

Cleo Trost 19y

What Makes a – Geriatric – Cat Friendly Practice

Daniëlle Gunn-Moore
Professor of Feline Medicine



international cat care

Home » Cat Friendly Clinic

What is a Cat Friendly Clinic?

- why/when: regular/irregular
- who/when: additional resources
- what/when: additional resources
- find a cat friendly clinic
- owners: from about CFC
- owners: what to expect
- owners: tell your vet
- 'antitank' competition

Cat Friendly Clinic is a worldwide programme from the International Society of Feline Medicine, the veterinary division of International Cat Care.

We recognise that because of their unique nature and needs, taking a cat to a veterinary clinic can be very stressful, both for the cat and also the owner. The Cat Friendly Clinic programme is designed to help address these issues by creating more cat friendly veterinary clinics and so reducing the stress for the cat, and making veterinary visits easier for cat owners as well.

www.icatcare.org



International Cat Care & cat-friendly practice

- <https://icatcare.org/veterinary/resources> - 16 videos on many aspects of cat handling, including:
 - How to assess the cat's behaviour & likely responses
 - Handling for blood sampling
 - Intravenous catheter placement
 - Administering oral, aural & ocular products
 - Tips on towel wrapping to assist handling in a comfortable way
 - How to safely handle really scared 'aggressive' cats & others



Territorial

Not seeing / hearing / smelling other cats

Stresses associated with Clinics

PREDATORS PREY

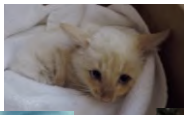


Fear responses

Flight, Fight, Freeze
Cat carrier / (car) journey / waiting room / consultation / procedures / hospitalisation / return home

RECOGNITION OF STRESS: Feline Fear Responses (the 4-Fs)

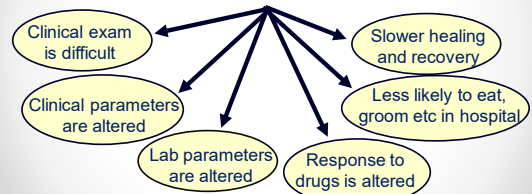
- Flight** – tries to escape from the fearful stimulus (avoidance)
- Fight** – outward aggression; occurs when no escape route (repulsion)
- Freeze** – initial response to fearful stimulus (inhibition)
- Fidget** – 'displacement' behaviour e.g. ↑ grooming (appeasement)



Stress is not always easy to recognise!

Why think 'cat friendly'?

Stress has serious consequences →



Sarah Caney

Clinical parameters affected by stress

- Heart rate
- Respiratory rate
- Blood pressure
- Temperature
- Blood glucose
 - Stress hyperglycaemia
 - May result in glycosuria
- Haematology profile
 - Stress leukogram →
 - ↑ neuts, ↓ lymphs
 - Activated platelets



Why think 'cat friendly'?

Longer term consequences of stress:

- Anorexia
- Depression
- Delayed healing

Andy Sparkes



Sarah Caney



Why think 'cat friendly'?

A calmer & happier cat:

- Will be easier to examine
- Will give more accurate clinical & laboratory results
- So a correct diagnosis is made sooner & appropriate treatment instituted
- More rapid recovery from illness



How to be cat friendly?

- **Building design**
 - Cat-only waiting area & ward
- **Staff attitude & training**
 - Understanding & flexibility with anxious cats
- **Waiting room displays**
 - Feline friendly credentials, sources of information, catteries, etc
- **Owner support**
 - e.g. getting the cat to the vets
- **And so much more!**



Sarah Caney



Molly in her carrier with Feliway Classic-sprayed blanket, on a raised up shelf in the waiting room
Louise Connolly



Shelving unit for cat carriers in cat only area of the waiting room – allowing them to be raised off the floor and with barriers between each carrier to avoid eye contact between cats and acting as a sight barrier

