



Interesting Case from our web site www.fairfield-vets.co.uk



"Floyd" - Elderly Cat with Detached Retinas



Floyd

Unfortunately, as a vet, I have to get used to the fact that many of my patients take a dislike to me! I try not to take this personally - many are just afraid or upset by the car journey to the surgery.

The stress an animal is under has to be taken into account when we make a diagnosis, as it can alter our findings when we examine an animal, and it can even change the results of some blood tests.

Floyd - an elderly cat I examined recently, made it quite clear that he was not impressed by his trip to the vet. He was having problems with his vision, but still managed to work out exactly where I was to hiss, spit and swipe at me!

On careful examination, and with his front legs firmly restrained by his owner, I managed to get close enough to see that Floyd's retinas, at the back of his eyes, were detached. This is most frequently caused by high blood pressure (hypertension).

In cats, the commonest reason for hypertension is kidney disease, hence the reason that we recommend that any cat diagnosed with kidney problems has their blood pressure checked regularly. Over-active thyroid glands, if not controlled by medication, can also have the same effect. But in some cats, the hypertension is "idiopathic" - ie: we cannot identify an underlying cause.

My next task was to check Floyd's blood pressure - not a prospect I relished, as we usually use an artery in the front leg, where Floyd's extremely sharp claws were located. In difficult cats, we can use the tail instead, and this was what we had to do in his case.

Our other problem was that to get an accurate reading, our subject must be calm. Any patient who is angry is likely to have high blood pressure, but this may simply be down to mood rather than disease. Thus, we spent a considerable amount of time letting Floyd settle down, and we took numerous readings to make sure we were accurate.

He did indeed have an exceptionally high blood pressure, but his blood tests showed that his kidneys and thyroid were OK. Thus he was started on blood pressure tablets. Much to Floyd's disgust, his blood pressure proved somewhat tricky to control, so he had to return several times to monitor the effect of increasing his dose of medication.

At last, we have got his blood pressure (but not his temper!) under control, so - much to everyone's relief, Floyd won't need to come back for some time.

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This article is available on the Fairfield Veterinary Centre web site at www.fairfield-vets.co.uk

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