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Urine Spraying in Cats: Finding the Culprit and Treatment

Urine spraying is a cat's way of marking its territory, and is unrelated to normal urination. Most common in non-neutered males and multi-cat households, the spraying of urine on vertical surfaces like draperies and furniture is a cat's way of identifying "his" property or covering the scent of other cats.

In a multi-cat household, it is important to determine which cat is exhibiting the behavior so that the proper intervention can be made. A safe and inexpensive dye (fluorescein) that can be orally administered to one cat in the household. That cat's urine will fluoresce under ultraviolet light for approximately 24 hours. To detect urine with fluorescein indicator, scan the household with a commercial black light or black light purchased from a novelty store. Although urine will commonly glow, fluorescein treated urine fluoresces a characteristic bright yellow. Scanning may also reveal previously undiscovered sites of elimination. By giving fluorescein to different cats at two day intervals, the culprit can be identified.

Prior to treatment, a veterinarian will typically perform an exam to rule out any physical cause. Administration of fluoxetine hydrochloride for treatment of urine spraying in cats can considerably reduce the rate of



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urine marking. Researchers recommend that most cats should be treated more than eight weeks to determine the full benefit of the therapy. In one study, the average number of spraying episodes per week in treated cats was 8.6 at the start of the study and decreased significantly to an average of less than one episode per week after 8 weeks of fluoxetine therapy while the spraying rate of cats receiving placebo did not decline. The medication dosage can be individualized for each cat and flavored by our compounding pharmacy.

Contact our compounding professionals for more information. We will work together with you and your veterinarian to solve your pets' medication problems.

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We care about our patients and want to provide you with quality information about your health. If you ever have questions or would like more information, please feel free to ask. We look forward to caring for you and your family.

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