If a wire basket, put it in a pillow case or put a big towel over it



Aging is individual

Cécile 16y



| Life stage | Age of cat | Human equivalent |
|---|--------------|------------------|
| Kitten (born to 6 months old) | 0 – 1 month | 0 – 1 year |
| | 2 – 3 months | 2 – 4 years |
| | 4 months | 6 – 8 years |
| | 6 months | 10 years |
| Junior (7 months old to 2 years old) | 7 months | 12 months |
| | 12 months | 18 months |
| | 18 months | 21 months |
| | 2 years | 24 years |
| Prime (3 years old to 6 years old) | 3 | 28 |
| | 4 | 32 |
| | 5 | 36 |
| | 6 | 40 |
| Mature (7 years old to 10 years old) | 7 | 44 |
| | 8 | 48 |
| | 9 | 52 |
| | 10 | 56 |
| Senior (11 years old to 14 years old) | 11 | 60 |
| | 12 | 64 |
| | 13 | 68 |
| | 14 | 72 |
| Geriatric (15 years old to 25 years old) | 15 | 76 |
| | 16 | 80 |
| | 17 | 84 |
| | 18 | 88 |
| | 19 | 92 |
| | 20 | 96 |
| | 21 | 100 |
| | 22 | 104 |
| | 23 | 108 |
| | 24 | 112 |
| 25 | 116 | |

Super Senior

Teaninich 18y



Mortlach 17y



Stephanie Brickman Blue 14y



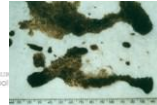
Why don't owners want to bring elderly cats to clinics?

- The change is part of normal ageing - ↓ weight, arthritis, confusion
- Embarrassed as they cannot cope with their cat's behavioural changes - ↑ vocalisation, house-soiling
- Misconception that nothing can be done to help
- Stress to owner & cat visiting the clinic
- Worried that euthanasia will be suggested



Owner education

- Ensure early socialisation with people
- Acclimatise to car travel
- Carrier = safe place (food, treats)
- Feliway Classic™ spray
- Favoured blanket
- ↓ negative pheromones after each visit
- Pregabalin (Bonqat™ 50mg/ml, 1-2mg/kg PO) ~90 minutes before travel
- Gabapentin or trazadone 50-100mg/cat PO 120 minutes before travel



Mobility / Dementia Questionnaire

| My cat ... | Yes | Maybe | No |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Is less willing to jump up or down | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Will only jump up or down from lower heights | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shows signs of being stiff at times | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is less agile than previously | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Shows signs of lameness or limping | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has difficulty getting in or out of the cat flap | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has difficulty going up or down stairs | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cries when picked up | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Has more accidents outside the litter tray | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Spends less time grooming | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Plays with other animals or toys less | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is less / more reluctant to interact with me | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Cries out loudly for no apparent reason | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Changes in sleep / wake cycles | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Appears forgetful | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



Clinical Metrology Instruments (CMI) e.g. feline musculoskeletal pain index e.g. VetMetrica

Accelerometers

Take a video

Ageing changes

Concurrent physiological & pathological changes

- Coat
- Senses
- Metabolic rate
- Gut
- Kidneys
- Liver
- Immune system
- Skeleton
- Brain

Nessa 16y



Investigation of old cats

Multiple & interacting diseases

- Chronic kidney disease
- Diabetes mellitus
- Hyperthyroidism
- Hypertension
- Constipation
- Arthritis
- Dementia (aka Cognitive dysfunction syndrome)



Mortlach 18 years

Investigation of old cats

Prompt & full investigation

Owner observation:

- Weight change
- Food & water consumption
- Urine & faeces production
- Behaviour
- CDS / Arthritis Questionnaire

Senior Health Care Clinics

- Tailor to individual



The feline consult

- Body weight – calculate % weight change: 5% = BAD!
- Eye examination
- Blood pressure
- Thorough physical examination
- Orthopaedic / neurological examination
- Blood tests – **assess BP before bloods**
- Serum biochemistry & T₄, haematology, ± FeLV/FIV
- Urine analysis – culture & UPC
- Further investigations



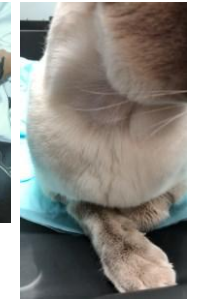
The feline consult

- Feliway Classic & Optimum, & Pet Remedy
- Don't rush – **calm, quiet & gentle (NO SHUSHING)**
- Let the cat settle – **take respiratory rate in the box**
- Examine it where it is comfortable & feels more secure
- Give treats – esp. kittens



The feline consult

- Try to think 'cat'
- A 'less is more' approach works best
- Avoid direct eye contact
- Do not corner the cat
- Consider underlying pain



