

## Hypertension in Cats

Your cat has recently been diagnosed with, or is suspected of having hypertension (high blood pressure). This can happen on its own, but is also very commonly associated with kidney disease, an overactive thyroid gland and heart disease.

If left untreated hypertension can cause serious problems such as sudden onset blindness due to bleeding within the eyes, strokes and more rapid progression of other underlying conditions listed above.

With regular blood pressure checks it can be detected, monitored and in the majority of cases successfully controlled with oral medication before any serious complications occur. We measure blood pressure in cats in the same way as we do in people - our veterinary nurse listens to the pulse in the leg below the cuff, this cuff is then inflated until we can no longer hear it, and gradually the pressure in the cuff is reduced until the pulse becomes loud enough to hear again.

It is normally easiest for you to leave your cat with us for a few hours whilst this is done - most cats will usually be a little bit stressed when they arrive at the clinic after a car or bus journey, and if we take the blood pressure immediately as they come in it will often be elevated. We find that we get the most accurate and meaningful results if cats are left in a quiet and comfortable environment for a couple of hours, then we take 4 or 5 readings over the course of an hour to get an average.

We recommend that blood pressure is checked at least every 3 months to make sure we keep it well controlled.