

## **Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease**

### **What is FLUTD?**

FLUTD (commonly referred to as F.U.S. - Feline Urological Syndrome) is one of the major health concerns of cat owners. Since this disease affects both male and female cats, it is a disease about which every cat owner should be informed.

Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease is a condition which indicates problems associated with the lower urinary tract. Most frequently, this involves the symptoms specifically associated with the cat's urinary bladder. Some of the symptoms may include:

- Straining in the Litter Box
- Crying While Trying to Urinate
- Frequent Urination
- Blood in Urine

If left untreated, the result can be a complete blockage of the urethra (*the tube leading from the bladder to the outside*). Blockage occurs more commonly in male cats because the urethra tends to be narrower than in the female. If your cat exhibits any of these symptoms, have him / her examined by your veterinarian immediately.

FLUTD occurs most commonly in young adult cats between one and six years old. Cats prone to develop FLUTD usually experience their first episode by the age of three.

### **What Causes FLUTD?**

Today, most veterinarians believe that a variety of factors influence the occurrence and the severity of FLUTD. Such factors have included stress, genetics, bacterial and viral infections, as well as factors which affect urinary pH, such as diet. While diet alone is not a cause or a prevention, it can have an influence on the occurrence of this condition.

**In a family of several cats, all of whom eat the same diet, only one gets FLUTD.**

### **Why?**

This is a question without a precise answer. There are many aspects of FLUTD that are not completely understood, and not all cases are caused by the cat's food. Also, cats, like people, exhibit metabolic differences. As a result, a food that produces acidic urine in one cat may be less effective in doing so in another. Finally, each cat has his own eating pattern and reacts differently to stress and other changes, all of which may affect urine acidity. Discuss a nutritional plan for your cat with your veterinarian.