Things to remember

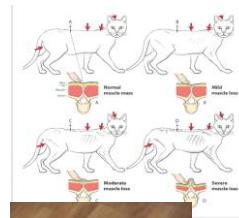
- Palpate thyroid glands
- Matched pulses
- Look for jugular pulse
- Perform hepatic jugular reflex?
- Thorough chest examination
- **40% of cats that die from pneumonia had no obvious respiratory signs**
- Check feet



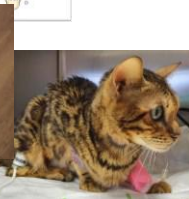
Take temperature

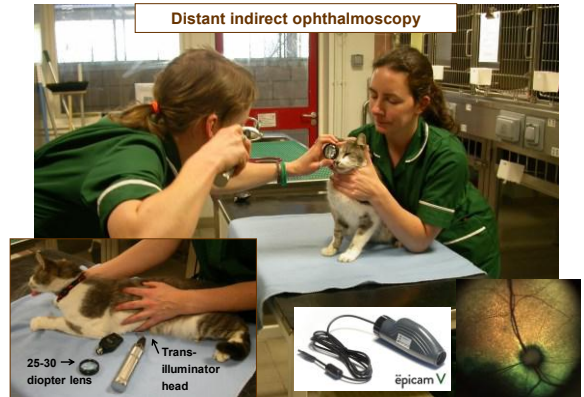
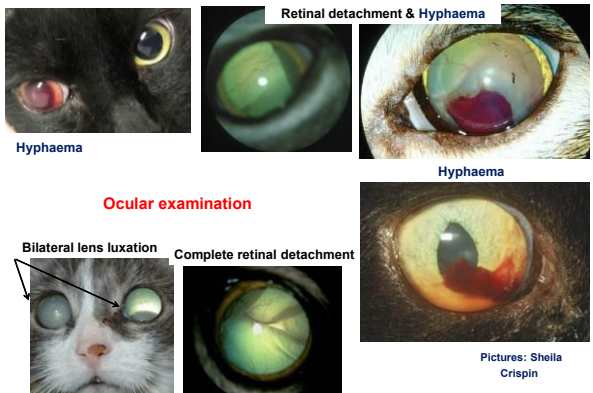
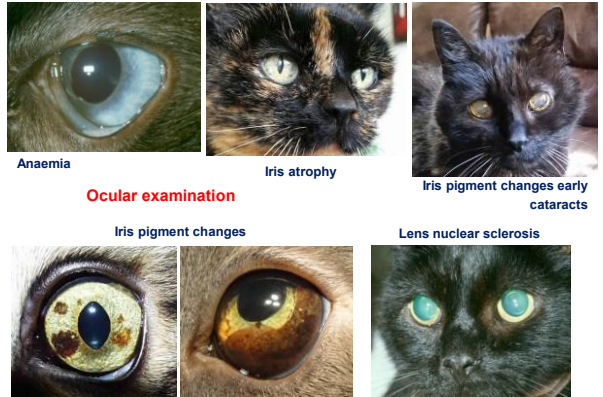
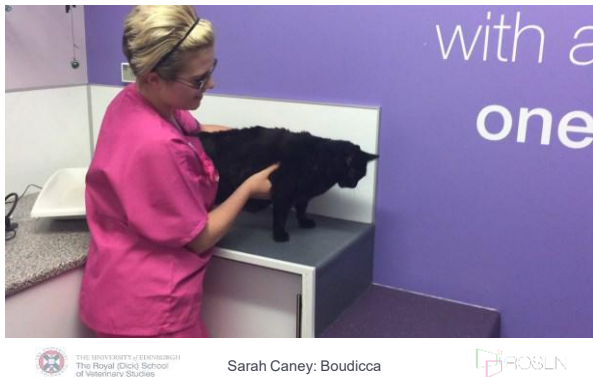
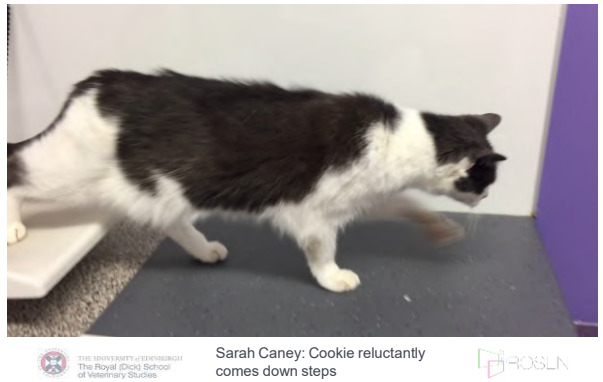
- Rectal temp – ↑accurate but ↑stress & ↑HR
- Axillary better than ear temp. & signif. fewer cats with signif. differences (>0.5°C)
- Axillary ~ rectal temp. in normal & thin cats
- Axillary ~ rectal temp. in 80% of cases

