

Asthma

Niles Animal Hospital and Bird Medical Center
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Overview

Asthma is a lung condition associated with airway obstruction caused by sudden narrowing of the bronchial tubes. Typical symptoms include difficult breathing, coughing and/or wheezing. These symptoms are caused by the spasmodic constriction of the bronchial tubes and increased production of secretions from the bronchial tree.

The cause of asthma in cats is not yet completely understood. Some type of hypersensitivity response is generally blamed; however, an inciting cause is often not identified. The symptoms can range from infrequent to recurrent to constant. In some cats the disease appears to be seasonal, while in others there is recurring and eventually relentless progression of respiratory signs. Some cats may be asymptomatic between bouts of acute airway obstruction, whereas severely affected cats may have a persistent daily cough.

Cats of all ages can be affected. The Siamese breed and obese cats may have an increased incidence of disease.

Diagnosis and Treatment Notes:

- Asthma is generally diagnosed by physical examination and chest x-rays. An ultrasound examination of the heart (echocardiogram) is often recommended to rule out underlying heart disease.
- Treatment depends on the severity of the disease, your individual pet, and your veterinarian. The majority of cats with asthma are treated with steroids, bronchodilators and possibly oxygen. Some drugs may be administered by inhalers. Discuss treatment details when your pet is diagnosed with this condition.

What to Watch for*:

- Coughing
- Noisy breathing (wheezing)
- Difficult breathing
- Weight loss
- Fatigue

**Please notify us if you notice any of the above signs or if you have any questions!*