

PETWISE PET HEALTH HUB

Vomiting in cats

Overview

Most cases of vomiting in cats will improve with minimal treatment from your vet but occasionally vomiting can be a sign of something more serious.

Contact your vet if your cat has been vomiting for more than 24 hours, if their vomiting is very severe (e.g. several times throughout the day or contains blood), if they seem unwell in themselves or you think they may have eaten something they shouldn't have.

How to tell if your cat is feeling sick

If your cat is feeling sick but not actually vomiting they may show the following signs:

- Turning their head away from food
- Eating less or nothing at all
- Licking their lips
- Swallowing repeatedly
- Drooling
- Being restless
- Eating grass
- Lethargy



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Causes of vomiting

By far the most common cause of vomiting is a simple tummy upset (gastritis) because of, for example, a food that disagreed with them. Causes include:

- Simple tummy upset (gastritis)
- Worms
- An overactive thyroid gland (hyperthyroidism)
- Kidney disease (CKD)
- Pancreatitis
- Food allergies
- Inflammatory bowel disease (IBD)
- Diabetes
- Poisons or toxins, for example eating a poisoned mouse, antifreeze poisoning or lily plant toxicity
- Medication side effect
- Travel sickness

Rarer causes of vomiting in cats include:

- Gut blockage
- Liver disease
- Gut ulcers (this can sometimes be a side-effect of antiinflammatory medication)
- A tumour
- Pyloric stenosis (narrowing of the exit out of the stomach)

When to contact your vet

Contact your vet urgently if your cat:

- Vomits for more than 24 hours
- Is vomiting constantly
- Can't keep food or water down
- May have eaten something they shouldn't have (even if they seem fine)



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- Is also very young, very old or have other illnesses
- Seems lethargic
- Has pale gums or yellow gums
- Also has diarrhoea
- Has signs of dehydration
- Is eating less or nothing at all
- Has a painful tummy
- Has blood or what looks like coffee grounds in their vomit
- They are drinking or peeing much more than usual, or hasn't drunk anything for more than a day
- They can't breathe well or they are breathing very fast.

What if they seem ok?

If your cat has only vomited once, seems well and is otherwise healthy you can monitor them at home. Contact your vet if anything changes, if you're unsure or if your cat has eaten something they shouldn't have, even if they seem well.

You know your cat best. If they don't have the symptoms listed above but you are still concerned it's always best to contact your vet.

Veterinary treatment for vomiting

Treatment for vomiting will depend how affected your cat is. For mild cases, your vet may give your cat some medication and ask you to nurse them at home. You should keep in contact with your vet and let them know if your cat's symptoms get worse or change.

Dehydrated or severely affected cats may need to be admitted into the veterinary hospital for more intensive care and treatment. This may include a drip to keep them hydrated and medicines to stop them vomiting. Your vet may recommend some tests to help find out the cause of your cats vomiting.

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