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Diwali Without Fear
Protecting Cats from Fireworks and Festive Hazards

Cough Cold Respiratory
Distress Put to Rest



More Than Bad Breath:
Feline Dental Disease and Tooth Resorption

Food Safety Concerns
from Dogs in Home

Uterine Inertia in Bitches

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Editor : **Sudhir**

Editor's Note

A Season of Light, Mindful Celebrations, and Complete Pet Wellness

As we usher in the crisp autumn air and the radiant warmth of the festive season, I extend my warmest greetings to each of you on the joyous occasion of Diwali. May the Festival of Lights bring peace, prosperity, and endless companionship to your homes and families. Our community has evolved remarkably—embracing higher standards of preventive medicine, evidence-based nutrition, and compassionate guardianship. Yet, every festive season reminds us of our dual responsibility: celebrating joyously while being fiercely protective of those who cannot speak for themselves.

Celebrating Diwali Responsibly: Safeguarding Our Pets

Diwali is synonymous with illumination and togetherness, but for our companion animals, it often marks the most distressing time of the year. The sudden, deafening explosions of fireworks, intense acrid smoke, bright flashes, and sudden shifts in household routine can induce severe acute anxiety, panic attacks, and respiratory distress.

While canine anxiety around crackers is frequently discussed, feline stress during the festive season remains tragically underaddressed. In this issue, our feature, **"Diwali Without Fear: Protecting Cats from Fireworks and Festive Hazards,"** sheds critical light on the quiet trauma our feline companions endure. Cats are masters of masking discomfort; their reaction to sudden loud noise often manifests in hiding, anorexia, stress-induced cystitis, or fleeing in panic. Beyond noise, festive sweets containing toxic xylitol, rich oily foods that trigger pancreatitis, open diyas, and toxic cracker chemical residues on paws are everyday hazards. As responsible caretakers, let us create sound-insulated safe spaces, secure all exits, and advocate for an eco-friendly, cracker-free celebration that values all living beings.

Complementing our festive focus, this edition brings you essential clinical insights and daily pet health guidance across canine and feline care: **Cough, Cold & Respiratory Distress Put to Rest:** The onset of cooler weather paired with seasonal smog creates a surge in upper and lower respiratory conditions. We break down the clinical markers distinguishing mild kennel cough from acute respiratory distress requiring urgent veterinary intervention. **Food Safety Concerns from Dogs in the Home:** As human-animal bonds deepen and pets share our living spaces, understanding zoonotic transfer, proper kitchen hygiene, and safe feeding practices is paramount for multi-species households. **Uterine Inertia in Bitches:** For breeders and veterinary practitioners, secondary or primary uterine inertia during parturition poses high maternal and neonatal risks. We review diagnostic protocols and timely medical versus surgical decision-making. **Healthy Cats, Happy Homes: Essential Feline Care Every Owner Should Know:** A holistic primer designed to demystify feline behavior, stress mitigation, environmental enrichment, and lifelong wellness routines. **More Than Bad Breath: Feline Dental Disease and Tooth Resorption:** Oral pathology in cats is often dismissed until severe pain sets in. We dive deep into feline odontoclastic resorptive lesions (FORLs), periodontitis, and preventive oral health regimens.

As *PETnVET* marches through its eighth year, our commitment remains unwavering: bridging the gap between clinical veterinary excellence and informed pet parenthood.

May your homes be illuminated with health, compassion, and the unconditional love of your pets. Wishing you and your furry companions a safe, peaceful, and truly Happy Diwali!

Warm regards,

Sudhir Aheriya

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Dr. Goel's

COUGH COLD

Respiratory Distress Put to Rest

One thing which both pet parents, as well as our pets, dread is the flu season; sneezing, coughing, and of course, having respiratory distress. Have you ever wondered why exactly we get sick? What exactly causes coughing? Coughing and sneezing are very natural mechanisms to get the irritant out of our respiratory system, but sometimes the coughing and sneezing mechanisms are intertwined with the mechanism of our body to help get rid of pathogens!

Also, not every cough is related to the flu as there are many other reasons too.

Do not worry. Through this blog, let's have a look at what goes behind the scenes- why my pet has a cough & cold and what we can do to help our pets.

What Is Coughing?

A cough, also medically termed as 'tussis', is a voluntary or involuntary act that clears the throat and respiratory or the breathing passage of foreign agents such as microbes, pollutants, irritants, fluids, and mucus. It is a rapid expulsion of air from the lungs as a reflex action or deliberate action.

Coughing & Its Importance

There are minute intricate systems that work hand in hand to help our bodies stay fit and fine. One such system is the physical barriers such as cilia/ hair/ etc, which are present on the mucous membrane of the nose, which helps prevent the pathogen from entering the body. On irritation of these, there is a reflex sneeze that expels the pathogen out. However, this is just a tiny example of what our body is capable of doing! Let's now understand what coughing is and its importance.

Defense Mechanism

Cough helps and aids the body to get rid of pathogens [which causes diseases] by providing protection and also aids in clearing the airway [trachea-bronchial tree]

1. Fight against Pathogen

The coughing mechanism of our body is helpful in hinting at a probable infection. As the infection rises, there is more cough and cold as the body tries to compensate and fight against the micro-organism. On the flip side, as the infection falls, or as the immunity builds, the cough and cold levels start dropping down, which again helps us to realize that the infection has been cured or minimized to a greater extent.

2. Coughing can transmit Pathogens.

Coughing and sneezing, although normal, have the capability to transmit bacteria, and viruses [that is, if the root cause of coughing is indeed a disease-causing pathogen]. Although, normal sneeze and cough due to allergens [dust, dander, allergy-causing items] may not particularly pose a threat of transmitting any bacteria/viruses.

For example: If a Dog or a puppy has Kennel Cough disease. One of the most common culprits for kennel cough is a bacterium called Bordetella bronchiseptica, although the coughing could be triggered due to viruses as well, such as Canine Adenovirus, Influenza Virus, and Parainfluenza Viruses.

If a healthy dog comes in contact with a coughing dog that has been diagnosed with kennel cough, it's pretty obvious that the healthy dog might get an infection. It's important to note that to prevent this from happening, always routinely vaccinate your dogs against such viruses so that immunity builds up and your dog has fewer chances of falling seriously ill.



Tip – A persistent cough during the evening or night hours indicates heart problems [Serious and life-threatening conditions such as pulmonary embolism or Congestive heart Failure] so it's best to get your pet diagnosed at the earliest for any doubts about the cause of coughing / wheezing.

What Signs Should I Look Out For?

Coughing could be because of the influenza virus causing normal seasonal flu to life-threatening conditions such as CHF or Allergic reaction. It's best to get your pet diagnosed at the earliest to avoid any future obstacles in the recovery phase.

Keep an eye on

A. Type of Cough: Dry Cough [without sputum or mucus being expectorated/ coming out from throat or Productive Cough [with sputum/ mucus accompanying coughing]

1. **Dry cough-** could be because of asthma or allergy. Other causative factors involve viral respiratory infections. In kennel cough, particularly, there is a honking type of coughing.
2. **Productive cough** – it could be because of respiratory infections, pneumonia, bronchiectasis, etc.

B. The period of coughing. I.e., whether the cough lasts for a few hours or more than a few days or worsens as time passes by.

1. **Acute Cough:** If the cough lasts only for a few hours and subsides, then it's an acute cough
2. **Chronic Cough:** If it lasts for more than a few weeks, it may be a chronic cough due to some health issues.

Generally, allergens cause short-term coughs. Even some mild respiratory infections last for a few days. Prolonged coughing needs to be diagnosed thoroughly as the causative factor could be the heart itself. Thus proper medical help should be sought out at the earliest to rule out or rule in cardiac complications and cardiac diseases.

C. Behavioral Aspects: If your pet is depressed or seems extra tired if they have Anorexia – i.e., they won't eat.

D. Rise in temperature: Keep an eye on whether they have a fever. This could be easily attributed to infectious disease progression.

Blood Panel

Your Vet may suggest a routine blood checkup to rule out or rule in Infections. A complete blood count test (CBC) gives a clear picture of the blood cells and whether there's an infection going on in the body.

Diagnosis: Finding the Root Cause.

The Diagnosis is generally based on the type of cough, its consistency of it, and the time period your veterinarian will diagnose your pet on the basis of some tests



X-Ray

X-Ray is an extremely handy diagnostic tool as it can check the lung patterns and even the heart for any lesion which may cause coughing in your pets.

History

Based on the history of signs and symptoms that your pet may be exhibiting, a good diagnosis can be made. Diagnosis is based partly on history as well! Hence it's essential that you give a proper and complete history of the signs that your pet exhibits.

Ie. If with coughing you notice any other signs and symptoms and if there are any other concerns, which you may have, they should be promptly expressed to your Vet.

Respiratory Distress Put To Rest: Treatment Protocols

Treatment is based on diagnosing. Thus Diagnosis is key. If your pet has coughing due to Respiratory causes, your Vet may suggest antibiotics, fluids, and other such medicines for your pet.

In cases of other reasons such as allergies, the coughing generally subsides when the causative irritant is removed (like pollen/cigarette or vehicle smoke, etc.)

On the other hand, for coughing caused due to heart problems, the treatment protocol is totally different and focuses primarily on resolving the heart disease to subsequently resolve the coughing problem.



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Food Safety Concerns from Dogs in Home

- Dr. Gourab Basak

Human food safety concerns originating from dogs focus mainly on cross-contamination in the kitchen, transmission of foodborne pathogens and spread of zoonotic bacteria through saliva and faeces. While pet owners frequently worry about what human foods might harm their dogs, health organizations like Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and FDA Centre for Veterinary Medicine, emphasize that dogs can introduce significant biological hazards into a human food-preparation environment.

The food humans feed their dog, directly impacts their own food safety. This risk increases exponentially if anyone feeds dog a raw food diet. A recent 2026 nationwide safety alert highlighted that raw pet food frequently tests positive for active, disease-causing bacteria because it dœs not require heat processing. The FDA has traced high levels of *Salmonella*, *Listeria monocytogenes* and *Campylobacter jejuni* in these commercial raw blends.

Even if a dog acts completely healthy, their digestive system can process these bacteria without showing symptoms. The live pathogens are then shed directly through their saliva and faeces, presenting a secondary contamination source for the household. The processed dry kibble, pig ears and rawhides are also subject to Salmonella contaminations. Handling these products and immediately touching the kitchen counters, utensils or food can inadvertently transmit the bacteria to human meals.

