



## ABSCESSES IN CATS

### What is an abscess?

An abscess is a pocket of bacteria, pus, and dead tissue. It can be just under the skin or deep in the muscles and other tissues.

Cats are especially prone to abscesses because they are territorial and fight to protect their home area. Their canine teeth (or fangs) are sharp and narrow so they can act like a hypodermic needle injecting mouth bacteria into another cat. And their tissue structures are somewhat loose, so an infection can spread rapidly before their immune system has a chance to stop it. Even females and neutered males will fight to protect their home turf, but the vast majority of abscesses are caused by un-neutered male cats.

Depending on the site and stage of an abscess, the destruction of tissues and toxin absorption may be life threatening.

### How are abscesses treated?

If an infection is in the early or cellulitis stage, we may be able to prevent the formation of an abscess with antibiotics.

Once the pus pocket has formed, it must be surgically drained and the pocket or pockets cleaned and flushed with medication. Antibiotics are needed to totally eliminate the bacteria causing the infection. Depending on the location and size of the abscess, drains may be placed leading from the pocket.

### Important Points to Remember...

- Medication must be given to eliminate the infection. Give it as directed. Antibiotics should be given until used up—even if your cat seems normal again.
- Keep your cat indoors during the treatment.
- If drains are needed they may be cleaned with water on cotton or Kleenex tissues. Treat the pus as infectious material, and wash your hands afterward. Keep any children away from the pus discharge.

### Special Instructions:




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Check back examination needed in \_\_\_\_\_ Days.

### Call Us...

- If swelling and tenderness returns to the abscess site.
- If your cat refuses to eat or seems depressed after the first full day at home.
- If the abscess doesn't seem to be healing.
- If there seems to be a change in your pet's general health for the worse.



*Thank you for this opportunity to serve you*