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Blind Cat Rescue: The Blind Cats Ask You to Have a Heart!



Hyperthyroid in Cats - What is it and What do you do?

Since several of the BCR cats have been diagnosed and treated for hyperthyroidism we wanted to share in the newsletter the blog post Alana wrote about this condition. In it, you'll find out what it is and how it's treated. Jamie, Jewell, Natasha, Pearl, Mack, Rusty and Yoshi all have hyperthyroidism and have been or are being treated for it.

What is hyperthyroidism? It s a common disease in usually middle aged and older cats.

It is caused by an increase in production of thyroid hormones (known as T3 and T4) from an enlarged thyroid glands.

Dr. Becker says that, "Sadly, feline hyperthyroidism has reached epidemic proportions in the U.S. It's the most common endocrine disorder of domestic cats, with over 10 percent of kitties over the age of 10 diagnosed with the disease."

Hyperthyroidism is usually caused by a benign tumor on the thyroid gland called an adenoma. In rare cases, the tumor is a carcinoma, which is cancer."

What is causing this epidemic? Like with most things and diseases, no one can come to a 100% agreement. Some vets think that you can do things to help avoid the bad things that cause it. Since they don't know exactly what they are, I am not sure that these things are true, but will share them with you.

* Feed a balanced, fresh food and species appropriate diet that is respectful of a cat's natural iodine intake (much lower requirement than dogs!) There is nothing that controls food companies with how much iodine they put in the foods. Unless you are feeding a raw diet you have no idea what is in the food.

* Do not buy canned food that is not labeled BPA free.

* Avoid feeding your cat a fish based diet or any food containing soy products. (That will be hard, fish oil seems to be in every single cat food out there, not sure how you would avoid it unless you are feeding raw)

* Rid your environment of flame retardant chemicals. Here is the link to an interesting study regarding flame retardants and cats. Not sure what furniture we would have left if you remove everything that is put into our furniture and clothes.

* Provide your cat with an organic pet bed. That one should be easy (smile) Amazon has a nice looking one here

* Purchase a high quality air purifier for your cat's environment.

Symptoms:

Many cats start losing weight and eating like crazy.

Other symptoms may include high blood pressure, frequent vomiting, hyperactivity and increased body temperature, heart and respiration rates. howling at night, increased thirst and urination

Testing:

Regular check ups and blood tests will help you catch stuff before they become a bad problem.

Have your vet do yearly blood work and after your cat reaches age seven make sure they are adding a T4 test and a Free T4 test. Or Total T3 & Free T3 and TSH if your cat has chronic kidney issues, that may push the T4 down into the normal range.

Starting at age seven gives your vet a base line and you can catch it early.

That is exactly how we caught Mack, Jewell, Yoshi, Jamie and Natasha becoming hyperthyroid. The numbers on the T4 were on the high of normal but had been increasing over the years so we added the Free T4 and it showed they are in fact hyperthyroid. Serena's numbers are very high but have not tipped over yet, we will now re-check her in 90 days.

Treatment:

Again, treatment is something that you can't get the vets to all agree what is best.

Some vets say if you catch it super early you may start with natural therapies. Homeopathic, acupuncture, herbals. Personally I am a skeptic of allowing the damage to continue...but that is just me.

You may have surgery, a thyroidectomy. That will stop the hyperthyroid But there may be complications that could cause more problems and the rogue thyroid tissues are still active in the body doing their damage.

You may start on medication called methimazole. It is inexpensive BUT has lots of side effects. GI upsets that cause GI issues (diarrhea, not eating, vomiting) difficulty getting the right amount to stop the damage. Some cats are allergic to the meds. Other side effects can be decreased platelets and increased liver enzymes. The cat can also develop toxic levels from the medication and also stop eating. Keller had hyperthyroid and we tried him on the medication until he became toxic. He then had the iodine treatment.

Some vets say this is the gold standard treatment. You could have radiation therapy, which is very commonly used on cats and people. It is pricey but it almost always gives you a cure. After all the problems we had with Keller on the medication, we go for the cure IF the cat is in good enough physical condition. We had two kitties that we also treated with the medication because they had such advanced kidney disease and knew that we were in hospice stage at that point they may not have been strong enough for the radiation. But Mack, Yoshi, Jewell, and Pearl have had the radiation and Natasha goes next week for hers.

