

Slap on the sun cream!

Spotlight on *Squamous cell carcinoma* in cats

Squamous cell carcinoma is the most common form of skin cancer seen in cats (representing up to 50% of skin tumours). The occurrence of this form of skin cancer increases with ultraviolet light exposure (for example higher altitude increases risk). Cats with white coats also have *13 times the risk* of developing squamous cell carcinoma than any other coat colour and older cats tend to be affected.

Lesions can eventually become ulcerated and crusty. Extensive lesions often require surgery - other forms of therapy like radiation and photodynamic therapy (using light sensitive medication) may be more appropriate for early disease. Squamous cell carcinoma does not tend to spread to other parts of the body but it can return locally, causing destruction of the local tissues. In some cases lesions can take years to progress.

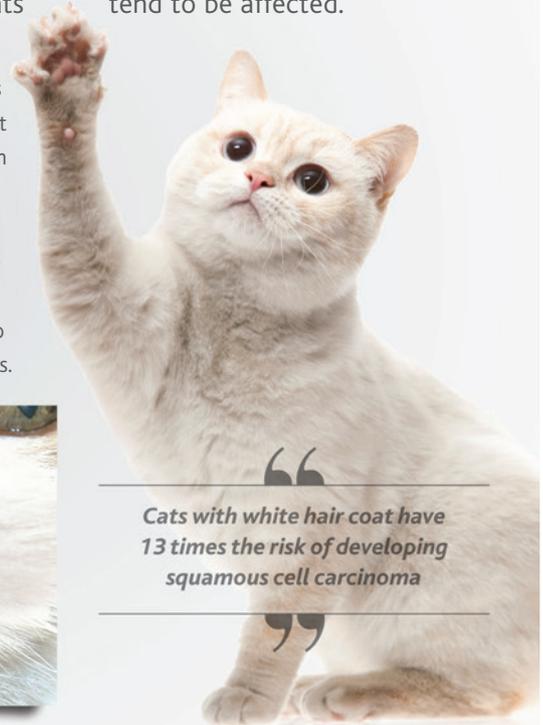
We all know cats are sun seekers, so it may not be possible to stop white cats from sunbathing - but to try to prevent lesions from developing, pet friendly sun cream can be applied to the nose and ears of white cats, particularly during the summer months. Owners of white cats should also seek early veterinary attention if they notice any changes to the skin on the nose, ear tips or eye lids.



Squamous cell carcinoma on the ear tip of a white cat



Squamous cell carcinoma on the nose



Cats with white hair coat have 13 times the risk of developing squamous cell carcinoma

PURR-FECT CPD FORUM

Willows recently hosted a feline themed continuing professional development (CPD) day for veterinary surgeons and nurses. We were very honoured to have Dr Andy Sparkes and Claire Bessant, Veterinary Director and Chief Executive of International Cat Care discussing the aims of International Cat Care and raising awareness in how veterinary practices can ensure that our feline friends and their owners enjoy their visit to the vets. Several members of the Willows Specialist team also presented lectures on the day. The subjects covered were clinically varied and were thoroughly enjoyed by all who came.

International Cat Care (iCatCare) is a charity that is passionate about improving the provision of care given to cats. The charity has been established for 50 years and has helped many veterinary practices (including ourselves), catteries, rescue centres and individual cat owners improve the way they care for cats.

As a result of our commitment to excellence and the five star facilities and care we provide to both cats and their owners, Willows has been officially accredited as an iCatCare Cat Friendly Clinic at the gold level.

Cats are unique in many ways and as a veterinary practice, it is important to be able to care for our feline patients and reduce stress to the cat and owner. At Willows we understand that cats are not just small dogs, they can have a range of diseases that are different to dogs (this was represented with the subjects covered during the day of lectures). They

also have behaviours and temperaments unlike dogs and need to be handled in a different way. Willows staff are trained to recognise and understand such needs, allowing them to provide the best possible care from the time they arrive at the practice until the time they leave.

Here at Willows, we have cat advocates who are happy to discuss our cat friendly facilities and help to ensure that whether the visit is for an annual booster, a short or long stay in hospital we can fully accommodate individual needs. Our reception team are also trained to give advice on how to reduce stress to your cat whilst travelling and are happy to answer any questions regarding this.

We are very pleased to say that a donation of £1,000 from the proceedings of the day have been donated to the iCatCare's charitable foundation.



Dr Andy Sparkes (Veterinary Director at iCatCare), Stephanie Lalor (European Specialist in Small Animal Medicine at Willows and Cat Advocate) and Claire Bessant (Chief Executive at iCatCare) in Willows cat waiting area.



To find out more about our cat friendly facilities here at Willows follow this link: www.willows.uk.net/cat-friendly-clinic
For further information on the work of iCatCare and cat friendly clinics follow this link: www.icatcare.org/about-us

