

## **D-Mannose and preventing urinary tract disease**

Excerpted from *Neighborhood Cats TNR Handbook (2d ed.)*

A colony's diet may include a relatively large amount of dry food, either for reasons of cost, convenience or weather conditions. The concern, especially with male cats, is that ash in the dry food can result in crystals forming in the bladder, leading to a condition known as Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease (FLUTD). In the worst cases, where blockages occur in males, the condition can be fatal. Unlike with a pet cat, who is normally closely observed as a matter of normal routine, it can be difficult to detect urinary tract disease in a colony cat. Prevention is really a caretaker's best strategy and fortunately, an excellent preventative does exist – D-mannose.

As described by Dr. Michael Dym, VMD, a leading homeopathic and holistic veterinarian ([www.doctordym.com](http://www.doctordym.com)), “Adding D-mannose to a colony's food may offer preventative benefits for cats with underlying urinary tract issues, and may help protect males at risk for urinary tract blockages. This natural glycolnutrient, which is naturally found in cranberries, binds to sites in the urinary tract where E coli bacteria attach, and therefore clears the lining of the bladder and urethra of these type of bacteria, as well as harmful substances including kidney and bladder crystals.” It can also be used during flare-ups of urinary tract symptoms or preventatively in cats predisposed to urinary tract disease.

According to Dr. Dym, in acute situations, D-mannose can be given in dosages as high as one level teaspoon (2 grams) every hour for up to 4 doses. It can be easily dissolved in water or added to the food. In more chronic situations, he recommends dosing at 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon (250 to 500 mg) daily. It can safely be added to the diet long term at this dose and is even safe to use in pregnant or nursing cats. Because it is not digested or metabolized in the cat's body, problems with toxicity associated with the use of D-mannose have not been observed.

At Neighborhood Cats, we've administered D-mannose to cats with symptoms of urinary tract disease and have seen the condition quickly clear up. Providing it in a colony's food on a regular basis can help keep crystals and blockages from occurring in the first place. D-mannose is relatively expensive, but even dosing once a week or during times of heavy reliance on dry food will be a big help in maintaining the cats' health.

***NOTE: Urinary blockages caused by bladder crystals can be fatal. If a blockage is observed (the cat is unable to pass any urine), the cat should be taken to a veterinarian immediately.***