

How to tell if your cat is in pain

You are in the best position to look for subtle changes in behavior that indicate your pet may be in pain. If your cat shows one or more of these behaviors, he/she may be hurting. By completing this assessment, you are helping us to identify possible painful conditions.

Please check all that apply:

Vocalization:

- Meowing more than usual
- Purring that seems to be associated with pain
- Hissing
- Growling
- Vocalizes differently: makes sounds that are not normal for him/her

Daily habits:

- Withdraws from social interaction with family members or other animals
- Decreased appetite
- Sleeps more or less than previously; sleeps in an unusual position, not curled up; sleeps in abnormal locations that may be easier to get to (do not require jumping)
- Changes in drinking habits
- Urinates or defecates outside the litterbox; has difficulty getting in or out of the litterbox, unable to squat;
- Constipation
- Won't groom or grooms less, looks unkempt
- Licking, biting, or overgrooming a particular part of the body

Activity level:

- Restless
- Reluctant to move, or moves slowly or stiffly
- Trembles or shakes
- Limp
- Less active: plays, hunts, or play-hunts less
- Avoids jumping, or can't leap as high as previously
- Avoids or has difficulty on stairs
- Seeks more affection
- Hides

Posture:

- Generally lays with feet underneath
- Avoids or has difficulty stretching
- Reluctant to sharpen his/her claws or scratch

Facial expression:

- Glazed, wide-eyed, or looks sleepy
- Squints
- Enlarged pupils

Self-protection:

- Protects a part of the body
- Doesn't put weight on a leg
- Doesn't want to be held, picked up, or petted

Aggression:

Especially a previously friendly cat

- Acts out of character
- Growls, hisses, or bites
- Pins ears back
- Is aggressive to humans or other cats

Please list any other changes that are not listed above:

Name of pet: _____ Date: _____ Your signature: _____

You are taking the best care of your best friend: Your veterinary practice is accredited by the American Animal Hospital Association. Unlike human hospitals, veterinary practices are not required to be accredited. Your veterinary team volunteered to be evaluated on about 900 standards of veterinary excellence in order to become accredited. AAHA-accredited practices are recognized among the finest in the profession and are consistently at the forefront of advanced veterinary medicine.

AAHA's *Standards of Accreditation* are continuously reviewed and updated to keep our accredited practices on the cutting edge of veterinary excellence. Our standards address patient care and pain management, surgery, pharmacy, laboratory, exam facilities, medical records, cleanliness, emergency services, dental care, diagnostic imaging, anesthesiology, and continuing education. To maintain accredited status, hospitals undergo comprehensive onsite evaluations every three years. Learn more about our standards and how they contribute to the health of your pet at bit.ly/XNnomU.

