



Polydipsia: Why is my Cat So Thirsty?

Cats are desert animals, so their kidneys are generally very good at conserving water, which is why cat urine is so smelly - it is generally very concentrated. In fact, cats with healthy kidneys that are on a combination of wet and dry food barely need to drink water, because the wet food component of their diet contains about 70% water - usually enough for cats.

If your cat starts to noticeably drink more water, it's time for your cat to head to the vet for a check-up, as this could mean there is something wrong.

The most common causes of drinking excessive amounts of water (known as polydipsia), are chronic kidney disease, hyperthyroidism and diabetes. All of these diseases can be tested for with a simple blood and urine test at a routine consultation. While some cats require sedation for blood and urine testing, the majority of cats will tolerate blood collection better than most humans do!

The majority of cats 15 years and older have some degree of kidney disease present as this is part of the aging process in cats. Hyperthyroid has an excellent prognosis if treated and diabetes can be life threatening if left untreated.

If your cat is drinking more than 50ml/kg/day, then a vet visit is recommended. This equates to 250mls for a 5kg cat within a 24 hour period. An observant owner can identify polydipsia without measuring the water intake because the cat visits the water bowl more than usual.

The sooner the cause of polydipsia is identified, the better the outcome for your cat.