



# Feline Upper Respiratory Infection



[www.smvhs.org](http://www.smvhs.org)

Here are the signs that your cat might be sick, and what to do about it if he is.

**Feline Upper Respiratory Infection (URI)** is similar to the common cold in humans. It's caused by a virus, and stressful environments and situations factor in as well. With supportive care and rest in a quiet, calm place like a loving home, most cases resolve in 7-14 days.

Please keep in mind that you should ALWAYS wash your hands after handling sick cats.

## Signs of URI

- Sneezing, runny nose or nasal congestion
- Red, swollen or runny eyes or squinting
- Coughing or hard swallowing
- Sores (ulcers) on the tongue, lips, nose or roof of mouth
- Fever, lack of appetite, hiding and/or decreased energy

## URI treatment plan

Just like with humans, viral infections aren't cured by antibiotics, even though they might be used for bacterial infections. A cat with URI should be separated from other cats in the household and put in a quiet space where he can recover in a low-stress setting. The cat can gradually be introduced to people and other animals in the household once he's recovered.

## In-home care for URI

- A low-stress room is necessary for the cat to rest, acclimate and recover

- Make sure the cat is eating (when cats get stuffy noses, they can't smell their food well) so offer canned food, warmed gently in the microwave to stimulate appetite
- Gently clean discharge from nose and eyes with a warm moist cloth at least once daily
- Administer any prescribed medications as directed by your veterinarian

## When to call a veterinarian

The Santa Maria Valley Humane Society provides a voucher for a FREE initial veterinary exam in your adoption packet, and every animal adopted should be taken for an examination by your regular veterinarian within a week of adoption.

In addition, contact your veterinarian if your cat has any of the following signs:

- Depressed or unresponsive; not eating for more than 24 hours
- Green or yellow discharge from the nose
- Difficulty breathing, especially panting or breathing through an open mouth
- Vomiting or diarrhea for more than 24 hours
  - Little or no improvement after a week of home care 🐾

