



THE BARRACKS
VET SURGERY
MOSMAN

WHY CATS SPRAY

The main reasons cats spray indoors:

- Cats may spray to communicate marked territory (especially entire males).
- Cats may feel insecure and be using urination to create a calming smell.
- Cats may have inadequate litter boxes and be unable to get outside.
- Cats may have a medical condition.

If your cat sprays indoors, tell the Vet the answers to these questions:

- How long has this been happening and have there been any correlating changes in the environment or family/animals in the area? (new people, animals or changes in the environment such as renovations may be distressing to cats).
- Can the cat see or hear neighbouring animals? (block the view and play masking music).
- Does the cat stand or squat? (spraying is when standing, urine is when squatting).
- What sex is the cat? Is it neutered? (spraying is normal behaviour for many male entire cats).
- Does the cat produce a lot of urine? (relieving itself) or a little? (marking territory).
- Is the cat anxious? (it's own urine will smell calming to the cat).

What can be done to prevent spraying?

- Castrate male cats before 6 months of age.
- Remove causes of anxiety and provide calming devices such as homeopet or feliway.
- Decrease the number of cats in the house or provide separate territories and trays.
- Prevent access to the problem area, if re-introducing, do so calmly and under supervision.
- Provide one litter tray per cat, plus one spare, and experiment with different types of litter.
- Alter the purpose of the environment by feeding the cat where it sprays.
- Consider valium or other medications if all else fails.
- Clean sprayed areas with detergent and then Biozet or "Urine off" which have appropriately acting enzymes to break down the uric acid. This is a smell in urine which we can't detect but animals can. Smelling it will often trigger them to repeat the action.

Whatever you do, don't punish!

- Yelling at the cat, spraying them with water or throwing them outside may be our first instinct. But remember that the cat's instinct is even stronger than ours! A stressed, intimidated or maybe even angry cat will seek to comfort itself by more spraying.
- Create new behaviours with your cat by grooming and playing with them at the same time each day. It only takes 10 - 15 minutes a day to establish this new routine. If the cat doesn't like being touched, try a toy like a laser pointer. You could also interact by rolling their dinner to them piece by piece, or rolling it a distance so that they can chase and hunt it down.