

## Cat Bite Abscess



An abscess is an accumulation of pus that forms following a bite, scratch or penetration of a foreign object through the skin (e.g. grass seed). Bacteria enters the wound and is trapped when the skin heals, leading to inflammation and abscess formation. Often abscesses have thick walls, through which antibiotics do not penetrate well, and generally management of abscesses requires surgery to drain the pus, flush the cavity and insert a drain to prevent fluid and pus re-accumulating in the cavity. Systemic antibiotics are more effective after this procedure is performed.

Recovery from an abscess is generally swift after surgery has been performed, with the drains in place for 3-5 days and the drain sites healed generally within 7-10 days. However, more than just bacteria can be transmitted through cat fight/bite injuries, and there is a very real risk that if your cat has been in one or more fights, that they may have contracted Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) which is a virus similar to HIV (AIDS) in humans. Feline leukaemia virus is also potentially transmitted through fights and can increase cat's susceptibility to developing lymphoma, a type of cancer. There are vaccines which can protect your cat from these infections, and we are happy to discuss testing for these diseases with you and the vaccine protocols we would recommend for your cat.



Prevention is always better than cure, and ideally it would be great if your cat was unable to get into further fights. The best way of doing this is to keep the cat indoors, or consider investing in, or building an outdoor enclosure for your cat which will keep them safe from other cats, neighbourhood dogs and also motor vehicle trauma. It will also help to protect native wildlife from predation. Devices can also be fit to existing fencing to prevent cats jumping in and out of your yard.

If you have further questions regarding options for protecting your cat from fight injuries and these serious diseases, please feel free to contact us.

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