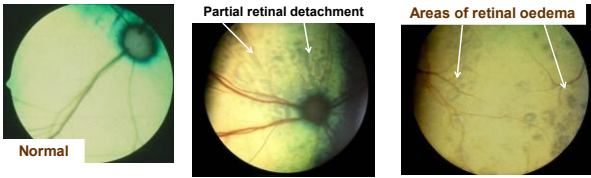
Smith et al. JFMS, 2015



- Body Condition Scores
- Muscle Condition Scores
- Limited orthopaedic & Neurological examination



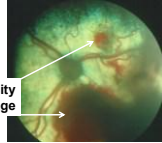




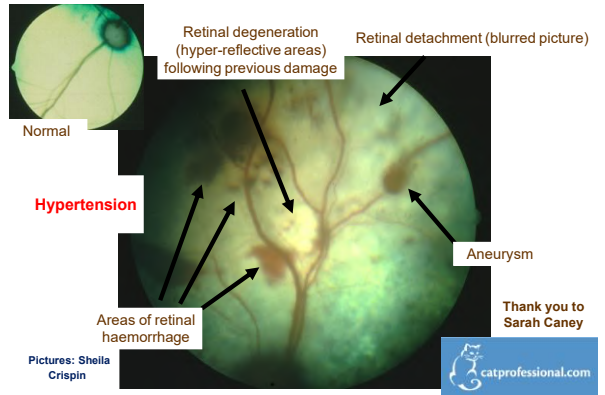
Hypertension

- Anterior chamber, vitreal or retinal haemorrhage
- Retinal oedema or detachment
- Arterial tortuosity
- Constriction & dilation of retinal primary venules
- Retinal degeneration
- Glaucoma
- Blindness

Pics: Sheila Crispin



Arterial tortuosity & haemorrhage

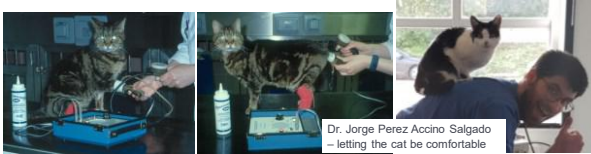


Normal
 Retinal degeneration (hyper-reflective areas) following previous damage
 Retinal detachment (blurred picture)
 Hypertension
 Aneurysm
 Areas of retinal haemorrhage
 Thank you to Sarah Caney
 Pictures: Sheila Crispin
 catprofessional.com



Assess Blood Pressure

- Indirect methods for measuring BP
- In cats, Doppler method is best
- Doppler - unpredictable at obtaining diastolic pressure



Dr. Jorge Perez Accino Salgado - letting the cat be comfortable



Use appropriate tools



Blood sampling



Blood sampling

- 'Less is best'
- Don't scruff
- Avoid touching feet
- Don't stretch legs unless essential
- Hold head / legs in a 'natural' position

Elderly cat with bad elbow arthritis – do not hold legs



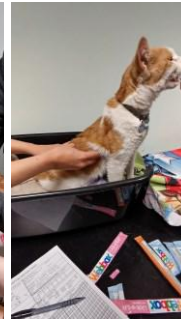
Elderly cat – often only need to hold the chin up

Blood sampling

Elbow OA can make cephalic sampling painful



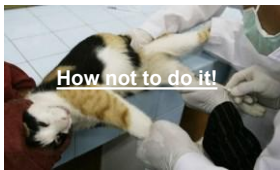
Fabulous: Cat Nurse Brd Seoghe with Pip-Squeak & Colin Masterton



