



LIESSE ANIMAL CLINIC

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Dr. R. J. Langill ~ Serving the community since 1950

FELINE HOUSESOILING

Inappropriate urination or defecation by your pet cat is a common problem. The causes may be a litter box aversion, a urinary tract infection, or spraying.

Many cases of this are due to **litter box aversion**, where the litter, litter box, or area has a disagreeable odor to the cat. Frequently this is due to scented litters, litter liners, urine odors, or other cats' odors. Cats that have litter box aversion will frequently urinate or defecate next to, or near the box. They will sometimes use the box for one, but not the other of their toilet habits. They should not be squatting more frequently than normal. Treatment for litter box aversion is to change any of the above factors, which might be causing the problem. Start out with fresh, clay litter, and clean out the box daily. Do not use detergents or soaps to clean the box, as this is a common cause. Put a second, open litter box in a second location.

Cats that have a **urinary tract infection** are squatting much more frequently than normal, and usually urinate very small amounts on each urination. Finding urine outside the box is also common here; sinks, bathtubs, sofas and beds are common sites to find urine. Bloody urine is always a sign of a medical disorder, and prompt veterinary attention is needed. Any symptom of a urinary tract infection in a male cat is always considered an emergency situation, for fear of a total blockage.

Cats that **spray** always flag, that is urinate standing up, wagging their tails up high, and urinate on vertical objects. The urine, of course will be found on the floor, but is usually next to doorways, windows, or furniture. The cause is usually another cat that your cat can see or smell, either male tomcats or female cats in heat. The treatment for spraying involves a combination of removing the cause, and decreasing your cats' desire, through veterinary assisted treatments.

The last category that we occasionally see is separation anxiety, where the cat may urinate only on objects of clothing, usually from a person that is away from home for a short time. Medical and behavior therapy together are needed to solve this problem.