So, bottom line:

If your cat is losing weight, go to the vet and insist on blood work. If your cat is just not acting right, vomiting, yowling etc., go to the vet :)

Left untreated, it will cause your cat a lot of complications including to their heart, and eventual death.

To visit the BCR blog, [CLICK HERE](#).

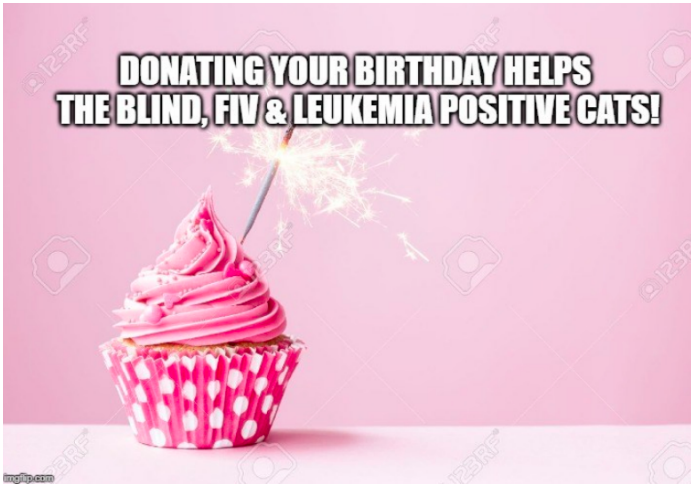


When Do Cats Stop Growing?

It's 100% true that we love our cats whatever their size....from big boys like Creamsicle and Dennis to smaller kitties like Gina and Skipper. We know various breeds can be bigger than other cats - like Maine Coon cats - and that, just like all the colors they come in, cats also come in an amazing array of sizes from as much as 20 pounds down to six or seven!

So, you get a kitten and you wonder how big it will be. It would be helpful to know when cats stop growing and how they grow! Is there a growth time frame sort of like people have? While the short, easy answer is cats stop growing between six and twelve months, it's not always that clear cut! While we can (and should) control our cats' weight, how they grow is out of our hands! Instead, it's controlled by genetics, specifically 19 pairs of chromosomes, in addition to the size of the parents and the kitten's gender.

[CLICK HERE](#) to unravel the fascinating mystery of how cats grow and when they stop!



Make your birthday this year a "give back" day! Birthdays are fun but did you know they can also do something really good for the BCR cats? You can have a big impact on their lives for free. Creating a Facebook birthday fundraiser is easy and costs you nothing.

Everyone who does a Facebook birthday fundraiser for the cats should feel GREAT about helping them get them the food they need, the medicines they take and even the regular checkup and dental vet visits that keep them healthy! You can help make it possible for them to continue to have the healthy and happy lives they deserve.

Set up is easy - [use this link to go to Facebook](#) and follow the instructions! You can personalize your message, ask your friends and family to donate to your special cause, set a target, and even monitor how it's going!

Make 2020 the year you donate your birthday to help the cats!



Sponsor Spotlight:

Sherri Hower



Blind Cat Rescue: The Blind Cats Ask You to Have a Heart!

The BCR family is full of wonderful people who truly love the cats and we want you to meet them!
Each BCR cat sponsor is given a set of questions to answer and asked to send along
their favorite photos of their sponsor cat.
Are you interested in being in the Sponsor Spotlight? [Email us and let us know!](#)

How did you first learn about BCR?

The first time I learned about BCR was seeing Snicker's story. He's such a handsome boy. I fell in love with him at first sight and started to watch the tours once in a while, then became completely hooked.

Have you visited and, if so, what did you enjoy most? What surprised you most?

I haven't visited BCR yet, but it's on my bucket list.



If you haven't yet visited, what are you most excited about when you do?

I plan on going there in July. The best part of visiting is to see my sponsor kitties and meet Alana, the staff and volunteers.



What cat or cats do you sponsor? Why did you choose them?

I'm sponsoring three kitties at BCR, Precious, Lucy and Marshmallow. The reason why I chose these babies is, have you ever heard of love at first sight? Because that's what happened when I saw the kitties. Precious with his adorable face and his awesome meow. Lucy because she is so cute and I love her markings, plus my mom loves calico kitties and I know she would love her, too. And Marshmallow is so handsome. I love his eyes and he looks cute when his tongue is always out! If I could I would love to sponsor all of the kitties because they all stole my heart.



If you could tell people one thing about BCR, what would it be?

