

# Inappropriate Urination

## The First & Most Important Thing: Urinalysis & Vet Check

Have your cat examined and urine checked and cultured by a veterinarian. Often cats have infections, crystals, bladder stones or FUS (feline urinary syndrome) that cause them to inappropriately urinate. These conditions can be life threatening or debilitating if ignored. After your vet has given you the all clear that your kitty's urinary problem seems to be an environmental issue, then you may try the following:

**Your cat must be spayed or neutered for any of these tips to work well.**

## Make Adjustments to Your Litterbox

1. Take the cover off of the litter box. If the cover must be used, cut a second entrance. For many cats, going into a covered box is like being trapped or stepping into a smelly bathroom stall.... unpleasant!
2. Add an extra box in the house. The general rule is one more box than you have cats.
3. Provide the largest size box you can find....the bigger the better. At least 1 ½ times the length of the cat from nose tip to base of tail. We sometimes recommend the ones that are made for small dogs to use in the house.
4. Avoid electric litter boxes. The electric mechanism can scare your cat so they are hesitant to use the litter box regularly.

## Make Adjustments to Your Litter

1. Make sure you are using **non-scented, clumping, scoopable** litter. Litter can be a clay, whole wheat, or corn based such as 'World's Best Litter'.
2. If aversion to litter or box location is suspected, offer a new litter type and/or a new litter box location to determine if there is a preference/aversion. Cat Attract Litter Additive or Cat Attract Litter has a unique herbal scent that can attract cats to use litter boxes that haven't been doing so.
3. Some cats prefer an empty litter box with no litter at all.

## Cleaning

1. The litter box must be kept extremely clean. This means scooping the litter box 1-2 times daily as a minimum (some cats need it done more often), wash the entire box weekly with a mild detergent such as dish soap. Do not use ammonia based cleanser, bleach, or anything strong smelling.
2. Keep your cat clean by trimming long hair between toes and around the perineum.
3. Keep dirty & clean clothing, blankets, backpacks, bathroom rugs or any other "target" items up off of the floor.
4. Clean urine spots with an enzyme based cleaner, Urine-Away or Nature's Miracle are some good ones. Feliway spray is not a cleaner.

## Safe Passage

1. Avoid placement of boxes in noisy (ie...loud washing machine), drafty or high traffic areas (dog or human). Avoid placement of litter box in areas that are difficult to reach or not readily available.
2. Address conflicts between pets, make sure you provide a safe passage to the litter box twice a day. In other words, if your cat is being (or has been) scared by another pet getting to the litter box they may not regularly use it and may need a litter box in a safer location or you may have to carry them to the litter box twice daily.
3. For elderly cats provide a night light near the litter box at night.

## Anxiety

1. If the urinary issue is deemed environmental and you've exhausted the above recommendations then you may want to discuss with your veterinarian the possibility of treating for anxiety. The use of anxiolytics can help.
2. Consider the use of Feliway spray or plug-ins. Discuss with your veterinarian which one may be able to help you and your cat.
  - A) Feliway Spray: may decrease the desire to mark in the house.
  - B) Plug-in: may decrease stress and anxiety.

Feliway is not a cleaner; do not spray directly onto just cleaned surfaces and the enzymes in the cleaner will break down the active ingredient in Feliway.