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FACT SHEET FOR CATS EATING ORIJEN CAT FOOD

A number of cats in the Sydney area have been affected by an unusual neurological disease. So far the only common factor that has been found is that all the cats have consumed Orijen dry cat food in the last 3 – 4 months.

Causes

- Blood analysis, viral and parasite screening, X-rays, spinal fluid analysis, CT scans and MRI have shown no abnormalities
- Changes in the spinal cord indicate toxic or metabolic causes
- Orijen cat food is irradiated when it enters Australia – irradiated food may be higher in free radicals which are damaging to tissue, and lower in anti-oxidants and Vitamins

Signs

- Changes in your cat's way of walking – the gait may be wobbly, or your cat's legs may slip under when going around a corner
- Unable to jump heights that were previously easy to jump
- Unwilling to jump onto lounge or bed
- Loss of balance and falling off of bench-tops, tables etc

Preventative Measures

- Fresh food carnivorous diet consisting of fresh meat, occasional fish, occasional vegetables
- Premium dry food if unable to feed the above
- Anti-oxidants – Cysteine/Glutathione to protect liver and kidneys – for 6-8 weeks
- Omega fatty acids ie Fish Oil to act as anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant
- Vitamin A – oral form for 3 week period – weight of the animal and specific dose is important
- Regular exercise and play
- Access to fresh spring water or reverse osmosis (RO) water

Treatment Options

- **Acupuncture and physical therapy**
- Anti-oxidants, Omega fatty acid, Vitamins
- Prednisone, Metacam or Antibiotics if needed on veterinarian's advice
- Exercise, movement and physical therapy are crucial for recovery
- Individual treatment plans at ANVC with nutrient support and specific anti-oxidants
- Some treated animals are showing signs of recovery but it is a slow process, may take 3-6 months and unknown whether full recovery is possible