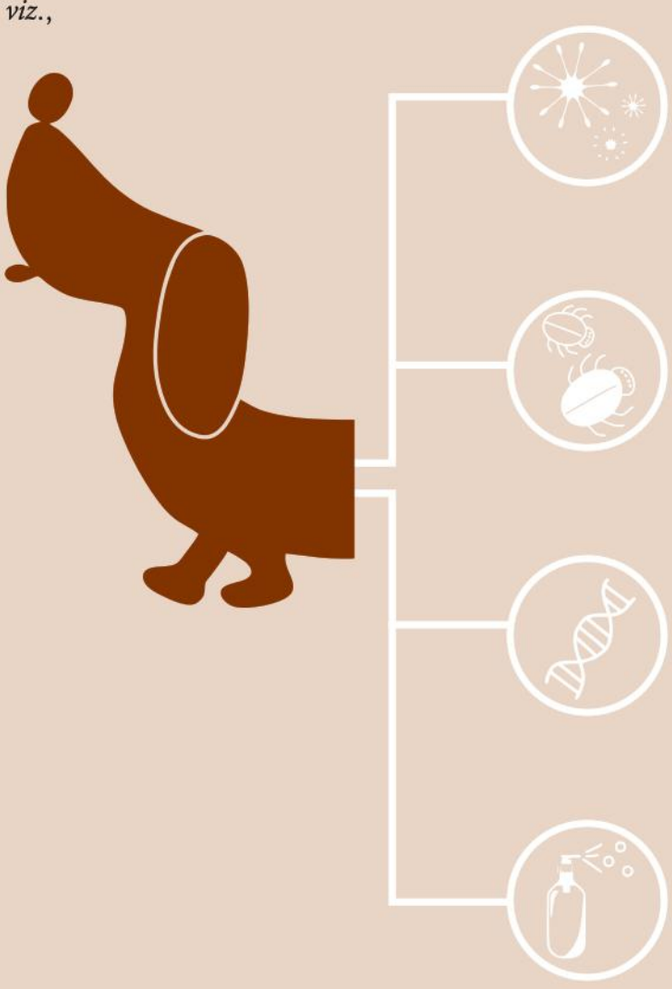
Allowing dogs into spaces where human food is processed or letting them clean human plates creates distinct cross-contamination pathways. The 'Clean Plate' myth, though is not common in our country; letting a dog lick the dinner plates or silverware before placing them in a dishwasher can leave bacterial residue behind. A dog's mouth naturally harbours the opportunistic bacteria like *Capnocytophaga* and *Pasteurella*, as well as parasites like *Giardia* and hookworms.

Besides, dogs lick themselves to groom, microscopic traces of faecal matter and any underlying intestinal parasites, frequently transfer to their mouth and tongue. Again, if a dog is a 'counter-surfer' or licks food preparation areas, their muzzle transfers bacteria directly to spaces where human ingredients are chopped, seasoned or served. Thus, these facilitate faeco-oral route of transmission.

As a result, zoonotic food safety concerns involve the transmission of pathogenic foodborne bacteria, parasites and drug-resistant bacteria from a dog to a human food preparation cycle. Health organizations like the CDC and American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) emphasize that even completely healthy dogs can act as asymptomatic carriers, shedding zoonotic agents into human dining and cooking spaces. These include

1. Primary Zoonotic Bacterial Pathogens

Dogs can ingest, carry and shed several major bacterial strains that cause severe gastrointestinal illness in humans, *viz.*,



- ***Salmonella* spp.:** Dogs shed *Salmonella* in their faeces and saliva after consuming contaminated commercial kibble, raw treats or backyard wildlife. Ingestion of species of this bacterium by humans causes severe salmonellosis, manifesting fever, bloody diarrhœa and abdominal cramps.
- ***Campylobacter jejuni*:** Frequently found in the intestines of young puppies, this bacterium spreads easily via the faecal-oral route. If a dog owner handles infected faeces or contaminated pet surfaces and then prepares human food without thorough washing hands, it triggers acute human campylobacteriosis.
- ***Listeria monocytogenes*:** This hardy pathogen can multiply in a dog's mouth if they eat contaminated foods, such as wet food or raw deli meats *etc*. *Listeria* can cross over to humans via saliva contact, posing a severe threat to pregnant women, infants and the elderly.
- ***Capnocytophaga*:** Commonly found in healthy dog mouths, *Capnocytophaga canimorsus* can be transferred via saliva to kitchen surfaces. While benign to most of the cases, it can cause severe sepsis in immunocompromised individuals or those without a spleen; if they handle food contaminated by the bacterium.

2. Parasitic Contamination of Food and Water

Dogs act as definitive or intermediate hosts for various parasites that can risk human food and water safety if properly not handled/maintained. The common such parasites are

- ***Giardia* and *Cryptosporidium*:** These are single-celled protozoa, infect dog and lodge in the intestinal tract. Dogs shed active cysts in their stool, which can easily contaminate home vegetable gardens, fresh backyard produce or shared water sources if the dog roams near food-growing areas.
- **Roundworms (*Toxocara canis*), Hookworms:** If a dog grooms itself, microscopic sized parasite eggs can stick to the fur around its muzzle. If the dog subsequently licks kitchen counterc or human food preparation bowls; humans in turn can ingest the eggs unknowingly. Sometimes, these can enter through the abraded skins, leading to disease conditions like Visceral Larva Migrans (VLM), where larvae travel beneath human skin and tissues.

3. Antimicrobial Resistance

Beyond the gastro-intestinal track, a dog's mouth naturally carries opportunistic bacteria that can be deposited directly into human food zones. Recent genomic studies show that canine saliva frequently harbours bacteria rich in Antibiotic Resistance Genes (ARGs). If dogs are allowed to lick human plates, cutting boards or utensils, they can transfer these drug-resistant strains into the human host, complicating the treatment of common illnesses.

Therefore, to break the cycle of zoonotic foodborne transmission, the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) recommends the following key protocols. Thus, to maintain a hygienic kitchen environment, establishment of strict behavioural and sanitation boundaries are recommended.

- **Avoiding High-Risk Pet Diets:** Do not feed dogs raw meat, unpasteurized milk or raw eggs, as these drastically increase the zoonotic bacterial load and their shedding by the dog in home.
- **Separate Feeding Zone:** Do not feed dogs in areas where human food is prepared, chopped or consumed. Keep their bowls far away from the kitchen table.
- **Isolating Pet Dish Washing:** Clean your dog's bowls and feeding utensils in a separate area like utility sink or outdoor area using completely separate sponges and brushes; but never in the kitchen sink where human food and dishes are cleaned. Use a high-heat sanitize cycle on dishwasher used for human purposes.
- **Controlling Veterinary Parasite:** Maintain year-round, routine deworming and veterinary checkups to ensure that the dog is not shedding any parasite-eggs.
- **Enforcing Structural Kitchen Boundaries:** Keep dogs out of food preparation areas entirely and never allow them to lick plates or cookware used for human uses with their tongues. Sanitize kitchen counters with an antibacterial agent immediately prior to cooking, especially if dog hangs around the kitchen.
- **Hand Hygiene:** Always wash hands with soap and hot water after touching pet food, picking up treats, or petting a dog before you cook human food.

Apart from these, talking about the toxicity of dogs from human foods, there are some foods which are not allowed to feed the dogs. Feeding of such food items are strictly prohibited to dogs as there could be serious health complications post-ingestion. If dogs ingest any of these, immediate contact should be made to a veterinarian. Such foods include

- **Xylitol (Birch Sugar):** Found in sugar-free gum, peanut butter and baked goods. It causes rapid, fatal drops in blood sugar and liver failure.
- **Grapes and Raisins:** Even tiny amounts can cause acute, irreversible kidney failure.
- **Chocolate, Coffee and Tea:** Contain methylxanthines (caffeine and theobromine) that trigger hyperactivity, tremors, seizures and heart issues.
- **Onions, Garlic and Leeks:** Contain thiosulfate, which destroys dog's red blood cells and causes life-threatening anaemia.
- **Macadamia Nuts:** Causes severe weakness, vomiting, tremors and hyperthermia.
- **Alcohol and Raw Dough:** Yeast dough ferments in stomach, producing toxic levels of ethanol and causing severe bloating in dogs...

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Uterine Inertia in Bitches

- Dr. Gourab Basak



Dogs are considered as man's best friend and well-known for their companion. The canine breeding industry in India is currently in a state of rapid transition. This is driven by a massive surge in pet ownership, which is estimated at over 31 million dogs as of 2024–2025 (https://www.imarcgroup.com/). The industry is shifting from an unregulated trade towards a more structured, strictly monitored, commercial sector. The broader Indian pet care market is valued at approximately $8.6 billion (₹71,000+ crore) in 2025, with a projected growth rate of over 5% annually (https://www.imarcgroup.com/). Therefore, in the recent past, a sharp increase in the number of pedigreed dogs has been seen in the urban localities.

But it gœs smooth if the whelping process as well as the mother bitch and her offsprings remain healthy after parturition. Therefore, healthy delivery of the puppies is the utmost important. It has been observed that, now-a-days, presentations of bitches to the veterinary hospital and clinics for pregnancy diagnosis, fœtal growth and prolonged whelping, have increased. When bitches are presented during a prolonged whelping, the priority is given on determining if the delay is either for any obstructive reason (like physical blockage) or inertia (uterine fatigue).

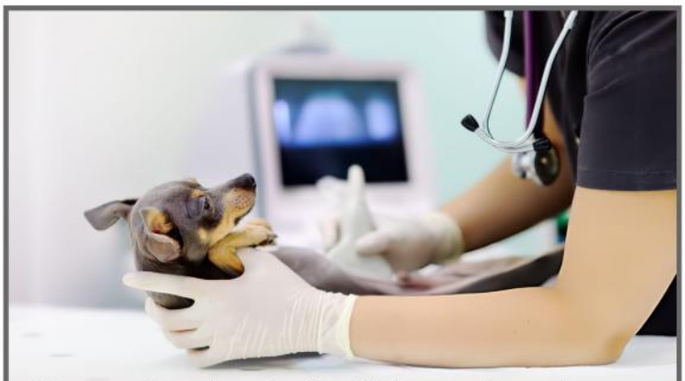


Dystocia, is one of the most common obstetrical conditions encountered by bitches. Dystocia is defined as difficult birth or inability to expel fœtus through the birth canal. It is a high-stress situation when a bitch experiences dystocia. When a whelping dog, expresses the following mentioned signs, concerns are raised for non-healthy delivery; and at the same time this could be the indications of dystocia.

