

# Blocked Cat Syndrome

## Bladder Stones In Our Feline Friends Can Be Deadly

By: Kate Lawrence and Dr. Brittany Neal, DACVS  
Gulf Coast Veterinary Specialists  
www.gcvcs.com

Joey was a typical cat. He loved catnip, naps, and sunning himself on the back of the couch whenever possible. Everything was perfect, until his owner noticed one day that Joey had stopped eating, was visiting the litter box a lot more than usual, and seemed to be straining to urinate.

however, it's possible for female cats to become blocked as well.

Animals become blocked when mucous and crystals or bladder stones make their way from the bladder down the urethra, and are too large to continue to pass through the small space. This is why male cats are so much more

get comfortable, straining to urinate with very little urine production, if any.

When a cat is blocked, it is a life-threatening emergency that needs immediate veterinary care. It's possible for the bladder to rupture, or for the toxins built up in the system from the urine to cause death within 1-2 days. Initially, Joey's family veterinarian attempted to place a urinary catheter and relieve the blockage, allowing him to urinate. When that was unsuccessful an x-ray was taken of Joey's abdomen, revealing the presence of multiple bladder stones both in his bladder and wedged in his urethra. Joey's vet immediately recommended that

owner will have to keep a close eye on him in the future. Some cats become re-blocked over and over, and these advanced cases often require a delicate surgical procedure called a perineal urethrostomy (PU). A PU involves creating a new opening in the urethra where it is larger in diameter and less likely to become obstructed or blocked in the future. Consultation with a board-certified surgeon may be recommended for these patients to discuss the complex surgery and subsequent aftercare.

There are many cats who suffer from urinary pathology, but unfortunately cats are very adept at hiding most ailments

*When a cat is blocked, it is a life-threatening emergency that needs immediate veterinary care.*

Joey undergo a surgical procedure called a cystotomy with a veterinary surgical specialist. During a cystotomy procedure, the surgeon cuts into the bladder to remove any stones or sediment that could cause continued irritation and blockage.

Luckily for Joey, the cystotomy procedure was a complete success, and he was able to go home soon after his surgery. A change in diet based on an analysis of the bladder stones will help prevent or delay the formation of new stones, but Joey's

until they become serious. It's important to monitor your cat for subtle signs of discomfort, frequent urination, inappropriate urination, or change in appetite. Cats with urinary issues can live full and happy lives, even in severe cases, with surgical intervention and on-going medical management. Talk to your family veterinarian about medical management options for your pet, and if necessary, speak with a veterinary surgeon about surgical options to help manage of your cat's urinary problems.



**Patient with Bladder Stones**

Concerned, she called her family veterinarian, who advised her to bring Joey in right away. He explained that he suspected Joey might be suffering from a urethral obstruction, or "blocked cat" syndrome. This condition affects male cats almost exclusively;

likely to become blocked – their urethras are much smaller than their female counterparts, especially at the end, where it narrows. When a cat becomes blocked, the symptoms can include decreased appetite, vocalization (crying), hiding, inability to