

# Pat related aggression in Cats

The behaviour of cats is sometimes a wonder. When you are patting your cat, why would your peaceful, purring puss suddenly bite and run away?

The truth is that some cats are not lap cats. While we enjoy patting the cat, there is no rule to say the cat has to enjoy the interaction too. A cuddle session may start comfortably from a cat's perspective but many cats reach their limit and then struggle to leave. The cat tries harder to escape our clutches and it soon realises that a strategically placed claw tip or bite, results in rapid ejection from the lap.

So what are the solutions that will turn this moggie into the perfect purring puss-cat?



## Know the warning signs:

It will help if you can predict when your cat is going to be aggressive and then refrain from interacting with him or her at these times. If observant, certain clues will become apparent.

- The ears may go back
- The skin or tail may start to twitch
- The pupils may dilate
- There may be a low growl
- The body may stiffen

If your cat is showing any of the signs above, then stay clear. Only interact with your cat when its demeanour shows you it is calm.

Once you are aware of the warning signs, you can start to time how long your cat likes to be patted.

## Change the way you pat your cat:

Some cats may prefer short small strokes; others prefer to be scratched under the chin or between the ears.

## Do NOT physically correct the cat:

Do not give your cat any physical correction if he does turn and bite, since it may cause him to be more aggressive.

## Counter conditioning:

You may be able to relieve your cat's pat related aggression by offering a reward or treat for not biting. If the cat makes any indication that it wants to leave, do not attempt to stop it.

## Make sure your cat does not have a medical condition:

Some cats may have arthritis or other conditions which may cause pain or irritability. If in doubt get puss checked by a Veterinarian.

**HAPPY CUDDLING!**



- Some cats have survived falls from over 32 stories (320 metres) onto concrete! This is due largely to their "righting reflex".
- The CIA spent US\$20 million in the 60's training cats with microphones implanted in their ears to spy on their foes. The first CIA spy cat was hit by a taxi.
- One study found neutered males live 62% longer than unneutered ones.
- Cats are believed to be responsible for the extinction of several species of animals.



# THOUGHTS

The Vets  
who ❤️  
your pets

Autumn  
2016

## FOR PAWS



## Do you have a pet with sore red eyes?

**Keratoconjunctivitis Sicca.** Quite a mouthful isn't it? This is the scientific term for a condition that causes red and sore eyes due to dryness. It's more commonly referred to as "dry eye".

This can be a distressing condition that has many different causes. We regularly see it in breeds which have eyes that protrude from the head (like a pug or cocker-spaniel) and every now then we see it in animals with an immune disorder causing the tear glands to slowly be destroyed. This is called immune-mediated adenitis. Because immune-mediated adenitis attacks the tear gland the damage caused by this condition is irreversible. However, the good news is that if it is recognised early there is prescription medication available to slow any further deterioration of the gland.

### *So how do we diagnose dry eye?*

The vet will use a Schirmer Tear Test – this is a small strip of special blotting paper. It's held against the eyeball of the animal for a minute and measures the amount of moisture produced by the eye. You may have already seen your vet carry out this test when you've brought your pet in for an eye check. It is a very useful tool that gives us a good estimate of effective tear production.

If you have any concerns about your dog's eyes please book them in for a check up. The longer eye problems are left, the more likely any changes might become permanent, which could mean loss of vision and even blindness.

## At home dental care for your dog

While home care products are no replacement for dental checks and dental care from a professional, they can still have huge benefits. A good regime of dental care in the home will help to keep your pets breath fresher and can even increase the time between costly dental procedures.

Home dental care aims to minimise the build up of plaque on the teeth of your pet. This prevents the mineralisation (hardening) of plaque which forms calculus (otherwise known as tartar).

Different home care options include: Tooth-brushing, chewing toys and treats, dental antiseptics which can be added to water and some premium diets even offer special food designed to keep your pets teeth clean. It is important to choose an option that is suitable for you and your pet, one that you can maintain and be consistent with. Before commencing with any of these regimes you should have your pet's mouth examined by a vet.

Contact us to discuss what options may suit you, or you can make an appointment to take advantage of our [free dental checks](#).



## Practice News

### Welcome to the Autumn edition of our Newsletter

We've recently had to say goodbye to Nicky, our head nurse at the Papamoa Clinic. Nicky is stepping back to take maternity leave and while she will be missed greatly – I'm sure you will all join us in wishing her and her soon to be new family all the best!

In her place we are welcoming back Mel O who has been working as the head nurse at a clinic in Auckland. Like the rest of us she couldn't stay away from the sun and surf on offer here in the Bay!



Our system reminders are now being sent out through text messages and emails. Please let us know if any of your details change so we can keep you up to date.