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Vestibular Disease in Cats

General Information

Vestibular disease is a disturbance of the cat's vestibular or balancing and orientation system. With vestibular disease, the cat's head is tilted to one side, the eyes move back and forth very rapidly, and walking is unsteady and awkward. When walking, the cat usually drifts to the side to which the head tilts.

This disease occurs most frequently during the late summer and fall, and its onset is sudden. The cause of the disease is unknown, but most cats recover within 2 to 6 weeks. Because other conditions, such as middle ear infections or brain disorders, may cause similar signs, various blood tests and radiographs (x-rays) may be necessary to establish the diagnosis.

Important Points in Treatment

1. *Medication:* Give all medication as directed. Call the doctor if you cannot give the medication.
2. *Diet:* Follow the instructions checked.
 Feed the normal diet.
 A special diet is required. Feed as follows: _____

3. *Activity:* It is essential that your cat be kept indoors while its ability to move is impaired. Allowing the cat to go outdoors could result in severe injury from automobiles, dogs, etc. Confine your cat to an indoor area where it will be safe from stairs, open windows, high ledges, etc.

Notify the Doctor if Any of the Following Occur

- Your cat has fainting spells or seizures.
- Your cat's signs worsen.
- Your cat's signs recur after an apparent recovery.