The signs include

- **Prolonged gestation:** It has been more than 70–72 days since the last breeding.
- **Active labour without results:** Strong, rhythmic contractions for more than 30 minutes without a puppy being born.
- **Weak straining or intermittent contractions:** Infrequent or weak contractions for more than 2–3 hours without progress, or in between puppies.
- **Excessive gaps:** More than 2 hours passing between the delivery of puppies.
- **Abnormal discharge:** The appearance of greenish discharge (uteroverdin) prior to any birth of puppy; suggesting placental separation.
- **Physical distress:** Systemic illness in the dam including fever, vomiting, trembling, or appears extremely exhausted/ lethargic.

Though majority of the bitches do not show such conditions but five per cent of the total canine pregnancy encounters dystocia.



Now, question arises why does this happen. Dystocia occurs due to and is usually categorized into two main causes, *viz.*, maternal factors and fœtal factors. Maternal Factors include

(a) Uterine Inertia: The muscles of the uterus simply stop contracting (common in older dogs or very large litters),

(b) Pelvic Narrowness: Physical blockage due to previous fractures or breed anatomy and

(c) Psychological Stress: Fear or environmental disturbance can halt labour.

The fœtal factors include (a) Fœtal oversize: The puppy is too large for the birth canal (common in single-puppy litters), (b) Malpresentation: The puppy is positioned sideways or breach in a way that causes a jam and (c) Fœtal Death: A deceased fœtus cannot assist in the birthing process with its own movements. Among these two, maternal dystocia is common and frequent than fœtal dystocia; and the major cause of maternal dystocia is the uterine inertia, contributing in 40 – 75.30% of all dystocia cases.

Further, uterine inertia can be generally categorized into two; primary uterine inertia and secondary uterine inertia. In case of primary uterine inertia, the uterus never starts contracting or fails to transition into active labour; common causes include small litters (not enough stimulation), very large litters (over-stretched uterus), obesity or age. During secondary uterine inertia, labour starts normally but the uterine muscles become exhausted. This may be attributed to prolonged labour; a puppy stuck in the birth canal or a very large litter.

Primary uterine inertia can be again of two types, *viz.*, complete uterine inertia, where the bitch never enters active labour and no puppies are delivered; and partial uterine inertia, where the bitch delivers one or two puppies, but then contractions stop entirely, even though more puppies remain inside. Data regarding the predisposing factors from the Indian subcontinent might be meagre, whereas, the general veterinary consensus suggests that the incidence of uterine inertia is heavily influenced by breed and size.

The brachycephalic breeds, and very small ('toy') breeds are statistically at higher risk. Certain breeds (like Terriers or Bulldogs) are more predisposed for the same. Considering, the age and parity, older primiparous bitches or those with very high parity often show decreased myometrial efficiency.

Litter size can play a role in this regard. A very small litter (one puppy; also known as 'Single Puppy Syndrome') might not provide



enough hormonal stimulation to trigger labour. Conversely, a massive litter/an exceptionally large litter (over-distension) can over-stretch the uterine muscle, making it unable to contract effectively. Hypocalcaemia and hormonal imbalance can also trigger such incidences. Low blood calcium levels prevent muscles from firing correctly, whereas, insufficient oxytocin release or a failure of progesterone levels to drop lead to inertia conditions.

The biochemical 'Triad' of labour include Oxytocin, Calcium and Glucose. The treatment protocols target the three essential pillars of muscular work. Oxytocin, plays the key role by triggering the start, and frequency of contractions; but its deficiency leads to failure to initiate the second stage of labour. Calcium, which is termed as the 'engine', necessary for the actual shortening of myometrial muscle fibres. Its deficiency impacts on weak, ineffective or non-existent contractions, even if oxytocin is present. The 'fuel', Glucose, provides the cellular energy required for sustained physical effort and in its absence or deficiency causes maternal exhaustion and stalling of labour, that is common in small breeds.

The clinical management protocol includes stabilization and diagnostics, medical intervention and surgical intervention. For stabilization, basically, intravenous crystalloids (fluid therapy) are administered to correct dehydration and electrolyte imbalances; thereafter checking for hypoglycemia and hypocalcemia. Gradually, calcium gluconate is often administered first slowly to rejuvenate the uterus. Even if serum levels are normal, supplemental calcium can increase the strength of contractions.

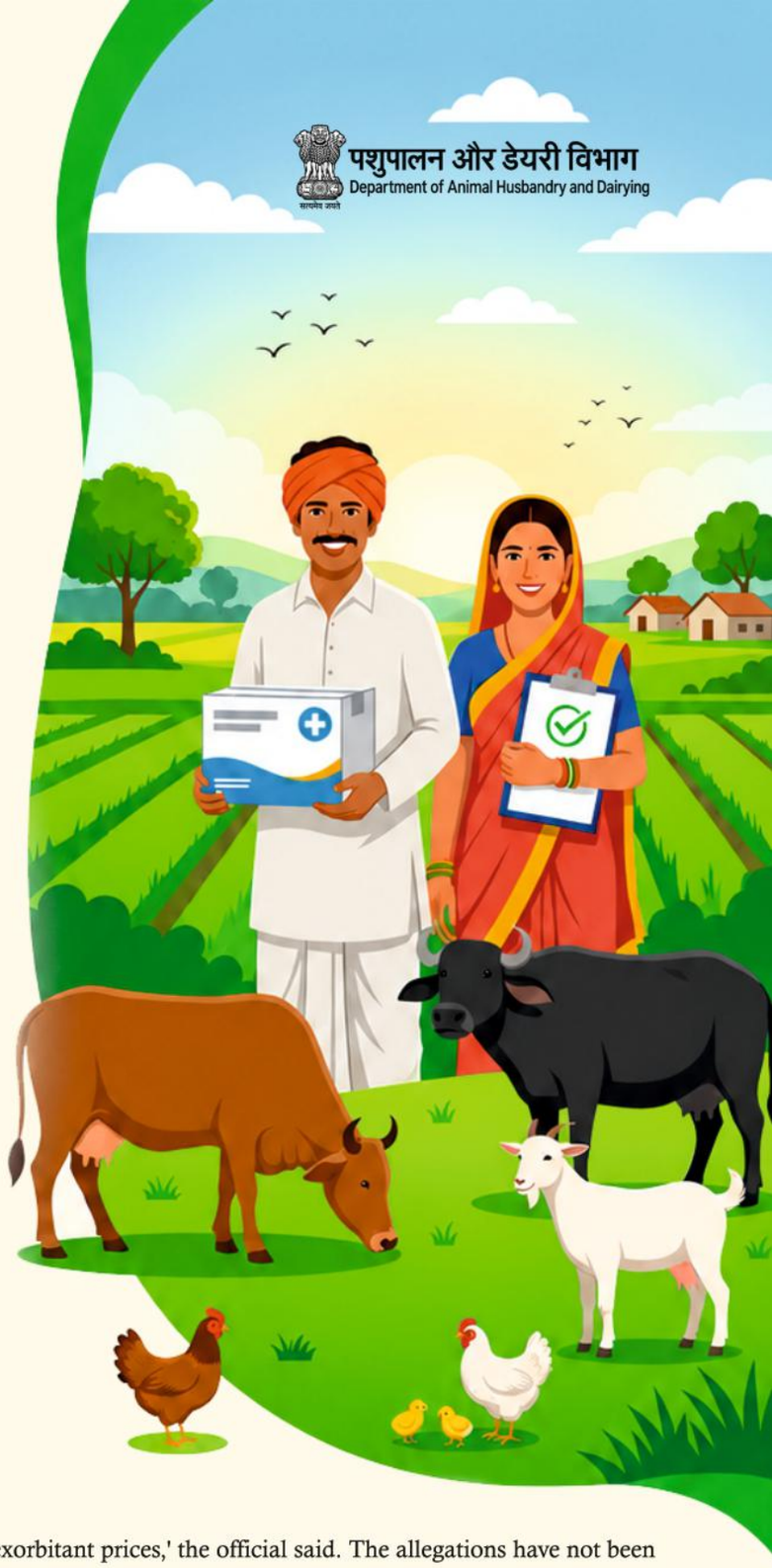
Oxytocin is then administered once calcium levels are stable. It is typically given in small, repeated doses rather than one large bolus to prevent uterine tetany (cramping). Glucose, hence, can be added to the intravenous (IV) line if the bitch shows signs of hypoglycemia or exhaustion. If medical management fails (no puppy produced within 30–60 minutes of treatment), a Caesarean Section is performed to ensure the survival of the puppies and the mother.

In regions where specific breed data is lacking, environmental factors, such as nutrition (Vitamin D and calcium intake) and ambient temperature during late gestation may also play a role in the incidence of inertia. Lack of prenatal veterinary care often means these cases are presented to hospitals very late, making the exhaustion factor (hypoglycemia) more prevalent...

Dr. Gourab Basak

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West Bengal to Open 375 Fair Price Animal Medicine Shops Under Centre's Livestock Scheme



West Bengal is set to launch **375 fair price medicine shops** for pet animals and birds, to be operated by the **Directorate of Animal Resources and Animal Health** under the state's **Animal Resources Development Department**. The outlets, formally designated **Pashu Aushadhi Vikray Kendras (PAVKs)**, will be part of the **Union Government's Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme**.

How the Network Is Structured

According to a department notification, the **375 PAVKs** will be arranged across three administrative tiers. The anchor outlet will be a single **state-level PAVK** situated in **Kolkata**. Below that, **30 district-level PAVKs** will serve major population centres, while **344 block-level PAVKs** will extend the network to rural and semi-urban areas — a deliberate design choice to reach communities in remote regions that depend on livestock for their livelihoods.

What Pet Owners and Livestock Farmers Can Expect

Medicines and vaccines for pet animals — including dogs — will be available at the PAVKs at significantly lower prices compared to private pet shops and clinics. The department has indicated that generic equivalents of commonly prescribed branded medicines will be stocked, directly reducing out-of-pocket costs for pet owners and small farmers alike. Kolkata-based pet owner **Jayita Srakr** said the move would ease the financial burden her community routinely faces. 'Often, we have to purchase medicines and vaccines for our pets, especially rabies vaccines for our puppies, at exorbitant prices since the veterinary doctors only prescribe branded medicines at premium prices. Now this initiative by the state government will solve that problem to a great extent,' she said.