I would definitely encourage people to follow Blind Cat Rescue because it is an amazing place and the kitties are so beautiful. I definitely learned a lot from watching them and planning on rescuing a blind senior kitty or a special needs one, because they always get overlooked. I just want to add a thank you to BCR for what you do for the kitties.

The SCOOP
Did you know?

Purr-sonal Reflections

**A Cat's Tale:
Spud**



Alana's mantra about blind cats is, "They don't know they're blind – they know they're cats!" We see that it's true every day at BCR, where there are lots of other cats and great people to care for them. But what's it like to live with a blind cat in a private home? What different challenges does that present for cat owners?

To help answer those questions, meet Spud!

Spud lives in Michigan with her owner, Vicki Rausch. Vicki has three rescued cats, two who can see and little Spud, who is blind. Spud is torti/calico kitty just shy of two years old and is a very lucky little girl.

Vicki was picking up some medicine for one of her cats at her vet's office when she ran into a friend who is very active with Animal Aid of Southwest Michigan. With this friend was a tiny, two-week old kitten who had been dumped by her owners. It seems that when her eyes first opened it was clear they were not normal and the people didn't want her. Spud got her name because she was just about the size of a small baking potato when she and Vicki first met.

Vicki loved Spud immediately but, having three other cats already, wasn't sure how this tiny blind kitten might fit in with them and her life. Vicki called Alana, who shared the BCR mantra about blind cats and she decided to adopt Spud when she was old enough.

Although it was first thought that Spud had an eye infection, a thorough exam revealed that a birth defect caused her eye problems. Her eyeballs are underdeveloped, the lids turn in and her third eyelids extend almost all the way across her eyes. The vet told Vicki that the presence of the third eyelid helped save Spud's eyes, keeping the inward-turning eyelids from rubbing

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against them. Spud only has partial sight and Vicki believes she can see motion and maybe shadows but not much else.

It turns out Spud has some additional problems, too, including a heart murmur that the vet hopes she will outgrow as she gets older, and some skeletal problems, a jutting jaw and turned out feet. The skeletal problems mean that Spud is at a higher risk of developing arthritis as she ages, so Vicki’s giving her a supplement now to hopefully prevent that.

Even with all this going against her, lucky little Spud found a loving home when Vicki picked her up at six weeks old. As Vicki says, they “plunked her down” in the same room as her other cats and they barely seemed to notice Spud. Then Spud did what blind cats do, they explore their surroundings using the senses they have. Vicki says within three hours Spud had the whole house mapped out, except for the stairs, which were closed off to Spud then because she was too small to navigate them safely.

One of Vicki’s other cats, the one closest in age to Spud, did some initial growling at Spud but that might have had the opposite effect from the one intended! Instead of being afraid, Spud wanted to follow her and find out what was going on! Vicki says this taught Spud to jump up on things she maybe shouldn’t have at first but she did just fine!

Since Spud came into her life, Vicki has been happily surprised at how normal she is. Even though they had some fears at first, they’ve never looked back or regretted their decision to adopt Spud. Today, Spud is a “teenager” determined to push boundaries! Vicki noticed that Spud usually jumps or climbs up and comes down from things in the same spot. So, where Spud likes to climb - the tall entertainment center, for instance - they keep clear “landing zones” for Spud. They also keep those areas clear of any clutter just in case Spud should fall. To keep her safe, Spud is an indoor-only kitty, which doesn’t bother her at all.

Vicki even trained Spud using audible cues. When Spud hears four taps, she knows exactly which food bowl is hers and where there’s a new safe place to explore. Spud sleeps on Vicki every night, completing every happy day of her life. For her part, Vicki couldn’t be happier or love Spud more!

Spud is a very lucky girl and proof positive that Alana’s mantra is right! Blind cats are wonderful pets who only know they’re cats, not that they’re blind! Thank you, Vicki and Spud, for helping prove that point!

BCR has more than 100 resident cats.

To keep them healthy and happy every month they use:

- * 85 boxes of litter
- * 400 pounds of dry food
- * 4,080 cans of wet food



Sounds like a lot and it is! Taking the best care possible of BCR's residents means good healthy meals and very clean litter boxes. [CLICK HERE](#) if you'd like to help keep these important items coming!



