

**New Hope for Spraying Cats\***  
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Urine marking, in the form of spraying urine onto vertical surfaces is one of the more common behavior problems in cats. Males spray more frequently than females, and cats who have not been spayed or neutered spray more than those that have. Cats will spray whenever their territory is threatened, such as when a new cat is added to the family or the resident cats aren't getting along. The presence of visitors, unfamiliar odors or new household items can also trigger the behavior. Some behaviorists also believe that cats will spray when they are stressed or anxious.

There is a generalized belief among veterinarians that spraying can also be associated with cystitis, although this correlation has not been clinically proven. Spraying problems can be very difficult to resolve, especially if they are chronic problems, or if the specific trigger for the behavior cannot be identified.

Treatments for spraying problems have included managing the cat's environment to isolate him from the areas he likes to spray and/or from the stimuli that trigger the behavior, behavior modification techniques, and sometimes anti-anxiety medication.

A new product is now available for spraying problems.. Feliway™ is an analogue of feline facial pheromones, which are the chemicals found in the scent glands located on cats' cheeks and in front of their ears.

When cats rub against objects, they are actually scent marking them by leaving deposits of these pheromones. Studies conducted in France have shown that these pheromones have a calming effect on cats, and that cats will not urine mark objects that have been scented with facial pheromones.

Feliway™ is sprayed onto the urine-marked areas and onto prominent objects such as doorways and furniture once or twice a day for a month. Once the cat begins to rub its own facial pheromones onto these areas, application of Feliway™ is no longer necessary. In the studies, 89% of cats stopped urine marking after environmental treatment with Feliway™.

Feliway™ may not be the "magic bullet" for all spraying problems. We do not yet have any first hand reports of its effectiveness. Before owners consider Feliway™, any cat who is spraying should be thoroughly evaluated by a veterinarian for potential medical problems. Feliway™ is designed for spraying problems, not for cats who are urinating or defecating outside the litterbox. In addition, underlying behavioral causes, such as aggression problems between cats, may also need to be addressed with the appropriate behavior modification techniques.

\*Feliway™ is now available in pet stores rather than being exclusively marketed through veterinarians. It is also recommended for keeping cats from becoming anxious, by spraying a crate or carrier prior to transporting a cat. Animal shelters and veterinarians have used it with varying degrees of success to help calm cats down. A new pheromone product, Dog Appeasing Pheromone, has been released to help dogs with separation anxiety.

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