Targeting an Alleged Prescription Scam

A state government official, speaking to reporters, alleged that a long-running malpractice has distorted the veterinary medicines market in the state. According to the official, a section of veterinary doctors has reportedly been prescribing specific branded medicines and vaccines in exchange for commissions and benefits in kind from pharmaceutical company representatives — a practice that drives up costs for pet owners and livestock farmers. 'Once these fair price medicine shops are operative, such alleged scams will automatically get restricted, and pet owners will benefit as they will be relieved of purchasing branded medicines at exorbitant prices,' the official said. The allegations have not been independently verified, and no formal charges or investigations were cited in the department notification.

Significance for Rural Livelihoods

The heavy weighting toward block-level outlets — **344** out of **375** total PAVKs — reflects the state's intent to serve rural households whose income depends on cattle, poultry, and other livestock. Access to affordable veterinary medicines in interior blocks has historically been limited, forcing small farmers to travel to district headquarters or pay premium prices at private suppliers. This comes amid a broader national push under the **Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme** to improve animal health infrastructure across states.

What Happens Next

The department has issued a formal notification, signalling that the groundwork for operationalising the PAVKs is under way. No specific launch date has been announced publicly, but the notification indicates preparatory steps are in progress. Stakeholders, including pet lovers' groups and livestock farmer associations, are expected to track the rollout closely for pricing transparency and stock availability once the outlets go live.

Yet the notification stops short of any enforcement or accountability mechanism against errant veterinary practitioners. Without that, PAVKs risk becoming parallel retail outlets rather than a structural fix to the market distortion they are meant to address.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are Pashu Aushadhi Vikray Kendras (PAVKs)?

PAVKs are government-run fair price medicine shops for pet animals and birds. West Bengal plans to open 375 such outlets under the Union Government's Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme, selling medicines and vaccines at rates lower than private pet shops or clinics.

Where will the PAVKs be located in West Bengal?

One state-level PAVK will be in Kolkata, 30 district-level outlets will serve major centres, and 344 block-level outlets will extend coverage to rural and remote areas. The heavy block-level presence is designed to help communities dependent on livestock for their livelihoods.

How will PAVKs benefit pet owners?

Pet owners will be able to buy generic medicines and vaccines — including rabies vaccines for dogs — at significantly lower prices than those available at private clinics. The state government says branded medicines at premium prices are currently the norm, partly due to alleged commission-driven prescriptions.

What alleged malpractice are the PAVKs meant to address?

State officials allege that some veterinary doctors prescribe specific branded medicines in exchange for commissions from pharmaceutical company representatives, inflating costs for pet owners. The department says government-run fair price shops will curb this practice, though no formal investigation or charges have been cited.

When will the PAVK shops become operational?

The Animal Resources Development Department has issued a formal notification and preparations are under way, but no specific launch date has been publicly announced. The rollout timeline is expected to be confirmed once the operational framework is finalised...

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Akasa Air

Pets on Akasa

sees Bengaluru lead as the airline's largest

Pet Travel Hub

with over 3,700 pet journeys



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- Five of Akasa Air's top 10 most frequent pet parents travel from Bengaluru
- Pet travel demand from the city grows 53% between FY24 and FY26

Akasa Air, India's fastest-growing airline, today shared new insights into pet travel trends, revealing Bengaluru as the airline's largest pet travel hub. The findings underscore the growing preference among pet parents to travel with their furry companions, with Bengaluru continuing to lead demand for pet-friendly travel across Akasa Air's network.

Key insights:

- Bengaluru accounts for more than 30% of all pet journeys on Akasa Air's network
- More than 3,700 pet journeys have been undertaken from the city since launch
- Pet travel from Bengaluru increased by 53%, from 856 journeys in FY24 to 1,310 journeys in FY26
- Five of Akasa Air's top 10 most frequent pet parents are from Bengaluru
- Bengaluru–Delhi, Bengaluru–Kolkata and Bengaluru–Guwahati are among the most popular pet travel routes; consistently ranking in top 5 sectors for pet travel in last three financial years, contributing to over 55% of pet flights from Bengaluru.
- Pet parents from Bengaluru now travel with their pets across 16 destinations, up from 10 since launch
- Apart from cities like Delhi, Kolkata, Mumbai, Guwahati, Ahmedabad pet travel is also growing in Bhubaneshwar, Pune, Lucknow, Kochi, Varanasi, Darbhanga, Calicut destinations.

As pet ownership continues to grow, pet parents are increasingly looking to include their furry companions in leisure, family and long-distance travel. Bengaluru's travel patterns reflect this shift, with demand extending beyond traditional metro routes to a broader mix of leisure and regional destinations.

Having flown over 13,500+ pets across its network, Pets on Akasa reflects the growing confidence that pet parents place in the service. Akasa Air has continuously evolved its pet travel offering based on customer feedback, introducing thoughtful enhancements such as allowing up to three pets per flight, increasing the in-cabin weight limit to 10 kg (including the carrier), simplifying booking processes, and adopting a more flexible health certification policy. These efforts align with the airline's broader philosophy of building a warm and reliable flying experience.

Customers travelling with their pets on Akasa Air enjoy a range of complimentary value-added services, including a pre-booked window seat, priority check-in and boarding, ensuring an elevated flying experience. Akasa Air has undertaken extensive research and provided specialised training for its customer care centre, ground services and in-flight teams, highlighting its commitment to delivering the highest standards of care, safety, and comfort throughout the journey. Moreover, Akasa Air has also partnered with Umeed for Animals Foundation, a Gurgaon-based non-profit animal rehabilitation dedicated to rescuing and rehabilitating animals. The airline works with the NGO to implement best practices across processes and policies to continuously enhance pet comfort and safety.

Launched on 1st November 2022, Pets on Akasa allows customers to travel on domestic flights across 28 cities with their cats and dogs in the cabin or cargo, based on their weight. As pet ownership continues to rise in India and travel preferences evolve, Akasa Air remains focused on strengthening its position as India's most trusted airline for pet parents, while continuing to set new benchmarks in reliability, care and customer experience.

About Akasa Air:

Akasa Air is India's most dependable airline, offering warm and efficient customer service, reliable operations, and affordable fares - all in the Akasa Way. Akasa's youthful personality, employee-centric philosophy, tech-led approach, and culture of service make this commitment a reality for all Indians. Akasa Air's consistent on-time leadership, operational efficiencies and extremely positive customer feedback have made it a preferred carrier in India, serving over 30 million passengers since its launch in August 2022. Akasa Air currently connects with 29 domestic and seven international cities, namely Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Bengaluru, Chennai, Kochi, Delhi, Guwahati, Agartala, Pune, Lucknow, Goa, Hyderabad, Varanasi, Bagdogra, Bhubaneswar, Kolkata, Sri Vijaya Puram, Ayodhya, Gwalior, Srinagar, Prayagraj, Gorakhpur, Darbhanga, Kozhikode, Navi Mumbai, Dibrugarh, Udaipur, Jaipur, Doha (Qatar), Jeddah, Riyadh (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia), Abu Dhabi (UAE), Kuwait City (Kuwait), Phuket (Thailand) and Hanoi (Vietnam).

With a clear focus on sustained, long-term growth, Akasa Air has placed a firm order of 226 Bœing 737 MAX airplanes, powered by CFM fuel-efficient LEAP-1B engines. It currently operates 43 737 MAX aircraft, which deliver superior efficiency in reducing fuel use and carbon emissions. The aircraft also has a quieter cabin with 40 per cent less noise, fulfilling the airline's promise of being an environmentally progressive company with the youngest and greenest fleet in the Indian skies...

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Allpets Clinic Opens 2nd Veterinary Facility in Hyderabad, Announces Plans for 10 More Clinics Across South India

Allpets Clinic, a growing veterinary healthcare platform, has opened its second clinic in Hyderabad, marking the beginning of a planned expansion that will see the brand establish 10 more veterinary facilities across South India over the next 12 months. The Nallagandla launch represents the next phase in Allpets journey from a single-clinic operation to a multi-city veterinary healthcare network.

The second Allpets clinic was inaugurated in the presence of Actor Sushanth A, who attended as the Chief Guest. Also present on the occasion were Dr. Jasleen Kaur, Founder & CEO, Allpets, Mr. A. Arun Kumar, Co- Founder and Mr. M. Thirumalai, Co- Founder, Allpets.

Speaking at the launch, Dr. Jasleen Kaur, Founder & CEO, Allpets, said, "Veterinary care is not something that pet parents should have to travel long distances for, particularly when an animal needs immediate attention. Nallagandla and the surrounding residential areas have a growing number of pet families, and we felt there was a clear need for a well-equipped veterinary clinic in this part of Hyderabad. Our new 1,200-square-foot facility brings the same facilities available at our first clinic closer to these families."

Founded nearly a decade ago, Allpets began with the belief that pets deserve access to quality healthcare as an integral part of family wellbeing. The platform has since grown to serve more than 15,000 pet parents, with over 57,000 consultations and 1,000 surgeries.

The new 1,200-square-foot facility at HUDA Residential Complex Layout, Ranga Reddy District, offers veterinary consultations, preventive healthcare, vaccinations, diagnostics, treatment, pharmacy and emergency services, along with specialised and allied pet care. Equipped to cater to dogs, cats and other companion animals, the clinic brings Allpets 'services closer to pet families in Nallagandla and surrounding residential communities.

The Nallagandla clinic marks the first milestone in Allpets 'next phase of growth. The company is currently planning 10 additional clinics across South India over the next 12 months, targeting established urban markets as well as cities with growing pet-owning communities and increasing demand for organised veterinary care.

The expansion is being planned around a scalable model combining modern infrastructure, trained veterinary teams, standardised clinical protocols and a wider range of medical and allied pet care services. The objective is to create a network that offers consistency in clinical standards while allowing each facility to respond to the needs of its local market.

Mr. A. Arun Kumar, Co- Founder, Allpets, said, "The opening of our second clinic marks an important transition for Allpets, from



building a successful individual facility to creating a scalable veterinary healthcare network. We are looking at 10 more clinics across South India over the next 12 months, with the larger objective of building a multi-city platform that can eventually expand across India. We are also open to conversations with promoters and investors who recognise the long-term opportunity in organised veterinary healthcare and want to participate in building a national platform."

