

# “How do I correct inappropriate elimination in my cat?”

**Assume that your cat has a medical reason why he/she won't use the litterbox, unless otherwise proven. Some potential reasons why your cat may urinate/defecate outside of his box may include...**

- 🐾 Crystals in the urine and stones in the bladder (uroliths)
- 🐾 Bacterial urinary tract infection, although uncommon
- 🐾 Kidney disease may cause your cat to drink more and therefore to urinate more
- 🐾 Hyperthyroidism
- 🐾 Diabetes
- 🐾 Arthritis – your cat may not be able to access its litterbox anymore because the sides are too high, or the box is at the top of stairs which are now difficult for your cat to climb
- 🐾 Cognitive dysfunction
- 🐾 Anal sacculitis, colitis, or constipation may cause inappropriate defecation

Any of the above conditions can be ruled out by having your cat examined by your Veterinarian. A urine sample and possibly some bloodwork, will help us to determine whether or not there is a medical reason for your cats new habit. I like to assume that there is a medical reason before blaming it on the cats behavior ☺

**Innocent until proven guilty! ☺**

If medical reasons have been ruled out....try these alterations to your cat's litterbox to see if litterbox preference is the issue.

## 1) Litterbox Maintenance

- 🐾 Most cats prefer to have their litterbox cleaned at least once daily
- 🐾 One litterbox per cat PLUS ONE!
- 🐾 Litterboxes should be COMPLETELY emptied and CLEANED once weekly
- 🐾 When cleaning the litterbox don't use any cleanser that is too strong smelling as this may lead to further aversion
- 🐾 Self-cleaning litterboxes MAY be a good idea for your cat, if he/she isn't afraid of the noise it makes!
- 🐾 Litterboxes should be replaced – especially plastic, as they may hold odours
- 🐾 Consider the type litterbox that your cats prefers – covered vs. uncovered
- 🐾 Consider the size of the litterbox – larger cats will require a larger litterbox – large plastic Tupperware containers may be used for larger cats

## 2) Litterbox Location

- 🐾 Must be convenient to access
- 🐾 Your cat may not appreciate having its litterbox next to a noisy furnace or washing machine
- 🐾 Your senior cat may find a litterbox that requires them to take the stairs, inconvenient

## 3) Litter Material

- 🐾 Depth of litter is important to some cats – you can experiment with different depths of litter to see what your cat prefers
- 🐾 Scented vs. unscented
- 🐾 Clumping vs. unclumping although most prefer clumping
- 🐾 Pine vs. Newspaper vs. Gravel