



EASTGATE VETERINARY CENTRE

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Feline Senility

As pet cats are reaching much older ages than in the past, more and more cases of feline senility are being noted. As with older people, this may range from absent-mindedness to more bizarre behaviours. Some of the more commonly seen behaviours are listed below:

- Restlessness and waking at night
- Yowling for no particular reason, especially at night
- Confusion, e.g. asking to be fed despite having been offered food shortly before, pacing around the house with no purpose.
- Disorientation, e.g. getting lost in familiar places or getting stuck in rooms.
- Reduced interaction and playing with people, increased daytime sleeping.
- Inappropriate house soiling, e.g. messing in the house despite ready access to a litter tray or outdoors.

If your cat suffers from a number of these then the chances are they have feline senility. All animals (and people) produce harmful chemicals called free radicals. Naturally they produce antioxidants to reduce these, but as they get older the levels of free radicals increase and the antioxidants deteriorate.

The solution to these problems is to supplement your cat's diet with antioxidants. The supplement we recommend is a product called Aktivait (produced by VetPlus, www.vetplus.co.uk). It is a formula of antioxidants and compounds to maintain healthy brain function, and comes in a capsule form which is sprinkled on food. It has a loading period of 3-4 weeks before its benefits will be fully seen, and often results in marked improvements in the behaviour and quality of life of older cats.

Senility can disturb the whole household, and result in family members getting upset with the loved family pet, at times even considering euthanasia if symptoms start getting too severe. However there are options that can be explored and these should always be discussed with your vet to avoid any rash decisions.

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