India's pet care ecosystem is evolving, with pet parents increasingly seeking preventive healthcare, diagnostics, surgery, emergency services and long-term medical support for their animals. At the same time, veterinary care remains relatively fragmented across markets, creating an opportunity for organised providers to develop scalable networks. As the network expands, Allpets plans to build on this ecosystem through specialised capabilities, technology-enabled services and allied care offerings.

Mr. M. Thirumalai, Co-Founder, Allpets, said, "The veterinary healthcare market in India is entering an important phase of growth. Pet ownership is increasing, pet parents are more informed and expectations around veterinary care are changing, while organised veterinary networks are still at an early stage. This presents a significant opportunity to build a credible and scalable platform. Our next 10 clinics in South India are the beginning of that journey."

With the Nallagandla facility now operational, Allpets will focus on executing its South India expansion. The company views the next 12 months as a defining phase in its growth journey, with the South India network expected to form the foundation for its longer-term national expansion. The vision is to build Allpets into a multi-city veterinary healthcare platform that brings organised and accessible pet healthcare closer to families across India...



Healthy Cats, Happy Homes:

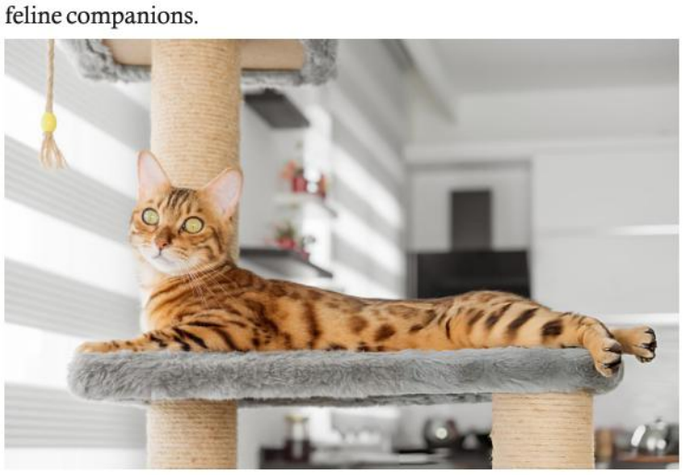
Essential Feline Care Every Owner Should Know

— Dr Akshita Purohit

Cats have become increasingly popular companion animals owing to their affectionate nature, adaptability, and relatively low-maintenance lifestyle. However, the common belief that cats require minimal care often results in neglected preventive healthcare, delayed disease detection, and reduced quality of life. Responsible cat ownership extends far **beyond providing food and shelter**; it includes balanced nutrition, timely vaccination, regular deworming, parasite control, grooming, sterilization, routine veterinary examinations, and environmental enrichment.

Cats have earned a special place in households around the world because of their playful personalities, intelligence, and ability to adapt to different lifestyles. In India, the number of pet cats has steadily increased over the past decade, especially in urban areas where apartment living has become more common. Despite their growing popularity, cats are still widely misunderstood. Many people believe that cats are completely independent animals capable of caring for themselves. As a result, routine veterinary visits, vaccinations, parasite control, and nutritional needs are often overlooked.

In reality, **cats depend on their owners for proper healthcare**, just as dogs and other companion animals do. Preventive healthcare not only protects individual cats from disease but also contributes to public health by reducing the risk of zoonotic infections and ensuring compliance with rabies vaccination recommendations. This article discusses the fundamental aspects of responsible feline care to help cat owners provide healthier, happier lives for their feline companions.



Make Your Home a Place Your Cat Loves

Most of us think that giving our cats food, water, and a cozy bed is enough. But cats need much more than that to stay happy and healthy. They are natural hunters, climbers, and explorers. Even though our homes are very different from the wild, a few simple changes can make a huge difference in a cat's quality of life.

Give Them Their Own Safe Spaces

Cats love having quiet places where they can relax without being disturbed. Whether it's a soft bed in a peaceful corner, a shelf by the window, or even a cardboard box, having a safe retreat helps them feel secure—especially when guests visit or the house gets noisy.

Think Vertically

Have you ever noticed your cat climbing onto cupboards, bookshelves, or the top of the refrigerator? That's because cats naturally enjoy being up high. Elevated spaces allow them to observe their surroundings and feel safe. Cat trees, wall shelves, or window perches are excellent additions to any home.

Let Them Scratch Without Worry

Scratching isn't bad behaviour—it's completely normal. Cats scratch to sharpen their claws, stretch their muscles, and mark their territory. Instead of trying to stop them, provide sturdy scratching posts or scratch pads. Your furniture will thank you!

Keep Food, Water, and Litter Separate

Imagine eating your meals next to your toilet—it wouldn't be pleasant! Cats feel the same way. Keep their food, water bowls, and litter tray in separate locations. Clean, easily accessible litter boxes also encourage good litter habits and reduce stress.

Play Every Day

Cats may spend hours sleeping, but they still need daily exercise. Interactive toys like feather wands, balls, or toy mice satisfy their natural hunting instincts while keeping them physically fit and mentally stimulated. Just 10–15 minutes of play each day can make a big difference.

Give Them Choices

Cats like to be in control of their environment. Providing different sleeping spots, hiding places, climbing areas, and scratching surfaces lets them choose what they need at any given moment. This sense of control helps reduce anxiety and builds confidence.

If You Have More Than One Cat…

Sharing isn't always a cat's favourite thing! Multiple cats should have enough food bowls, water bowls, litter trays, resting places, and scratching posts to prevent competition and conflict. A good rule is to have **one litter tray per cat, plus one extra**.

Keep Life Predictable

Cats thrive on routine. Sudden changes in furniture arrangement, loud noises, new pets, or unfamiliar visitors can make them anxious. Introducing changes gradually and maintaining a consistent daily routine helps them feel secure.

A Happy Home Means a Happy Cat

Creating a cat-friendly home dœsn't have to be expensive or complicated. Sometimes, a simple cardboard box, a sunny windowsill, or a few minutes of play can make your feline friend's day. By understanding your cat's natural instincts and giving them opportunities to climb, hide, scratch, play, and explore, you'll not only improve their well-being but also strengthen the bond you share.

- After all, a happy cat isn't just a pet—it becomes a healthier, more confident, and more affectionate companion



Feeding Your Cat: Good Nutrition for a Healthy Life

A balanced diet is one of the most important factors in keeping your cat healthy. Unlike humans and dogs, cats are **obligate carnivores**, meaning they must eat animal-based protein to meet their nutritional needs. Nutrients such as **taurine, vitamin A, and arachidonic acid** are essential for cats and must be supplied through their diet.

Choose a Complete and Balanced Diet

Always feed a commercially prepared cat food labeled as **"complete and balanced."** These diets provide the right amounts of protein, fats, vitamins, and minerals needed for healthy growth, maintenance, and overall well-being. Choose a food that matches your cat's life stage—kitten, adult, or senior.

Wet Food, Dry Food, or Both?

Both wet and dry foods can provide complete nutrition. Wet food contains more water, which helps keep cats hydrated and supports urinary health. Dry food is convenient, economical, and can be left out longer. Many veterinarians recommend feeding a combination of both to provide hydration, variety, and convenience.

Fresh Water Is Essential

Cats naturally drink less water than many other animals because their ancestors obtained much of their water from prey. Always provide clean, fresh water, and consider using multiple water bowls or a pet fountain to encourage drinking.

Avoid Overfeeding

Obesity is one of the most common health problems in pet cats. Measure food portions, avoid excessive treats, and encourage daily play and exercise to maintain a healthy body weight.

Feed According to Life Stage

Kittens require frequent meals rich in energy and nutrients to support growth. Adult cats need a balanced diet to maintain their health, while senior cats may benefit from diets tailored to age-related conditions such as kidney disease or reduced activity.

Foods that should never be offered include:

- Chocolate
- Onions and garlic
- Grapes and raisins
- Alcohol
- Caffeinated beverages
- Xylitol-containing products
- Cooked bones
- Excessive amounts of liver



Litter Training: Teaching Your Kitten Good Habits

Most kittens learn to use a litter box quite easily with a little patience.

Make a simple litter box: For a young kitten, you can use a **shallow plastic tray or a low-sided cardboard/plastic box** that is easy to climb into. Fill it with a suitable kitten-safe litter, keeping the layer shallow enough for the kitten to dig comfortably.

Start early: From around 4–6 weeks of age, kittens can begin using a shallow litter tray. Place it somewhere quiet and easy to reach.

Keep it clean: Scoop the litter regularly and keep the tray clean. A clean toilet area encourages good litter habits.

Be patient: Accidents are normal while a kitten is learning. Never punish or frighten your kitten. Simply clean the area and gently guide them back to the litter box.

Remember: A simple tray, clean litter, easy access and a little patience are usually all your kitten needs to get started!

Vaccination: Protecting Cats from Preventable Diseases

Vaccination remains one of the most effective methods of preventing infectious diseases in cats. Kittens receive temporary protection through maternal antibodies, but this protection gradually declines, making timely vaccination essential.



Core vaccines generally protect against:

- Feline panleukopenia
- Feline herpesvirus (FHV-1)
- Feline calicivirus (FCV)
- Rabies

Typical vaccination schedule:**AgeVaccine**6–8 weeksFirst FVRCP vaccine9–12 weeksBooster dose12–16 weeksRabies vaccine16 weeksFinal kitten boosterAdultBooster as advised by veterinarianEven indoor cats should be vaccinated because infectious agents can be introduced through people, other animals, or contaminated objects.

Deworming: Keeping Hidden Parasites Away

Even healthy-looking cats can carry intestinal worms without showing obvious signs of illness. Kittens are especially vulnerable because they can acquire worms from their mother or from their surroundings soon after birth. If left untreated, these parasites can lead to poor growth, weight loss, vomiting, diarrhœa, anaemia, and a dull coat.

To keep your cat healthy, regular deworming is essential.kittens should begin deworming at **3–4 weeks of age**, with treatment repeated **every two weeks until they are 3 months old**. From **3 to 6 months of age**, they should be dewormed **once a month**. After six months, the deworming schedule should be decided by a veterinarian based on the cat's age, lifestyle, and risk of exposure. Cats that spend time outdoors or hunt are generally at a higher risk of picking up parasites than strictly indoor cats.

Regular veterinary check-ups and periodic faecal examinations help detect parasite infections early and ensure that the most appropriate deworming programme is followed. A simple preventive routine can protect your cat from hidden parasites and help it live a healthier, happier life.



