



Practical help for stressed or nervous cats



What's inside this guide?

Introduction - Feeling better together	3
What causes fear and what's happening when cats are scared?	4
What are cats afraid of?	6
How to spot the signs of fear or anxiety – Lintbells guide to cat body language	8
4 steps to help fearful cats	10
Using supplements in a multimodal approach	12
Which natural ingredients help stressed or anxious cats?	13
About YuCALM Cat	14
Contact us	16



Miss that happy, relaxed purr?

Help to progress from fearful feline to confident cat

It's easy to see why the UK is a nation of cat lovers. Intelligent, adorable and undeniably rulers of the home, our cats give us their own unique brand of unconditional love. Whether your kitty is bursting with "cat-itude" or naturally quiet and reserved, every adoring owner wants the best for their feline friend. However, sometimes it's difficult to know why your cat acts in a certain way, or to recognise the signs that they are stressed in their current environment.

Whether it's moving house, loud noises, redecorating or other neighbourhood cats, many cats find certain circumstances challenging to their everyday lives. A recent report by the PDSA showed that 77% of owners wanted to change one or more of their cat's behaviours*. So if your cat becomes anxious, skittish or hard to handle at times don't feel alone - or to blame.

25% OF THE
UK POPULATION
HAVE A CAT, WITH AN
ESTIMATED **11.1**
MILLION CATS
CURRENTLY
RESIDING IN
THE UK*

9.9 MILLION (89%)
OF UK CATS ARE
AFRAID OF AT
LEAST ONE
THING

FEELING BETTER TOGETHER

Most cats who find certain things scary can be helped to feel better. This often takes a combination of things (see the 'multimodal approach' p12), including a check up at the vets, help from a feline expert or Certified Clinical Animal Behaviourist (CCAB) and perhaps a supplement to calm and increase happiness.

We cover all this – and more – in this guide. So read on, and start your journey towards happier days with your best friend.



Understanding fear

WHY DO CATS FEEL FEARFUL?

Your cat might become anxious or fearful of specific triggers for a number of reasons, many of which are beyond your control. These can include their genetic make-up, early life experiences, as well as scary encounters with things in later life.

Fearful cats try different behaviours in response to what's scaring them – and change their behaviour depending on the consequences of what works and what doesn't. Sometimes, your cat's coping strategies result in behaviours that are problematic for their wellbeing – and distressing and difficult for you.

“This product revolutionised mine and my cats life - he is now not only comfortable but companionable. Thank you for making a product that has helped him feel he can live his life free of fear”

Linda and Felix



WHAT'S HAPPENING, SCIENTIFICALLY SPEAKING?

Dr Emily Blackwell, Clinical Animal Behaviourist at the University of Bristol has helped us create a diagram to explain how fears – and the behaviours that show us that cats are frightened – develop.

FIRST ENCOUNTER WITH SOMETHING SCARY

Stress response is triggered

When your cat encounters something scary, they become 'aroused' or 'hyper-vigilant' and they think about what to do next.

1



Your cat tries to resolve the conflict

Your cat will try different responses to solve the issue – that might be cowering, fleeing or attacking to try and make the scary thing go away. The response he or she tries will depend on their personality and past experiences.

Consequences?

If your cat's behaviour successfully removes the threat (your scared cat moves away from the threat, or the threat itself moves away or ceases), 'arousal' will decline, helping them feel better.

If the behaviour is unsuccessful, and the threat is not removed, your cat becomes more 'aroused'. They may try another response to the threat – if they started with a warning response and the threat doesn't go away, they may show more aggression.

NEXT ENCOUNTER WITH SOMETHING SCARY

If their response worked last time, they may try it again.

2

However, if this behaviour doesn't successfully remove the threat again, they may try something else. Perhaps instead of vocalising, your cat will begin to hiss and lash out.

Consequences?

With repeated exposure to scary events, a successful behaviour (e.g. running, hiding or attacking) becomes more established (automatic).



AFTER MANY ENCOUNTERS

3, 4, 5.



Over time, with repeated exposure to a scary situation, successful responses will become more established. There are two ways this can manifest:

1: Sensitisation – responses occur even with less intense triggers. So if your cat has shown fearful responses towards other cats coming close, they may start to react to cats that used to be at a 'safe' distance.

2: Generalisation – they respond in a wider range of situations. For example, a cat who is scared of sudden, unpredictable loud noises – such as vacuums, washing machines or blow dryers – may develop a reaction to other similar noises.

What are cats afraid of?

CONFLICT WITH OTHER CATS



This could be a cat living in the same home or in the neighbourhood, and is considered one of the main sources of stress for cats who normally prefer to live alone.

43%

live in a multi-cat home¹

14%

don't get along with the other cat or cats they live with¹

ENVIRONMENT CHANGES



This could include the introduction of a new pet, family member or object as well as changing the look and feel of the environment through decorating.

