Small Animal Practice*, 49(2), 187–209. doi:10.1016/j.cvsm.2018.11.001

The Purina Institute aims to help put nutrition at the forefront of pet health discussions by providing user-friendly, science-based information that helps pets live longer, healthier lives.