Grooming and Hygiene: Keeping Your Cat Clean and Comfortable

Cats are naturally clean animals and spend a significant part of their day grooming themselves. This daily routine helps remove loose hair and dirt, spreads natural skin oils, and keeps their coat healthy. Although most cats can manage their own grooming, they still benefit from a little help from their owners.

Brush Regularly

Regular brushing removes loose fur, reduces hairballs, and keeps the coat shiny. Long-haired breeds may need daily brushing to prevent painful mats and tangles, while short-haired cats usually require brushing once or twice a week.

Don't Over-Bathe

Unlike dogs, cats rarely need regular baths. Bathing should only be done, when necessary, such as when the coat becomes heavily soiled or if advised by a veterinarian. Frequent bathing may strip the skin of its natural oils and cause dryness.

Check the Ears, Eyes, and Teeth

Take a few minutes each week to inspect your cat's ears, eyes, and mouth. The ears should be clean and free of foul-smelling discharge, the eyes should be bright with minimal discharge, and the teeth and gums should be checked regularly to help prevent dental disease. Daily or regular tooth brushing with a cat-safe toothpaste is one of the best ways to maintain oral health.

Trim the Nails

Indoor cats may not wear down their claws naturally. Trimming the tips of the nails every few weeks helps prevent overgrowth, accidental scratches, and snagging on carpets or furniture. Providing scratching posts also helps keep claws healthy.

Watch for Changes in Grooming Habits

A change in grooming behaviour can be an early warning sign of illness. Excessive grooming may indicate allergies, parasites, skin disease, pain, or stress, while a cat that stops grooming may be suffering from arthritis, obesity, dental disease, or another medical condition that makes grooming difficult. If you notice sudden changes, consult your veterinarian.

Keep the Litter Box Clean

Good hygiene also includes a clean litter box. Scoop waste daily, replace litter regularly, and wash the litter tray with mild soap and water. Most cats prefer an unscented, clumping litter in a spacious, quiet location. A clean litter box encourages proper toilet habits and reduces stress.

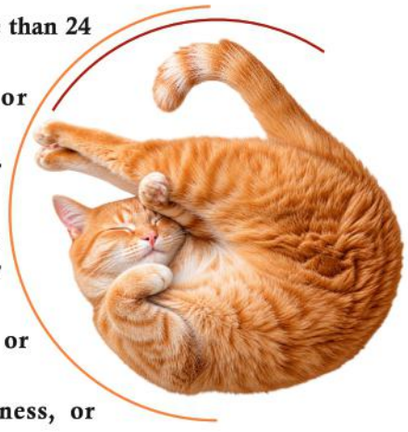
Sterilization: A Responsible Choice

Sterilization (spaying in females and neutering in males) is an important component of responsible pet ownership. Besides preventing unwanted litters, it reduces roaming, fighting, urine spraying, and the risk of certain reproductive diseases. Female cats can reach sexual maturity as early as 4–5 months of age; therefore, the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) recommends sterilizing cats intended as pets by **5 months of age**, unless there are medical reasons to delay the procedure. Early sterilization not only contributes to population control but also promotes better long-term health and welfare.

Recognizing Early Signs of Illness: When Should You Visit a veterinarian?

Cats are known for hiding pain and illness, a survival instinct inherited from their wild ancestors. By the time obvious signs of disease appear, the condition may already be advanced. Therefore, payingclose attention to subtle changes in your cat's daily habits can make a significant difference in early diagnosis and successful treatment.

Consult your veterinarian immediately if your cat shows any of the following signs:



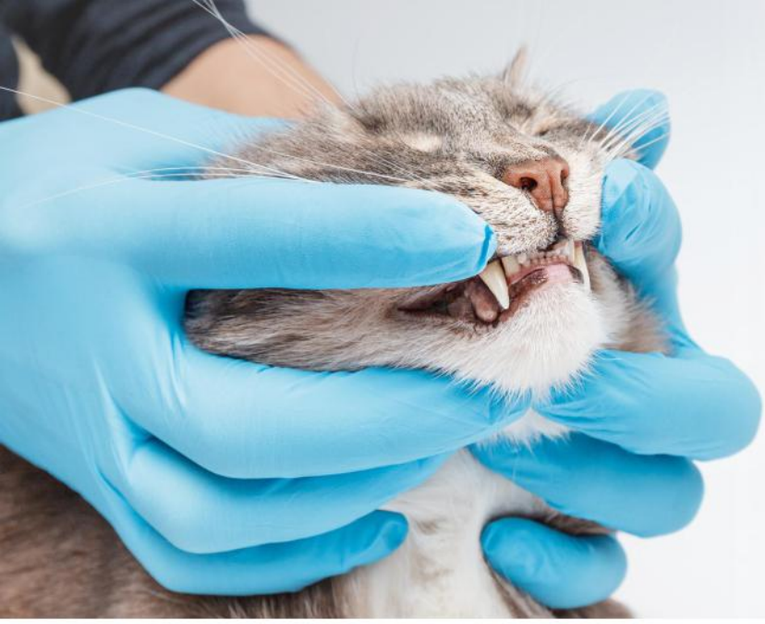
- **Loss of appetite for more than 24 hours**
- **Difficulty breathing or persistent coughing**
- **Repeated vomiting or diarrhœa**
- **Difficulty urinating or frequent visits to the litter box with little urine**
- **Blood in urine, stool, or vomit**
- **Sudden lethargy, weakness, or collapse**
- **Seizures, disorientation, or loss of balance**
- **Unexplained weight loss or excessive thirst**
- **Changes in behaviour**

Remember, your cat cannot tell you when something is wrong. Observing changes in appetite, activity, grooming habits, litter box behaviour, and social interactions can help detect health problems early. Regular veterinary check-ups, combined with careful observation at home, are the best way to ensure your feline companion enjoys a long, healthy, and comfortable life.

To conclude this, I would like to say that cats may appear independent, but they rely on their owners for every aspect of preventive healthcare. Balanced nutrition, timely vaccination, routine deworming, parasite control, sterilization, grooming, and regular veterinary check-ups are the cornerstones of responsible cat ownership. By investing in preventive care rather than waiting for illness to develop, owners can help their feline companions enjoy healthier, longer, and happier lives. Every informed decision made today contributes to a lifetime of well-being for these remarkable animals...

-Dr Akshita Purohit

College of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry Jabalpur



More Than Bad Breath:

Feline Dental Disease and Tooth Resorption

A cat that eats happily can still be living with a painful mouth. Recognising the signs—and understanding what a proper dental examination involves—can make a real difference.

The hidden problem behind a cat's bad breath

Persistent bad breath—known as halitosis—is not something to dismiss as a normal part of having a cat. It can be an early sign of oral disease. Cats often conceal pain, and some continue eating even when their mouths are uncomfortable. A normal appetite, therefore, dœs not guarantee a healthy mouth.

Untreated dental disease can affect eating, grooming, social behaviour and overall quality of life. Two important causes of feline oral pain are periodontal disease, which is associated with plaque and inflammation around the teeth, and tooth resorption, in which the tooth's own tissues are progressively destroyed. These conditions can occur together, but they are different diseases and need to be assessed and treated accordingly.

Understanding feline dental disease

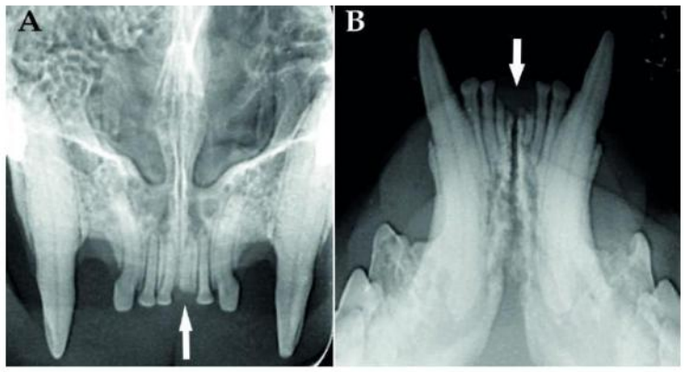
Dental disease is an umbrella term for several conditions. Plaque is a soft bacterial biofilm that forms on tooth surfaces. If it is not removed, minerals in saliva can harden it into calculus, or tartar. The rough surface encourages further plaque accumulation.

- Gingivitis: inflammation limited to the gums, commonly seen as redness, swelling or bleeding along the gumline. It may be reversible when the underlying cause is addressed.
- Periodontitis: inflammation and damage affecting the structures that support the teeth, including the periodontal ligament and surrounding bone. Advanced disease can cause deep pockets, loose teeth and tooth loss.
- Feline chronic gingivostomatitis: a severe, painful inflammatory condition involving the gums and other tissues inside the mouth. It is distinct from ordinary plaque-associated gingivitis and can require complex, individualised treatment.
- Tooth resorption: progressive loss of tooth tissue caused by resorptive cells. It is not the same as a conventional cavity.

A cat may have more than one of these conditions at the same time. A veterinary assessment is needed to identify which problem is present and how advanced it is.

Feline tooth resorption: when a cat's own tooth breaks down

Tooth resorption is one of the most painful dental conditions seen in cats. Cells called odontoclasts progressively break down the hard tissues of a tooth, including dentine and cementum, and sometimes the crown. The exact reasons these cells become abnormally active in adult feline teeth are not fully understood.



The condition can affect one tooth or several. Lesions may occur around the neck of the tooth, near the gumline, or along the root where they are hidden beneath the gum. Some lesions eventually expose sensitive tissues and may appear as a pink or red defect at the tooth surface. Others cannot be seen during a routine visual examination.

Dental radiographs are important because the appearance of the roots helps the veterinarian classify the type of resorption and choose the appropriate treatment. In type 1 lesions, the root retains a recognisable periodontal ligament space; in type 2 lesions, the root is progressively replaced by bone-like tissue. Type 3 teeth show features of both patterns. These distinctions matter because treatment decisions differ between types.

Tooth resorption is not simply tooth decay caused by bacteria, and good home care cannot reliably prevent it. Even cats that receive regular dental care may develop the condition, so ongoing veterinary monitoring remains important.

