

# TO YOUR

# Pet's

# Health

## Anxiety IN YOUR CAT



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In the past couple of articles, we have been focusing on anxiety in dogs. Did you know that cats get anxiety as well? Some of the signs of anxiety and causes might surprise you! So, let us spend a little time talking about them.

Just like puppies, it is absolutely necessary to socialize your new kitten. The more positive events, situations, and people that the kitten can be exposed to the better. The most important developmental time for socialization in kittens is between 7 to 12 weeks of age. The better socialized your kitten is the more outgoing and confident it will be. However, if you get your kitten at a little older age or as an adult, all is not lost. It is still important to socialize them but take into consideration that you may have to introduce new things slowly as not to cause a traumatic or fearful situation.

Acute signs of anxiety in cats include panting, trembling, drooling, increased movement, trying to hide, excessive vocalization, and holding its tail close to the body or flicking it a lot. More chronic signs of anxiety are always hiding in a new situation, decreased appetite, destruction, excessive grooming, house soiling or inappropriate urination. As always, it is important to make sure there is not an underlying medical condition such as a urinary tract infection, kidney

disease, or allergic skin issues that may be causing the noted signs.

Cats are very routine oriented. They tend not to adapt well to quickly changing situations that interrupt that routine. They also like to be able to hide in small spaces, so any situation that seems to leave them open and exposed are ones to avoid. Some situations that can cause anxiety in cats include new house guests, new pets, any unfamiliar object, abrupt loud noises, wide open spaces, or leaving home. Just remember that cats do not like change. If at all possible, try to make any necessary change slowly.

If you notice that your cat is constantly trying to hide in new situations or is slinking around the room instead of coming out to greet you, that is a strong indication it may be suffering from some kind of fear or anxiety. One of the first things to help treat an anxiety, is trying to figure out what is triggering it. Try to pay close attention to any situation where the unwanted or unusual sign is happening.

There are different medications, supplements, foods and pheromones that can be used to help with the cat's anxiety. However, a certain amount of behavioral modification is needed to truly help the cat be less fearful.



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