

## Cats suffer stress, experts say

**Cats can suffer from stress-related illness like humans, a study by animal experts suggests.**

Rivalry with another cat is the biggest source of feline anxiety closely followed by moving home or the arrival of a new member of the owner's family.

Experts compared 31 cats with bladder disease to 24 healthy cats in the same households and used a control group of 125 other healthy cats.

Sick cats generally got more stressed by other cats in the house, they said.

### Stress trigger

Dr Danielle Gunn-Moore, senior lecturer in feline medicine at Edinburgh University's school of veterinary studies, said feline lower urinary tract disease was frustrating for vets and owners because most cases had no apparent cause.

"This group of diseases of the bladder is most commonly seen in pedigree, middle-aged, overweight male cats which don't go out much and eat a dry food diet.

"We believed stress could be a trigger and wanted to identify differences in the cats' environments and temperaments which might cause this condition."

**" We've always known cats are extremely sensitive and this study highlights a problem more widespread than previously thought "**  
Scottish SPCA

University researchers suggest cats with such illnesses should be fed wet food and encouraged to drink more fluid by adding tuna-flavoured ice cubes to water.

The Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty Animals has welcomed the research.

Spokeswoman Doreen Graham said: "We've always known cats are extremely sensitive and this study highlights a problem more widespread than previously thought."

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