

BEAUTIFUL "BLONDIE" - A CAT WITH CHRONIC KIDNEY DISEASE

Blondie is a beautiful, sleek black nineteen and a half year old cat. We have known her at the Mill Road Vet Clinic since she was a kitten and have come to love her as her owners do!

Blondie was admitted to our hospital on the 8th of September 2010 for a routine dental. As far as her owners were aware, she was physically well. A pre-anaesthetic blood test (PABs) and urinalysis was performed on Blondie prior to her dental and surprisingly, she had quite high Blood Urea Nitrogen (BUN) and Creatinine, and her urine wasn't concentrating properly, all of which indicates kidney disease. Due to her decreased kidney function, Blondie's dental was postponed with a view to getting her kidney disease under control first.



Blondie tucks into her breakfast while the vet nurse administers her SQ fluids

We recommend PABs for all animals, particularly animals over 8 years of age, prior to a general anaesthetic to pick up any subclinical disease (such as kidney disease, liver disease or diabetes) that could become worsened by a general anaesthetic.

Blondie had her blood pressure taken, and as it was very high, she was started on medication to lower this. High blood pressure is very common in older animals and is often a complication of kidney disease. An intravenous catheter was also placed into one of Blondie's front legs and she was given intravenous fluids for 5 days in hospital until her BUN and Creatinine had decreased.

Contrary to popular belief, kidney disease in cats if caught early enough, is very manageable. Blondie was sent home on Hill's K/D, a food specifically formulated for kidney disease, which has reduced phosphorus and protein levels to decrease the filtering load on the kidneys. Changing a renal cat's diet onto Hill's K/D is one of the most important things we can do to increase the length of quality life for the cat. As long as the transition onto Hill's K/D happens slowly, most cats adapt well to the change in diet. Blondie was also sent home on her blood pressure medication to be given every day, and appetite stimulants to be given every 3 days. Appetite stimulants are often given to cats with renal failure to help to keep them eating and to help them maintain their weight.

Her dedicated owners were taught how to administer subcutaneous (SQ) fluids to Blondie, and she gets 75mL run in under the skin of the back of her neck twice daily. A cat in renal failure drinks a lot, but is often dehydrated due to having dilute urine and urinating more frequently. Administering a bolus of fluids under the skin via a needle and drip line once or twice daily can help to boost the cat's hydration. Cats cope with a small needle in the back of their neck for 3-4 minutes surprisingly well!!

Blondie is doing very well with her kidney disease, and her dental was done in December 2010. She is eating well and is pottering about happily. Blondie comes in regularly for weight checks and blood pressure checks and it's always lovely to see her! She is currently staying in our hospital for 5 weeks while her family are away, so that the nurses can administer her pills and twice daily SQ fluids, and she is a very happy cat!

