



FELINE HOUSE SOILING: Urine Marking (Spraying)

Urine spraying occurs more commonly in male than female cats. However communication via chemical signals, (spraying), can be used by both male and female cats.

During spraying, the cat will back up to a target stand with its rear end held high, tail erect and quivering and squirt a stream of urine – just prior to the urine release the cat may tread the ground with its rear paws. The increase of spraying within the home is directly related to the density of the cat population, and in a recent study the incidence of spraying increased from 25% in single cat household to 100% in those with 10 + cats.

While urine spraying is readily recognised as a type of urine marking because of the conspicuous deposition of urine on upright surfaces, some cats do urine mark on horizontal surfaces.

As well as cat overcrowding, urine spraying appears to reflect the affective (emotional) state of the animal. It has been noted that some cats will spray urine during socially stressful situations, such as adding new pets or family members to the home, visitors and also absences by the owner can cause spraying and tensions between pets.

Problems associated with elimination behaviour

Initial learning failure	Poor maternal example
Lack of toilet facilities	Location
Failure to bond to Litter (as a kitten)	Type of litter box (Size)
Post trauma break down	Cleaning regime
Forced confinement	Number of cats
Fear association	Nervousness
Medical condition	Disruption of substrate
Litter preference	Overcrowding
Litterbox with/without lid	Old age
Challenges to security	Alteration to core territory