35%

are fearful of unfamiliar people¹

“Take a dog for a walk and it will come back to you because you are the centre of its universe. With a cat, its universe is a physical space where it feels relaxed... Cats are bonded to their location and the bond to the owner is secondary”²

LOUD NOISES



This can include things like fireworks, sirens, vacuums, loud music or the TV.

34%

are scared of fireworks¹

35%

are frightened of loud noises¹

REMOVAL FROM TERRITORY



Such as visiting a vet or cattery.

25%

are afraid of going to the Vet¹

CHANGES TO NORMAL ROUTINE



Such as a change in feeding time or owner/caretaker.

Studies show that healthy cats were just as likely to show symptoms of sickness as chronically ill cats when environment or routine changes occur⁴

LACK OF CONTROL AND PREDICTABILITY



Including sudden biting, scratching or fleeing unexpectedly

13%

of cats show aggression towards human beings³

48%

of cats show aggression towards other cats³

POOR HUMAN CAT RELATIONSHIP



Including a lack of trust from the cat or lack of knowledge/understanding from the owner.

23%

of cat owners said they would not seek advice to change their cat's behaviour⁵

BARREN ENVIRONMENT



That limits opportunities to express normal behaviour and can lead to destruction of the home.

27%

of all cat owners would like their cat to stop scratching the furniture⁵

Get the full picture and learn to spot the signs of fear and anxiety online at lintbells.com/blog



³ Bowen, J., Heath S., 2005. *Behaviour Problems in Small Animals: Practical Advice for The Veterinary Team*; Elsevier Health Sciences. (p. 166)

⁴ Judi L. Stella, Linda K. Lord, C. A. Tony Buffington. Sickness behaviors in response to unusual external events in healthy cats and cats with feline interstitial cystitis. *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, 2011; 238 (1): 67 DOI: 10.2460/javma.238.1.67

⁵ PDSA Animal Wellbeing (PAW) Report 2018

What's your cat trying to tell you?

Our cats are communicating with us all the time – but we don't always understand what they're saying. Here are some of the signs to help you spot when your cat might be feeling stressed or anxious.

Aggressive behaviour



Crouching or covering



Ears flattened



Fleeing or trying to escape



Hiding



Hissing



Hyper-vigilance



Pupils dilated



Loss of appetite



Reluctant to play



Tail tucked in



Urine spraying



4 steps to help fearful cats

1 IDENTIFY THE SOURCE OF YOUR CAT'S FEAR

Knowing your cat's signs of fear and identifying their triggers can really help. As you learn to understand your cat's body language, recognising the specific situations that cause them fear or anxiety will put you in the position to be able to do something about it. To help you understand what your cat's trying to tell you, see pages 8-9.



2 SHORT-TERM MANAGEMENT

Make sure to provide your cat with the ability to escape situations that they view as threatening/fearful - cats often rely on a 'flight' response to fearful stimuli, so it can be challenging to introduce less confident cats to new sights, sounds and smells unless done very carefully.

It's also important to avoid touching or handling a stressed or fearful cat, and to provide a safe area where your cat can retreat to (including all necessary resources such as food and water), as well as maintaining this area with familiar smells. Making sure they have an enriching, engaging environment with appropriate cat friendly toys and posts will also help to promote calmer behaviour. Encourage your cat with treats and play as opposed to punishment, which can cause more stress and deepen their fears.



3 GET PROFESSIONAL HELP

Once you've recognised that there is something worrying your cat, it's important to talk to your vet. They'll be able to check that everything's Okay medically. If the issue isn't medical, it's time to talk to a Clinical Animal Behaviourist to devise a practical plan to help your cat. These experts provide advice and behavioural therapy programmes for pets and their owners. As well as helping you understand your cat, they'll give lots of advice to help you manage and improve the situation together. Out-of-date advice and techniques can do more harm than good, so it's important to seek professional help, and choose your experts carefully.



4 CONSIDER A CALMING SUPPLEMENT

A calming supplement can help you and your cat on your journey towards making every day a good day. As well as providing effective calming and a happiness boost in stressful situations, all-natural options like **YuCALM Cat** can be used everyday to support your behavioural therapy programme – see how on the next page.



Supplements within your support strategy – the ‘multimodal approach’

Supplements can help stressed, anxious cats by providing calming support in challenging situations. They’re also ideal as you work on changing feelings and responses to triggers of fear and anxiety.

The idea is to help your cat feel calmer, so they become more receptive to behavioural therapy techniques, which in time lead to a happier, more relaxed, more confident cat, and an improved quality of life for you both.

STAGE 1 SHORT TERM MANAGEMENT

Supplements can help your cat feel calmer, overall. It can be an ideal first step towards rehabilitation as you get advice from your vet practice or a certified behaviourist to make immediate environmental changes to help reduce stress.

STAGE 2 SUPPORT THEM TO FEEL BETTER

Working with feline expert, you’ll start behaviour therapy techniques, like desensitisation and counter conditioning. The right supplement can help your cat be more receptive to this therapy work thanks to its naturally calming action.

