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Cats Stressed-Out By 21st Century Life

Press Release

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Whether it's the work pressures, financial concerns or even relationship woes there's no doubt that stress is on the increase. The Mental Health Foundation says that Britons are more stressed than they were 10 years ago* and anyone who has suffered stress and anxiety knows the debilitating effects it can have on your health. Something that is far less widely reported is the affect of stress on pets. Whilst owning a cat can be beneficial in terms of reducing our stress, cats themselves are very vulnerable to suffering from stress. Common causes of stress in cats include building work, moving house, living in a multi-cat home and new additions to the household (such as new pets and babies). Cats affected by stress may show signs such as eating and/or grooming less, becoming withdrawn and even showing signs of defensive aggression by hissing at people or other pets in the home. Cats will readily pick up on stress in their owners and this too can have a knock-on consequence of making them anxious and even unwell.

Recent research has shown that stress – most often related to tension with other cats in the home or local environment – is known to be a significant factor in causing feline lower urinary tract disease (FLUTD). This means that for most cats suffering from FLUTD the best treatment lies with their owner (after consulting a veterinary professional). In the current economic climate the good news is that there are many home measures that owners can take to greatly reduce the contributory factors of FLUTD and also the stress (and expense) of repeat vet visits for both cat and owner. Simple steps which owners can take involve addressing issues relating to the five essential resources that a cat needs, which are food, water, litter boxes, resting areas and points of entry and exit to a territory. For example, it is important to ensure that the litter box is in a safe, secure and private location. Although a glass porch or conservatory may be convenient for an owner the fact that the windows allow neighbourhood cats a direct view can be a particularly stressful factor for the cat. There are many measures that an owner can take both to recognise stress in their cat and also to find ways of improving the situation.

Further information on this and FLUTD in general can be found in 'Caring for a cat with lower urinary tract disease'. This book was written by UK Feline Specialist Dr Sarah Caney and leading FLUTD researcher Professor Daniëlle Gunn-Moore and is published by Cat Professional (www.catprofessional.com) in e-book or softback format. Additionally, a helpful free download for owners which gives advice on how to encourage your cat with FLUTD to drink more water can be found at http://www.catprofessional.com/free_downloads.html This guide was written by Dr Sarah Caney, feline veterinary specialist and Chief Executive of Cat Professional, an organisation dedicated to providing specialist feline care and advice for veterinary professionals and cat owners alike.

*<http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>

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