

Hypertension

What is it?

Hypertension is the medical term for high blood pressure. High blood pressure is a common condition in older cats. In fact, over 20% of cats aged 9 years and older have hypertension!

Hypertension can be caused by other conditions, such as chronic kidney disease and hyperthyroidism (an over-active thyroid). If left untreated, high blood pressure can cause damage to several organs in the body, such as the heart, kidneys, eyes and brain.

How is it diagnosed?

Blood pressure in cats is measured in a similar way to humans. An inflatable cuff is used around the leg or tail. The procedure is pain free and doesn't usually distress the cat.

In cats over 7 years old, blood pressure should be measured at least twice a year. In our older feline friends, or those with other underlying conditions, this should be monitored more often.

What are the signs?

The signs associated with hypertension can often be vague. However, if the high blood pressure has started to effect other organs, some noticeable signs are seen and, if caught early, some can be reversed.

Brain and eyes:

- Blindness
- Wobbliness
- Strange behaviour
- Seizures



Heart:

- Lethargy
- Breathlessness

Kidneys:

- Weight loss
- Increased thirst and urination

As 80% of cats diagnosed with hypertension have an underlying condition, such as chronic kidney disease and hyperthyroidism, the signs are often associated with these diseases. These may include weight loss, a ravenous appetite, an unkempt coat or increased thirst and urination.

How is it treated?

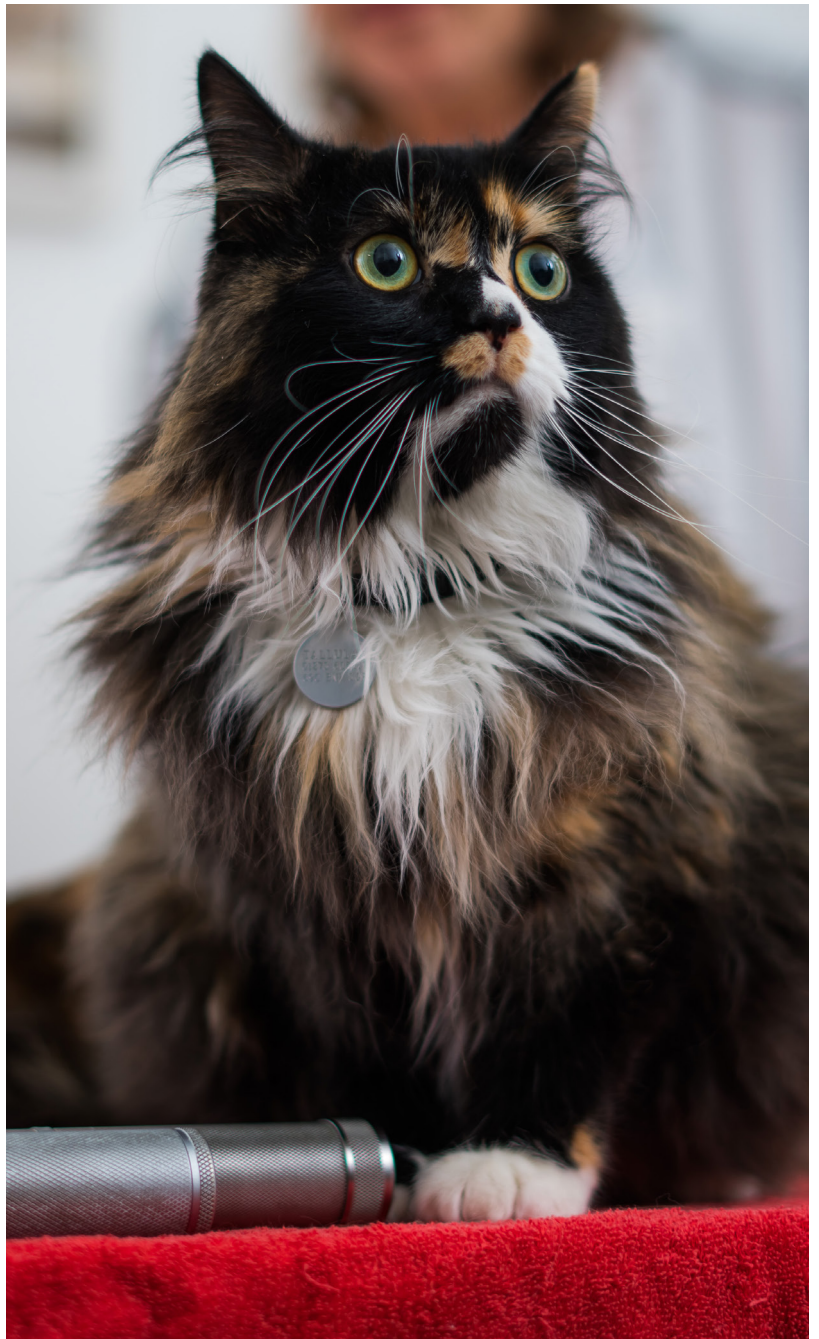
High blood pressure can be treated with medication to bring it back to normal levels. The medication is in both liquid and tablet form. It is given once or twice daily, depending on the individual cat's needs.

Any underlying causes of the high blood pressure should also be investigated and managed with the appropriate medications or therapies.

What does this mean for my cat?

Hypertension is a very common disease seen in older cats. Once your cat has been diagnosed with high blood pressure, they will require medication for the rest of their life. Your vet will want to monitor their blood pressure every three months to keep an eye on any changes. Blood pressure may be monitored more frequently in newly diagnosed cases and if a dose change is needed.

In cases of primary hypertension (where there is no underlying cause), it is possible to manage the condition very well with regular blood pressure checks. If a cat has secondary hypertension (caused by a disease such as chronic kidney disease or hyperthyroidism), then the prognosis is dependent on the severity of the underlying disease.



limetreesvets.co.uk



Lime Trees Cat Clinic

Tean Road, Cheadle, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST10 1TW

☎ **01538 752117**

reception.cheadle@limetreesvets.co.uk

limetreesvets.co.uk



If you are worried about your cat's health, or want to discuss treatment options, give us a call to make an appointment.