

## Symptoms of hyperthyroid disease

The signs of hyperthyroid disease are related to the overproduction of thyroid hormones, which results in an increase of overall body metabolism. Cats with hyperthyroidism often display one or more of the following symptoms:

- Weight loss
- Increased appetite
- Increased thirst
- Increased urination frequency and volume
- Vomiting and/or diarrhea
- Decreased grooming activity
- Poor or dull hair coat
- Behavior changes, hyperactivity

## Testing recommendations

Testing recommendations made by your veterinarian are based on your pet's breed, age, clinical signs, and history.

Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count

Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count, Thyroid Testing, Urinalysis

Chemistry Panel, Complete Blood Count, Thyroid Testing, Urinalysis, Blood Pressure, Electrocardiogram

## Physiological Age in Human Years

Cat<sup>1</sup>

Current Age (Year)	Human Years	Life Stage
6 Months	10	Kitten
1	15	
2	24	Junior
3	28	
4	32	
5	36	Prime
6	40	
7	44	
8	48	Mature
9	52	
10	56	
11	60	
12	64	Senior
13	68	
14	72	
15	76	
16	80	
17	84	
18	88	
19	92	
20	96	
21	100	Geriatric

## My Next Appointment

Pet: \_\_\_\_\_

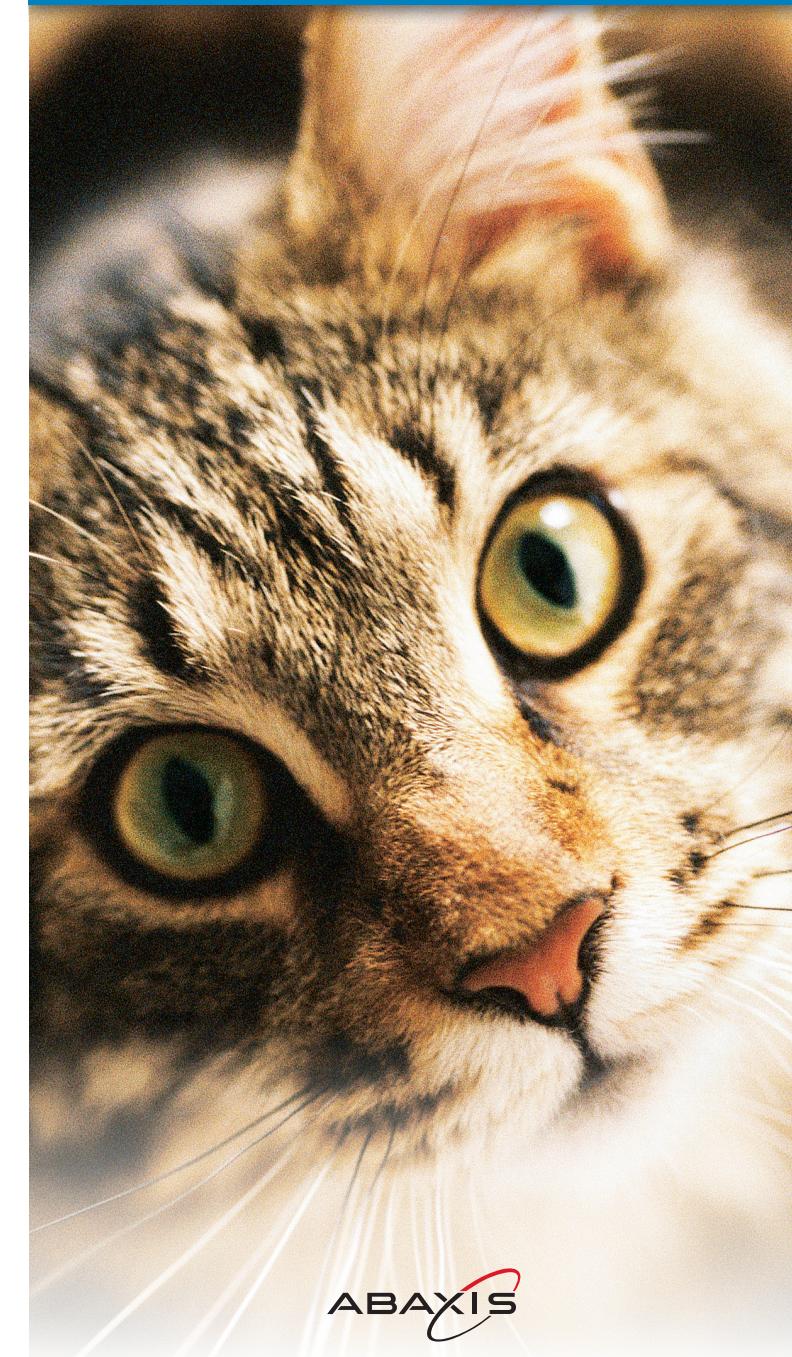
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for  
Appointment:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# A PET OWNER'S GUIDE TO HYPERTHYROID DISEASE