Kindred spirits, pals, cat lovers - you'll find them all in the Friends of BCR Facebook group! It's not just BCR - it's YOU, too! Chat with fellow cat fans, share stories and photos and find lots of useful cat info! [Join our Friends of Blind Cat Rescue Facebook page today!](#)

BONUS FACEBOOK HINT!

Ever wonder why you don't see BCR in your Facebook feed? Facebook's algorithm changes have made it harder and harder for you to see our posts! [CLICK HERE](#) for some great instructions to make sure you see the BCR cats!



Shopping on ebay helps BCR!

It's true - there are lots of wonderful ebay sellers who donate a portion of their sales back to BCR! We thank them so much for their generosity. So, as spring approaches with graduations, weddings, baby showers, and anniversaries, [give ebay a try!](#) You'll be helping the BCR cats at the same time!

Are You an ebay Seller who supports BCR?

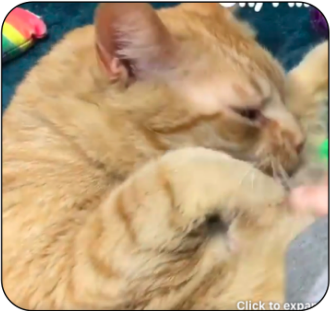
Please let us know so we can thank you and shine some light on your special ebay auction page!
[Just email us](#) and we'll be in touch with you!

BCR Cats in Action!

*The dedicated BCR staffers spend every day with our very wonderful resident cats, seeing them play, learning about their personalities and finding out what they love! We want you to see what they see so we hope you enjoy these video clips of the BCR cats in action - doing what they do best! To view a video, just click where it says **CLICK HERE** or on the photos and sample life with the BCR cats!*



We feel the need to celebrate this super sweet guy! [Professor](#) is always eager for love and pets during every tour that visits his room. Being a big guy, he's hard to say no to when he wants attention! [CLICK HERE](#) to see why this guy is so darned lovable!



From very rough beginnings - and we do mean rough - sweet [Rusty](#) is doing very well. He was in terrible shape when he wandered out of the woods around BCR but with love and care he's doing great and is very much another BCR love bug! [CLICK HERE](#) to see Rusty set a tummy trap!




You can watch your favorite BCR kitties anytime on our 24-hour Zmodo Cameras! [CLICK HERE](#) to get started!


Helping the cats is EZ!



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Matching gifts are a great way to [double your BCR donation!](#)

You can **Donate** just by **Shopping!**
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Support Blind Cat Rescue when you shop
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You shop. Amazon gives.

When you shop online, please [use Amazon Smile](#) and pick Blind Cat Rescue as your charity. With every purchase, their foundation donates to BCR. There is no charge to you!

Direct link: <https://goo.gl/4DJHX2>



Angel asks: Are you a Fresh Step Litter user? If you don't use your [Fresh Step Litter](#) paw points, please donate them to the cats! You'll help provide shelters with free litter in exchange for paw points!! We use more than 90 boxes of litter every month! Your points help us get free litter for the cats!! [CLICK HERE](#) for details.

Share the Love
Donate your vehicle today!



Wonder what to do with your old car? Donate it and help the cats! If you have an old car, truck, van, SUV, boat, motorcycle, ATV, RV, trailer or even an airplane, you can donate it BCR. [Find out how here.](#)



Are you an Alexa user? Did you know that you can **make charitable donations using Alexa**? It's true. It's very easy and secure! All you have to say is: Alexa, make a donation to Blind Cat Rescue! She'll take it from there. Need more information on how this works? [CLICK HERE.](#)

Res**walk**
Helping animals one step at a time.

Are you a runner, walker or biker? You can get your daily exercise, track your route and help the BCR cats at the same time! Sponsored by [BestFriends.](#)

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Helping animals one step at a time.

ResQwalk is a free app you can put on any phone.



Check out our very own cat-tastic dedicated site, [BCR on YouTube](#) - the home channel for the latest kitty videos, helpful cat-care hints, shelter tours and boxes sessions and even the history of BCR and its resident cats.



For all things cats - [follow BCR on Pinterest!](#) From DIY cat projects to articles and stories on cat health to cat tattoos and just fun photos, you'll find it all here!



Voldo and Wifi want you to be their Valentine at this month's BCR Open House!

Tomorrow!
Saturday, February 15
noon - 4 p.m.

Important Reminder!
Please remember to add blindcat@blindcatrescue.com to your email "safe" list so we don't wind up in your Junk Mail box!



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