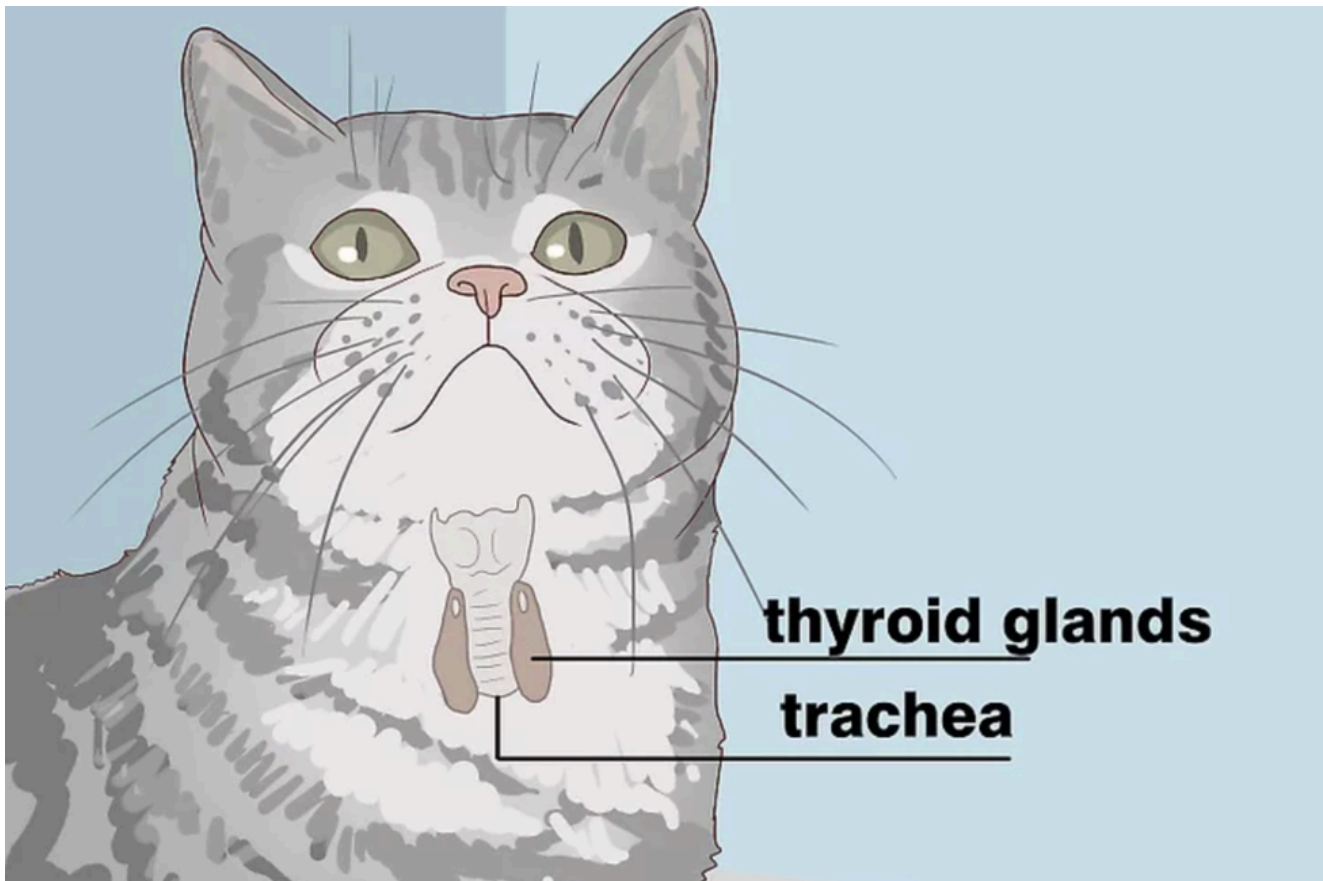


HYPERTHYROID CATS



Hyperthyroidism is a common condition in older cats where the thyroid glands in the neck become overactive. These glands start to produce too much thyroid hormone, which speeds up your cat's metabolism and affects many organs in the body.



Common signs to look out for

- Weight loss – even though your cat is eating more than usual
- Increased appetite
- Restlessness or hyperactivity
- Increased thirst and more frequent urination
- Vomiting or diarrhoea
- Poor coat condition – the fur may look greasy or unkempt

- Fast heart rate
- Panting or difficulty breathing



These signs usually develop slowly, so you might think your cat is just “getting older.” But hyperthyroidism is treatable, so early detection makes a big difference!

How is Hyperthyroidism diagnosed?

We diagnose hyperthyroidism with a combination of veterinary examination and a blood test that checks the level of thyroid hormones. We may also run other tests to check how your cat’s kidneys, liver, and heart are coping.

Treatment options

There are several ways to treat hyperthyroidism. Your vet will help you choose the best option for your cat based on their age, overall health, and your lifestyle.

Medication

- A daily liquid that reduces thyroid hormone levels.
- This is often the first treatment choice.
- Your cat will need regular check-ups and blood tests to monitor hormone levels.

Surgery

- Surgical removal of the overactive gland.
- This is usually a permanent solution but involves an anaesthetic, so it's only suitable for healthy cats. The thyroid is a paired gland and we will usually only remove the enlarged side. Sometimes this means that repeated surgery is needed if the other thyroid gland becomes overactive.

Prescription Diet

- A special low-iodine food (iodine is needed to make thyroid hormones).
- Works well for some cats but not all, but they must eat only this food—no treats or shared bowls!

Radioactive Iodine Treatment

- A single injection that destroys the overactive thyroid tissue.
- It's very effective and usually a one-time cure.
- Only available at specialist referral centres, and your cat will need to stay there for a minimum of 4 days and often much longer.

What happens if I don't treat?

Without treatment, hyperthyroidism can cause serious health problems, including:

- Heart disease
- High blood pressure
- Weight loss and muscle wasting
- Kidney damage

Thankfully, with the right care, most cats with hyperthyroidism can go on to live happy and comfortable lives.

Further Reading

[Hyperthyroidism in cats](#)