Warning signs cat parents should not ignore

Cats do not always show obvious signs of oral pain. Changes in everyday habits may be the first clue. Look for:

- Persistent or unusually offensive breath.
- Red, swollen or bleeding gums.
- Dropping food, chewing on one side, or pausing while eating.
- A new preference for soft food or reluctance to eat harder food.
- Drooling, especially if saliva is blood-tinged.
- Pawing at the mouth or rubbing the face.
- Reduced grooming, a scruffier coat, irritability or withdrawal.
- A pink or red defect near the gumline.

A cat that stops eating, develops facial swelling or has significant oral bleeding should be assessed promptly by a veterinarian. Do not try to inspect a painful mouth forcefully. If possible, note changes in eating or behaviour and share them with the veterinary team.



Why do cats develop dental disease?

There is no single explanation for every feline oral condition. Plaque accumulation is central to gingivitis and periodontitis, but cats differ in how quickly plaque builds up and how strongly their tissues react to it. Tooth position, crowding and other anatomical factors can make some areas harder to clean. Immune-mediated inflammation also plays a role in conditions such as chronic gingivostomatitis.

Tooth resorption is different: its precise cause remains uncertain, and it can occur in cats with apparently excellent oral hygiene. Periodontal disease may cœxist with resorption, but neither diet nor brushing should be presented as a proven standalone cause or prevention method for resorption. A cat's age, medical history and individual risk profile help guide the frequency and scope of dental checks.

Diagnosis: what happens during a veterinary dental examination?

A brief look into an awake cat's mouth can identify obvious redness, broken teeth or heavy calculus, but it cannot reliably rule out disease beneath the gumline. A comprehensive dental assessment commonly includes:

- History and clinical assessment: discussion of eating, drooling, breath, grooming and behaviour, followed by a general physical examination.
- Initial oral screening: inspection of visible teeth, gums and other oral tissues, as the cat's comfort allows.
- Examination under general anaesthesia: tooth-by-tooth assessment, periodontal probing, checks for mobility and dental charting are needed for a complete evaluation.
- Intraoral dental radiographs: X-rays reveal root structure, bone changes and resorptive lesions that may not be visible from the crown.
- Additional tests when indicated: pre-anaesthetic assessment and blood or urine testing may be recommended based on the cat's age, health and examination findings.

General anaesthesia allows a thorough examination and appropriate treatment while reducing stress and movement. Anaesthesia-free scaling is not a substitute for comprehensive veterinary dentistry because it cannot adequately assess or treat disease below the gumline. The veterinary team should explain the proposed procedure, anaesthetic plan and monitoring for the individual cat.

Treatment: can damaged teeth be saved?

Treatment depends on the diagnosis and severity. Professional scaling and polishing remove plaque and calculus and may be recommended for plaque-associated disease. Periodontal treatment is tailored to the extent of damage; teeth with advanced loss of supporting structures may not be salvageable.





For painful teeth affected by resorption, extraction is often the appropriate treatment. The choice between complete extraction and crown amputation depends on the radiographic appearance and the condition of the roots and surrounding tissues. Crown amputation is reserved for carefully selected cases—typically advanced type 2 replacement resorption confirmed on dental radiographs, with no relevant periodontal or endodontic disease or other contraindication. It is not appropriate for every resorptive tooth.

Pain relief is a core part of dental treatment. Veterinarians may use local anaesthetic nerve blocks and suitable systemic analgesics before, during and after procedures. Antibiotics are not automatically required for every dental procedure; the decision depends on the clinical findings. Follow-up checks help confirm healing and identify further disease.

Home dental care: what can cat parents do?

Home care helps control plaque and supports oral health, but it cannot treat established tooth resorption or replace professional assessment.



- Introduce toothbrushing gradually, using a soft cat-specific toothbrush and toothpaste formulated for cats. Start with brief, positive sessions and reward calm behaviour.
- Never use human toothpaste. Cats may swallow it, and human formulations are not designed for feline use.
- Consider dental diets, treats or other products with credible evidence of plaque or tartar control. The Veterinary Oral Health Council (VOHC) Seal of Acceptance can help identify products that have met its accepted criteria.
- Do not scrape tartar at home with metal tools. This can injure the gums and damage tooth surfaces, while leaving disease beneath the gumline untreated.
- Do not force brushing if the cat appears painful or distressed. Arrange a veterinary examination first.

Prevention and long-term monitoring

Positive handling of the face and mouth can begin during kittenhood, provided the kitten is comfortable and has no eruption or bite problem requiring attention. Routine veterinary oral examinations help detect gingivitis and other problems early. The frequency of professional dental care should be individualised according to examination findings, age, medical history and risk.

Brushing can slow plaque accumulation and help maintain gum health, but tooth resorption cannot currently be reliably prevented through brushing or diet alone. Cats previously diagnosed with resorption may develop lesions in other teeth, so the veterinarian may recommend repeat examinations and dental radiographs at an appropriate interval.

Life after dental extraction: can cats eat normally?

Most cats adapt well after appropriate dental extractions. Once painful teeth have been treated and the surgical sites have healed, many eat more comfortably and return to their usual routines. Even cats that need multiple extractions can enjoy a good quality of life with suitable care.

After surgery, follow the veterinary team's instructions about food texture, medication and activity, and ask when the cat can return to its normal diet. Contact the clinic if you notice persistent bleeding, swelling, discharge, poor appetite or difficulty eating. Do not stop or change prescribed medication without veterinary advice.

A healthy mouth means a happier cat

Persistent bad breath, altered eating habits and changes in grooming deserve attention. Because cats can hide oral pain—and because some dental lesions lie beneath the gumline—looking at the visible teeth is not enough to rule out disease. Veterinary examination, dental radiography when indicated, appropriate treatment and ongoing monitoring can relieve pain and protect quality of life. The next time you notice that breath, treat it as a question worth asking your veterinarian...

Diwali Without Fear: Protecting Cats from Fireworks and Festive Hazards



For many families Diwali is the brightest night of the year. For the cat under the bed it is the loudest and most unpredictable. A little planning, from clinic to living room, can turn a frightening festival into a manageable one.

Every year the pattern repeats in veterinary practices across India. In the days around Diwali, clinics see frightened pets, lost animals, burns, upset stomachs and the occasional emergency that began with a stolen sweet. Dogs dominate the conversation because their distress is loud and obvious. Cats suffer differently. They hide, freeze, stop eating and are often overlooked until something gœs wrong.

This article looks at what fireworks and festive hazards mean for cats, and what veterinarians, industry partners and cat parents can each do before the first cracker is lit. Diwali falls in early November this year, so the preparation window is open now.

Reading the signs

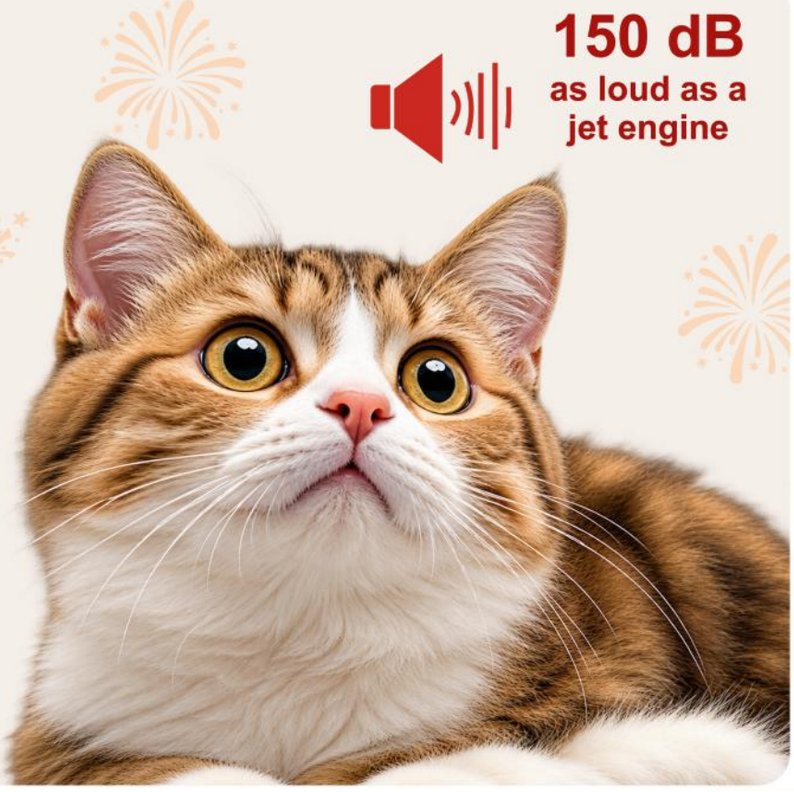
Cats are experts at concealing stress, so vigilance matters. The obvious signs include bolting, dilated pupils, hissing or low grumbling, and withdrawing from people. The subtle signs are easy to miss: lip licking, swallowing, hiding, becoming withdrawn or on edge, excessive meowing, over-grooming, and toileting or spraying in the house. Frightened cats may also squeeze into very tight spaces.

One point deserves emphasis for clinicians. Chronic pain and some medical conditions can worsen noise sensitivity and behaviour problems. A cat that suddenly reacts badly to Diwali needs a physical examination, not just a diffuser.

Why cats find Diwali so difficult

Cats have very sensitive hearing and perceive many sounds as far louder than we do. Firework noise can reach 150 decibels, as loud as a jet engine. Volume is only part of the problem. Fireworks are sudden and unpredictable, and they arrive with flashes, smoke and smell, while the household itself changes: visitors, music, lamps, open doors. Cats dislike environmental change, and Diwali changes everything at once.

The science is candid about its gaps. A 2025 review of fireworks and animals notes that research on cats is limited, although many owners report marked fear during fireworks. Unlike dogs, cats have no formally recognised diagnosis of noise phobia, and clinicians tend to speak of fearful or highly noise-sensitive cats instead. The absence of a label is not the absence of suffering. BSAVA points out that animals who do not show behaviours problematic to owners are presented less often, which should not be read as meaning they are unaffected.





When stress becomes a medical emergency

Fear can show up in the body. Stress can trigger gastrointestinal upset and cystitis. Veterinarians have also warned that fear can contribute to life-threatening urethral obstruction in cats, with early signs of repeated trips to the litter tray, toileting outside it and blood in the urine, followed by vomiting and loss of appetite if the cat becomes blocked. These reports reflect clinical experience rather than controlled trials, but the practical message is sound: a cat straining to urinate is an emergency and should never be left to see if it settles.

