



Associated Veterinary Specialists, PC, LTD

12462G Natural Bridge Road

Bridgeton, Missouri 63044

314-739-1510

Emergency 314-739-3330

Hepatic Lipidosis (Fatty Liver Disease)

Fatty liver disease occurs when the body breaks down fat in the body for energy and stores the excess fat in the liver. The liver cells are then overwhelmed with the excess fat deposits and the liver loses its ability to function. There are many contributing factors that can lead to fatty liver disease in cats, but the true cause of the disorder is unknown. Any disease or condition that leads to anorexia can cause fatty liver syndrome. Some of the most common causes of fatty liver include the following diseases:

- Pancreatitis
- Inflammatory bowel disease
- Cholangiohepatitis (inflammation of the liver and its ducts)
- Behavioral anorexia secondary to stress or diet change
- Unknown cause

Anorexia or inappetence may be reported over several days or weeks. The most common physical exam findings include

- Depression
- Muscle wasting
- Dramatic weight loss
- Jaundice

Diagnostics our doctors may recommend to rule out fatty liver disease include, but are not limited to the following:

- Chemistry panel to evaluate the function and assess for damage to the liver
- Ultrasound to evaluate the structure of the liver and rule out an underlying cause including pancreatitis, cholangiohepatitis or cancer
- Obtain a small sample of the liver via fine needle aspiration

The most important aspect of treatment of fatty liver is providing adequate nutrition. It is essential to provide enough calories to stop the fat breakdown that is occurring in the cat's body. It is impossible to force feed a cat enough food to accomplish this goal. If appetite stimulants do not result in a normal food intake early on in the disease process, then a feeding tube will be recommended for survival. There are several different feedings tubes available, but our doctors most commonly recommend a percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) tube placement.



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Feedings tubes are a safe, comfortable and effective way to provide your cat with adequate nutrition and administer medications in the comfort of your own home.



Picture reference: www.vetsurgerycentral.com

Please watch the video below for a detailed description of how to feed your cat via the PEG tube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TMX5q6eUfU8>

If you have any questions or concerns about feeding your cat or troubles with your tube, please do not hesitate to contact us at any time. Our technicians are very experienced in the management and troubleshooting problems and more than happy to walk you through any issues!

Kimberly Loyd, DVM, DACVIM

Reference: Seattle Veterinary Specialists