Health Care Focus

Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD)

TAMPA BAY ANIMAL HOSPITALS

TampaBayVets.net

Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD)

Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD) is a hereditary abnormality in cats characterized by progressive development of fluid filled cysts that distort the normal kidney tissue leading to enlarged and irregular kidneys. Lesions develop through a progressive compression of the healthy tissue, often resulting in potentially fatal kidney failure.

Unfortunately, once signs of PKD, such as increased drinking and urination, decreased appetite, weight loss, and reduced activity, are observed irreversible damage has usually been done.

Cysts can be detected as early as six to eight weeks of age, but kidney failure does not occur until later in life. The rate of growth of renal cysts is quite variable, but the average age of onset of kidney failure is 6 years.

Is there a test for Polycystic Kidney Disease (PKD)?

Yes, the University of California recently developed a very accurate DNA test for PKD. The test involves sending swabs from the cheek and gums to the lab.

Which cats should be tested?

PKD is most common in Persians and breeds that are related to Persians. It is estimated over 39% of Persians have PKD.

Currently we recommend the Polycystic Kidney Disease PKD test for:

- Persians and Persian Crosses
- Himalayans
- British Shorthairs
- Exotics

Is there anything that can be done if a cat is positive on the PKD test?

Yes, after additional tests are performed to determine the extent of the problem, special foods and medications can usually help cats with PKD live longer and have a better quality of life.

Please contact your veterinarian should you have any additional questions or are seeking additional information regarding oral and Polycystic Kidney Disease. It has been a pleasure caring for your cat and we hope to continue in helping you to provide the care that they need to live a happy, healthy, and long life!