Supplements also support learning by affecting the dopamine and serotonin pathways. Your cat feels happier and more content as they learn new behavioural responses and experience more positive emotions, which can increase confidence and improves results.

STAGE 3 ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

With positivity, commitment, and consistency, you’ll start to see a real improvement as your cat becomes reassured, and feels better in situations that have caused fear or anxiety.

As your relationship moves forward together – your cat will be able to enjoy more out of life, as calmer emotional and behavioural responses are positively reinforced.

Which natural ingredients help stressed or anxious cats?

There are many options to consider when it comes to natural supplements – so what do they typically include, and how do they help?



LEMON BALM



This herb is a member of the mint family. It's scientifically proven to increase the activity of GABA, which helps to reduce excitability: Lower levels of GABA are associated with increased anxiety in pets. Lemon Balm is included in our **YuCALM Cat** supplement to make your best friend feel more relaxed, by soothing stress and encouraging calm behaviour.

L-TRYPTOPHAN



L-Tryptophan is an amino acid precursor that is converted into serotonin in the brain and proven to decrease stress related behaviours.

L-THEANINE



This amino acid is uniquely found in green tea. It offers relaxing properties by supporting your cat's natural production of calming neurotransmitters, including serotonin, GABA and dopamine, which maintains levels of hormones responsible for happiness.

L-Theanine is included in our **YuCALM Cat** supplement to boost feelings of relaxation, which help to promote happy, calm behaviour so that you can enjoy more of your life together.

FISH PROTEIN HYDROLYSATE



This natural fish protein helps to ease anxiety. It works to help calming signals find the right spot, by supporting GABA and dopamine activity for a "feel good" effect.

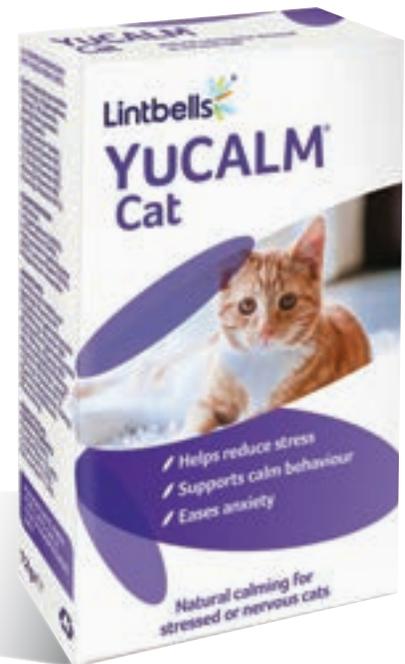
B VITAMINS



Look out for B vitamins, which support healthy nerves and brain function. We include them in **YuCALM Cat** to reduce agitated behaviour and promote a softer temperament.

Introducing YuCALM Cat

YuCALM Cat is a premium, natural supplement with scientifically proven ingredients to safely help your cat cope with stress. The complete formula works to unlock chemicals in the brain to support calm and happy behaviour, and can be effectively used either short term or as a long term programme to help calm and soothe anxiety.



YuCALM Cat is phosphate free
for cats on a low phosphorus diet.

Feeding Guide



85% of cats ate YuCALM easily¹

YuCALM Cat is a tasty sprinkle capsule.

Twist and pull to open and mix with their food at mealtimes. If your client's cat is taking more than 1 YuCALM Cat capsule a day we would recommend spreading the daily recommendation throughout the day.

CAT SIZE		DAILY AMOUNT
SMALL CATS (under 4kg)		½ capsule
AVERAGE CATS (4 - 5kg)		1 capsule
LARGE CATS (over 5kg)		2 capsules



CHOOSING THE RIGHT EXPERT

It's a good idea to talk to your vet about ways to help your fearful cat. We also recommend using the register of Certified Clinical Animal Behaviourists (CCAB) to make sure you see someone with the right skills, knowledge and experience – inappropriate or out-of-date advice can do more harm than good to your cat's behaviour and welfare. To find your local Clinical Animal Behaviourist visit: <http://www.asab.org/ccab-register>



¹ Da Graca Pereira G, Fragoso S and Pires E. 'Effect of dietary ni take of L-tryptophan supplementation on multi-housed cats presenting with stress related behaviours (abstract)'. BSAVA Congress Scientific Proceedings, 2010

Contact us

FREE ONLINE RESOURCES

There's a range of support materials available online at www.lintbells.com to help you understand and support your cat when they show signs of stress or anxiety.



HOW TO CONTACT US

 Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm,
on **01462 790886**

 info@lintbells.com

 **Lintbells Ltd, West Barn,
Fairclough Hall Farm,
Halls Green, Weston,
SG4 7DP**

 www.lintbells.com

FOLLOW US



LINTBELLS and YuCALM are registered trademarks of Lintbells Limited.
Copyright Lintbells Limited 2018. Establishment Registration
No. GB154E0140.

CALMC0818-L