

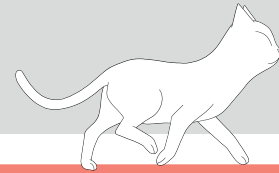


# Hypertension Hints for Reception

## What to do

For every cat owner spoken to (phone or in person):

- 1 Check on the system if the cat is 7 years or older.
- 2 If yes, inform them that because their cat is 7 years or older, they have an increased risk of developing high blood pressure and a routine blood pressure screen is recommended.
- 3 Let the owner know if the practice is running a current offer on blood pressure checks.
- 4 Book an appointment for a blood pressure check.



## What you need to know

- The latest veterinary guidelines say that **cats should have a yearly blood pressure screen (or check) from the age of 7**. This is because most cases of high blood pressure (hypertension) occur in older cats.



- **High blood pressure in cats is also often associated with other diseases**, such as chronic kidney disease or hyperthyroidism, so it is important to monitor the blood pressure of cats with these conditions regularly, to identify any changes early.

- High blood pressure can cause damage to a cat's organs, such as the eyes and kidneys, but the early stages of high blood pressure are not obvious and affected cats can seem healthy until it is too late. This is why **the disease is often referred to as 'the silent killer'**.

- It is very easy to take a cat's blood pressure - it is the same as when a doctor or nurse takes a person's blood pressure. A small cuff is placed around the cat's leg or tail which is inflated and deflated allowing the cat's blood pressure to be detected. It only takes a few minutes and most cats stay relaxed during the process.

- During the blood pressure screening consultation, **the cat will have a general health check and be weighed**, to make sure everything is in good shape and give peace of mind.

- If an abnormal blood pressure reading is detected at a cat's blood pressure screen, this doesn't necessarily mean that they have hypertension and **further checks may be done to confirm a diagnosis**. This may include:

- further blood pressure checks on another day
- checking the cat's eyes, for evidence of damage by high blood pressure
- taking a blood sample to check how the kidneys are functioning

- If hypertension is diagnosed, **there is medication** that can be prescribed to prevent the disease from progressing.

- If a cat's blood pressure check shows a normal reading, it is recommended to **re-check again in 12 months' time** as the risk of high blood pressure increases as a cat gets older – the practice can send a reminder for this.