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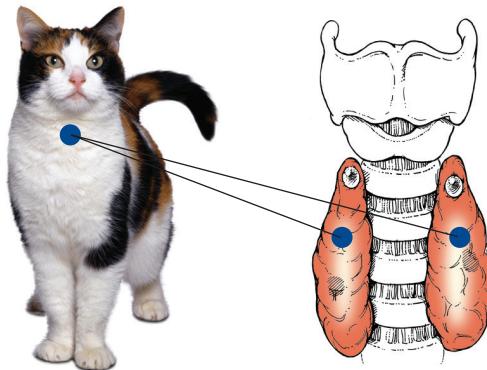
1. Adapted from American Association of Feline Practitioners - <http://catfriendly.com/cat-care-at-home/life-stages/>

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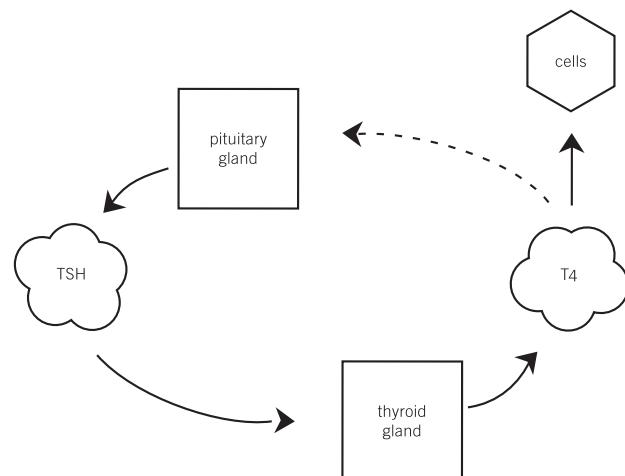
**H**yperthyroid disease, also known as hyperthyroidism, is one of the most common hormone disorders affecting cats. All breeds can develop hyperthyroidism, and while it is most commonly found in middle age and older cats, it can also occur in younger cats.

Regular thyroid disease testing is highly recommended, and it is important to pay close attention to your cat's physical and behavioral changes as he/she ages. Remember to bring any noticeable changes to your veterinarian's attention, so they can perform the proper diagnostic tests.



## The normal thyroid gland

The thyroid gland is small and consists of two glands, one on each side of the trachea in the neck. The thyroid produces hormones called thyroxine (T4) and triiodothyronine (T3). Production of T4 and T3 is controlled by another hormone, called thyroid stimulating hormone (TSH), which is produced by the pituitary gland in the brain.



## Causes of hyperthyroid disease

In hyperthyroid cats, the thyroid glands are continuously producing and releasing thyroid hormones. This constant production of thyroid hormone is usually due to a benign tumor on one or both of the thyroid glands, called adenomas. In very rare cases, these cats develop cancerous tumors, or hyperfunctioning carcinomas.

The rise in thyroid hormones impacts every system in the body. The numerous body functions affected can cause complications to the kidneys, heart, skin, and gastrointestinal system.

## Diagnosing hyperthyroid disease

There are many other diseases with symptoms similar to hyperthyroid disease; some may occur alongside this disease. To evaluate the best potential treatment and outcome for your pet, your veterinarian may recommend some of the following diagnostic testing:

### T4 Blood Test

A higher than normal level of T4 is consistent with hyperthyroidism, and is often all that is needed to diagnose this disease. In some instances, this test may be inconclusive and additional thyroid testing will be required.

### Chemistry Panel

A full blood panel may reveal other diseases, such as concurrent liver and/or kidney injury or disease.

### Complete Blood Count (CBC)

A complete blood count evaluates blood cell counts for anemia (low red blood cell count), inflammation, infection, and platelets. This test may be needed to rule out blood-related conditions.

### Urinalysis

This test examines the urine for concurrent kidney disease, crystals, and infection.

### Additional Thyroid Tests

Depending on the T4 blood test results and clinical signs of your pet, your veterinarian may also recommend testing free T4 by equilibrium dialysis, or conducting a T3 suppression test.

## Treating hyperthyroid disease

Hyperthyroidism can be treated successfully. Your veterinarian will discuss and recommend the treatment option that is best for your pet. Common choices for treatment include:

### Medication

A daily medication is prescribed to control the production of the thyroid hormone.

### Prescription diet

A prescription diet that restricts iodine. This diet must be exclusively fed to your cat.

### Surgery

The thyroid gland is surgically removed.

### Radioactive Iodine Therapy (I131)

The thyroid tissue is selectively destroyed by radioactive iodine.

## Monitoring hyperthyroid disease

Your veterinarian will recommend regular monitoring of T4 levels, and may also recommend monitoring kidney function and blood pressure.

If your cat receives medication, there will be frequent T4 tests until their thyroid level returns to normal. Once regulated, your cat will need regular T4 testing to ensure the thyroid hormone level remains normal.

If your cat undergoes surgery or radioactive iodine therapy, T4 testing will be conducted shortly after the procedure to ensure the treatment was successful. Your cat will need regular T4 testing to ensure the thyroid tissue does not re-grow. In rare cases, your veterinarian may recommend a thyroid supplement and additional monitoring.