Escape is the other great risk. Shelters report a dramatic rise in lost pets during Diwali, and a frightened cat may bolt through a door, window or balcony. UK emergency vets describe seeing hundreds of pets injured in road accidents each year after being spooked by loud bangs. Smoke adds a further burden. GADVASU warns that heavy cracker smoke can cause severe respiratory distress, so cats with airway disease deserve a conversation before the festival, not after it.

A practical plan for cat parents

Most of the work happens before the festival, not during it.

1. **Start early.** Set up a quiet, covered refuge away from doors and noise, and introduce it now. If using pheromone diffusers, begin weeks before the fireworks start. They may not suit every cat, and no product should be expected to work alone.
2. **Check identification.** Every cat, including indoor-only cats, should be microchipped with current details and wear an ID tag. A breakaway collar is the safer choice for cats.
3. **Secure the exits.** Check window screens and balcony netting, and ask family and guests to keep doors closed. Keep the contact details of local shelters and municipal bodies handy in case a cat gœs missing.
4. **Manage the evening.** Bring cats indoors before dusk with food, water and a litter tray. Draw the curtains and play background sound such as a radio or television. A new toy can be a useful distraction.
5. **Stay calm and flexible.** Some cats become more stressed when confined to a single room, so let a frightened cat choose its own hiding place. Never punish fearful behaviour, avoid dressing cats up, and stay at home with them if you can.
6. **Seek advice early.** Cats that are elderly, have heart or urinary disease, or are already anxious should be discussed with a veterinarian before Diwali. A behaviourist can plan gradual desensitisation using recorded sounds.

Festive hazards beyond the fireworks

Diwali brings other dangers into the home. The table summarises the main ones.



Hazard	Why it matters	What to do
Diyas, candles, incense and oils	Cats can burn whiskers and fur sniffing flames. Concentrated essential oils can ulcerate the mouth and oesophagus.	Use enclosed or LED lamps, keep flames high and never leave them unattended.
Sweets, ghee and chocolate	Veterinarians report stolen sweets and gulped ghee as a common festive emergency. Chocolate contains theobromine, which is toxic to cats.	Keep mithai covered and out of reach, and brief guests.
Lilies in bouquets	Petals, leaves and pollen can cause acute kidney failure in cats. Stargazer, tiger and other Asiatic lilies are among those of concern.	Choose cat-safe flowers. Seek immediate veterinary care after any contact.
Fireworks debris	Unexploded crackers, sparkler remnants and broken casings can cause burns or poisoning if chewed.	Sweep balconies, terraces and gardens after celebrations.
Open doors and windows	A single knock at the door can send a frightened cat outside.	Keep doors and windows closed, use secure barriers and double-check during visitors.

What Veterinarians can do

Start the conversation in October. The British Veterinary Association notes that owners often ask for help in the days around the event, but far more can be done if measures begin sooner. Practical steps for the practice:

- **Communicate early.** Use WhatsApp broadcasts, social media and waiting-room displays to cover signs of fear, home hazards and the identification checklist.
- **Examine before you medicate.** Check sensitive cats for pain or underlying disease. Pharmacological support is a case-by-case decision. Evidence specific to firework fear in cats is thin, and one veterinary source notes that no medications have been approved specifically for feline noise-related fear.
- **Plan for emergencies.** Expect urinary obstruction, burns, road accidents, toxin ingestion and respiratory distress. HSI/India advises owners to check clinic availability over Diwali in advance, so publish holiday hours and emergency arrangements early.
- **Think beyond the client list.** Community cats with no owner may suffer burns that go untreated. Clinics can work with feeders and resident welfare associations on awareness and, where possible, on care for injured animals.

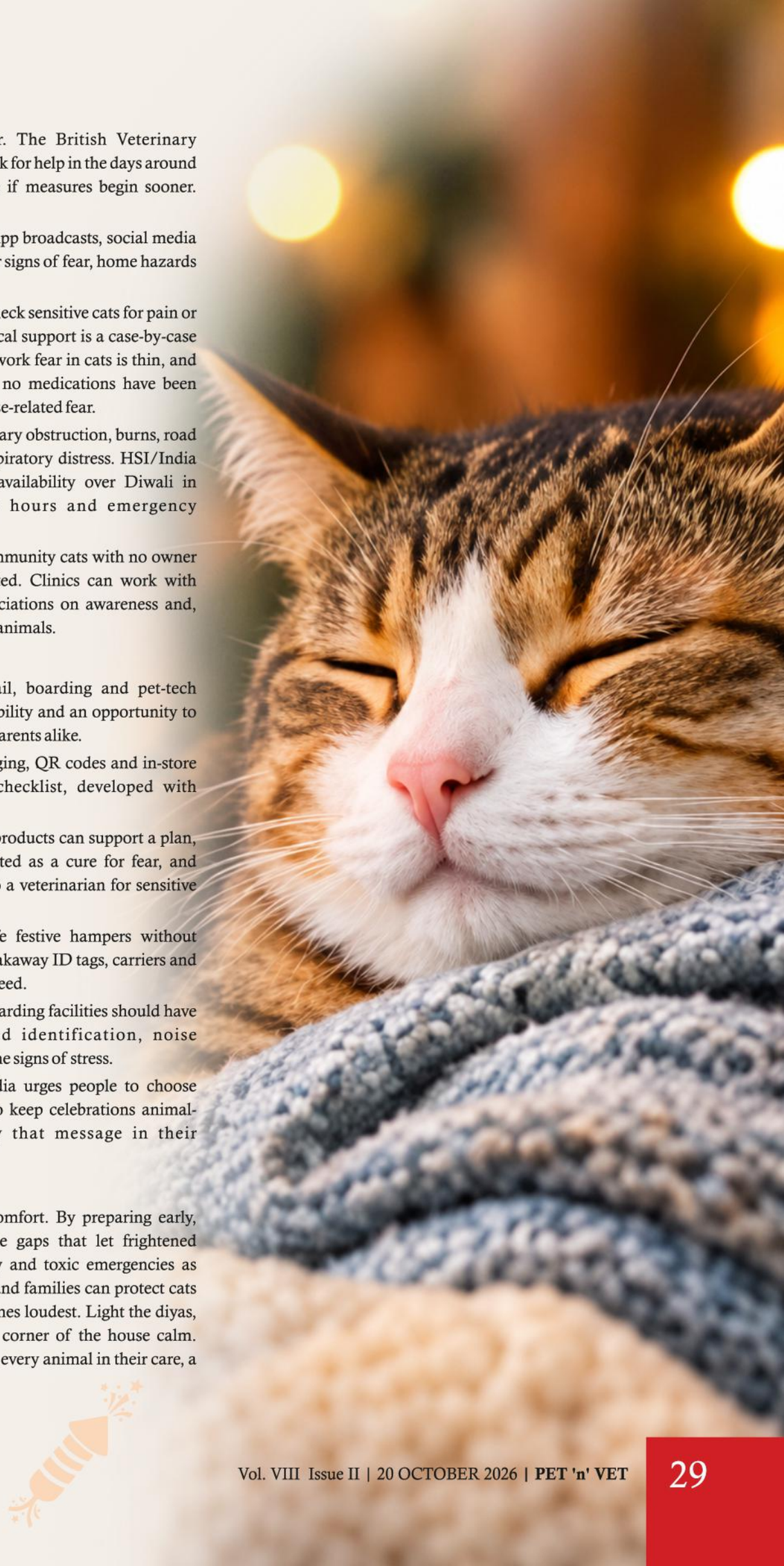
Where industry can help

For pet food, pharmaceutical, retail, boarding and pet-tech companies, Diwali is both a responsibility and an opportunity to build trust with veterinarians and cat parents alike.

- **Educate, do not only sell.** Packaging, QR codes and in-store displays can carry the safety checklist, developed with veterinary partners.
- **Make claims carefully.** Calming products can support a plan, but no product should be presented as a cure for fear, and messaging should point owners to a veterinarian for sensitive cats.
- **Design for the festival.** Cat-safe festive hampers without chocolate or lilies, LED diyas, breakaway ID tags, carriers and covered hideaways all meet a real need.
- **Run catteries as quiet refuges.** Boarding facilities should have secure doors, double-checked identification, noise management and staff briefed on the signs of stress.
- **Back a quieter Diwali.** HSI/India urges people to choose small crackers or sparklers and to keep celebrations animal-friendly. Brands can amplify that message in their communities.

A calmer festival of lights

A cat's silence is not the same as comfort. By preparing early, recognising subtle signs, closing the gaps that let frightened animals escape, and treating urinary and toxic emergencies as emergencies, veterinarians, industry and families can protect cats at the very moment their world becomes loudest. Light the diyas, share the sweets, and keep the cat's corner of the house calm. Wishing every PETnVET reader, and every animal in their care, a safe and happy Diwali...



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More Than Bad Breath:
Feline Dental Disease and Tooth Resorption

A cat that eats happily can still be living with a painful mouth. Recognising the signs—and understanding what a proper dental examination involves—can make a real difference.

The hidden problem behind a cat's bad breath

Persistent bad breath—known as halitosis—is not something to dismiss as a normal part of having a cat. It can be an early sign of oral disease. Cats often conceal pain, and some continue eating even when their mouths are uncomfortable. A normal appetite, therefore, does not guarantee a healthy mouth.

Untreated dental disease can affect eating, grooming, social behaviour and overall quality of life. Two important causes of feline oral pain are periodontal disease, which is associated with plaque and inflammation around the teeth, and tooth resorption, in which the tooth's own tissues are progressively destroyed. These conditions can occur together, but they are different diseases and need to be assessed and treated accordingly.

Understanding feline dental disease

Dental disease is an umbrella term for several conditions. Plaque is a soft bacterial biofilm that forms on tooth surfaces. If it is not removed, minerals in saliva can harden it into calculus, or tartar. The rough surface encourages further plaque accumulation.

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Feline tooth resorption: when a cat's own tooth breaks down

Tooth resorption is one of the most painful dental conditions seen in cats. Cells called odontoclasts progressively break down the hard tissues of a tooth, including dentine and cementum, and sometimes the crown. The exact reasons these cells become abnormally active in adult feline teeth are not fully understood.

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Why do cats develop dental disease?

There is no single explanation for every feline oral condition. Plaque accumulation is central to gingivitis and periodontitis, but cats differ in how quickly plaque builds up and how strongly their tissues react to it. Tooth position, crowding and other anatomical factors can make some areas harder to clean. Immune-mediated inflammation also plays a role in conditions such as chronic gingivostomatitis.

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