



Dr Kay Pitkeathly BVSc

109 Billa Road, Corner Menai Road, Menai NSW 2234

Telephone: (02) 9541 1455 Fax: (02) 9543 1756

menaivet@menaivet.com.au

Vomiting Cats

Cats find it easy to vomit. They often will vomit up a hairball which can be a normal part of grooming. However if your cat is vomiting frequently (more than once a week for over 3 months) or persistently, then this is not normal and your vet should investigate.



First your vet will want to find out if your cat is actually vomiting: rather than regurgitation or expectorating, so they need to ask you about what the vomit looks like (taking a sample is always a good idea).

With vomiting, there is nausea, lip licking, salivating , abdominal contractions and usually bile in the vomit. With regurgitation , there is no bile, there may be food (undigested), often in a tubular shape, but no nausea. With expectoration (hoiking from respiratory tract) there is often a cough, but no bile nor nausea. There may be energetic abdominal contractions with any of these.

Vomiting can be due to: eating too fast, “sensitive stomach”, hairballs, eating cat grass, poisons or eating something they shouldn't. But cats are different than dogs, apart from eating grass, they rarely eat poisonous substance or garbage or other indigestible items (there are some exceptions like pieces of string and hair elastics).



Your vet will usually suggest a blood test first, as this is relatively cheap and no – invasive. This will picky up kidney disease, liver problems, thyroid problems, hypoadrencorticism (Addison's) and pancreatitis. These are all treatable.

If your cat's blood test is normal, these metabolic problems are ruled out. The next step to finding out what is wrong could be: doing a diet trial, xrays,ultrasound or surgery.

Statistically if blood test are normal then out of very 100 cats:

- 49% will have inflammatory bowel disease
- 46% lymphoma
- 3% mast cell disease
- 1% unknown

As IBD (inflammatory bowel disease) is so common, often drugs and a dietary trial will find what foods your cat can't tolerate and if you avoid these, the problem is solved.

If drugs and diet don't solve the problem then surgery is your best option to find out definitely what is the problem. When you know what the problem is, then you can deal with it. So if your cat vomits a lot , there are options, you can treat it , it is not normal.