'Unhandeable' ex-street cat Fred, being examined, having blood taken and having his heart assessed



Blood sampling



The Government of Wales
The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Studies



Restraint

- Towels
- Muzzles
- Bags



Sedation & analgesia

If unable to sample without stress then sedate

- Pregabalin (0.1 ml/kg) PO 1.5 hours B4 travel
- Gabapentin or trazadone (50-100mg/cat) PO 2 hours B4 travel
- Alphaxalone (2-3mg/kg) + butorphanol (0.3ml/kg) IM ± Medetomidine
- Ketamine + midazolam ± medetomidine
- Consider analgesia in all cases



Pankratz, et al JFMS 2018

No analgesia Post analgesia



Cat Ward

- Cat Friendly Practice
- Monitor water & food intake
- Monitor urination & defecation
- Weigh daily

Calculate % weight change





Key resources - food, water, litter box, resting place, hiding place



THE SPECTRUM OF FEAR, ANXIETY & STRESS

RED: SEVERE SIGNS - FIGHT/AGGRESSIVE (FAS 5)

RED: SEVERE SIGNS - FLIGHT/FREEZE/FRET (FAS 4)

YELLOW: MODERATE SIGNS (FAS 3)

GREEN: MILD/TURTLE SIGNS (FAS 2)

GREEN: PERIOD-INTERESTED/ANNOYED? (FAS 2.5)

GREEN: RELAXED (FAS 1)

Fear Scales

Emotional Record

Today my FAS score is: _____

My Cat/My Horse is _____
My Student is _____

My blanket looks like _____
My blanket location is _____

Assess all cats on entry to ward

Assess all cats ≥ 3 daily depending on illness, recent trauma, surgery, etc.

Scale anxiolytics up or down as needed

Pain Scales e.g., The Feline Grimace Scale

Assess all cats on entry to ward

Assess all cats ≥ 3 daily depending on illness, recent trauma, surgery, etc.

Assess pain after giving analgesia

Scale analgesia up or down as needed

Part of the Glasgow Acute Pain Scale

Question 1

a) Look at the following caricatures. Circle the drawing which best depicts the cat's ear position?

Question 2

b) Look at the shape of the muzzle in the following caricatures. Circle the drawing which appears most like that of the cat?

Colorado State University
Veterinary Medical Center
Feline Acute Pain Scale

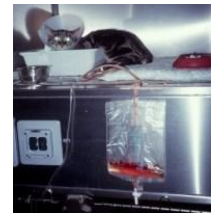
| Score | Example | Physiological & Behavioral | Response to Opioid | Signs/Status |
|-------|---------|--------------------------------------|---|--------------|
| 0 | | 1) Collapsed and/or pinned back ears | 2) Not sedated by a quantity of opioid analgesic (e.g., morphine) | Minimal |
| 1 | | 1) Collapsed and/or pinned back ears | 2) Sedated by a quantity of opioid analgesic (e.g., morphine) | Mild |
| 2 | | 1) Collapsed and/or pinned back ears | 2) Sedated by a quantity of opioid analgesic (e.g., morphine) | Moderate |
| 3 | | 1) Collapsed and/or pinned back ears | 2) Sedated by a quantity of opioid analgesic (e.g., morphine) | Severe |
| 4 | | 1) Collapsed and/or pinned back ears | 2) Sedated by a quantity of opioid analgesic (e.g., morphine) | Very Severe |

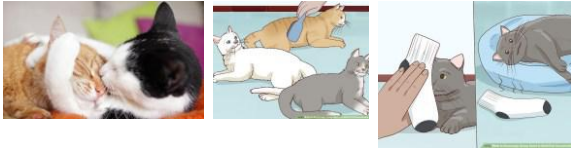
Comments: _____

- ### Analgesia
- Consider underlying pain - e.g. joints
 - Local anaesthetic - e.g. dentals, etc.
 - Epidural e.g. with urinary catheters
 - Consider analgesia in **all** cases



Keep warm





When a cat returns home:

If multiple cats

- Keep separate for a short time to disrupted scent profile
- Diffuse Feliway Friends™ or Feliway Optimum™
- Cloth to transfer scent between them




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 of Veterinary Studies

Thank you!
Questions?




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<https://www.nordicnaturals.com/uk/>