

New AAFP/ISFM guidelines for diagnosing and solving house-soiling behavior in cats

June 27 2014

Owners of house-soiling cats frequently abandon or relinquish these pets to shelters where many are euthanized as unadoptable. Veterinarians can significantly decrease this number by preventing house soiling or effectively treating it. To provide practice guidelines for veterinary professionals, the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) and the International Society of Feline Medicine (ISFM), have released the AAFP/ISFM Guidelines for Diagnosing and Solving House-Soiling Behavior in Cats, which has also been endorsed by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA). [Click here to access the guidelines.](#)

The AAFP/ISFM Guidelines for Diagnosing and Solving House-Soiling Behavior in Cats contain scientifically documented information when available and provide practical insight that reflects the accumulated clinical experiences of the authors. The document emphasizes that this unwanted behavior is not due to spite or anger toward the owner, but because the cat's physical, social, or medical needs are not being met. The guidelines replace the term "inappropriate urination" with the term "house soiling" because "house soiling" implies no misconduct by the cat and thus, may encourage owners to better follow veterinary recommendations.

These guidelines help clinicians identify the causative factors of house soiling and include a cat owner questionnaire which is customizable for clinic use. Within the document is an algorithm for the diagnosis and treatment of the four basic categories of house soiling. The guidelines propose and explain two universal suggestions for the management of all

cases of house soiling: (1) optimizing the litter box/tray and (2) meeting the "five pillars" of feline environmental needs. They also include specific treatment suggestions for each diagnostic category, take-home instructions for cat owners, and what steps practitioners can take if the frustrated client is considering euthanasia. "Our hope is that by using these guidelines, veterinary practices will be able to more effectively and confidently address cases of feline house soiling," said Hazel Carney, DVM, MS, DABVP, and AAEP Advisory Panel Co-Chair. "Success with these cases will improve the veterinary–client–patient relationships and overall feline welfare, while keeping cats in their homes with a good quality of life."

More information: To access an audio podcast of an interview with Dr. Carney, visit: jfm.sagepub.com/site/Podcast/podcast_dir.xhtml

Provided by SAGE Publications

Citation: New AAEP/ISFM guidelines for diagnosing and solving house-soiling behavior in cats (2014, June 27) retrieved 20 March 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2014-06-aafpisfm-guidelines-house-soiling-behavior-cats.html>

<p>This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.</p>
--