

## Splish, Splash, I Was Bathing in My Drinking Water

**What to do when your young cat has a penchant for making a watery mess.**

**Q:** I have four indoor cats varying in age from 1 to 14 years old. The 1-year-old, Tangerine, has always been fascinated with water, whether its running from the faucet or in the cats water bowls. Lately she has been splashing in the water bowls to the point where she empties them. There is water everywhere. I have tried setting the bowls in a pan, where the cats can drink but its hard for Tangerine to splash in them. She still was able to splash and make a huge watery mess. I am at my wits end. Is there some way to discourage her from splashing, but still not make the water bowl a bad thing?

**A:** I'm sure some of Tangerines enthusiasm for water stems from her young age. While kittenhood officially ends when cats reach 1 year of age, most cats retain a kittens curiosity and playfulness for many months afterward. My cat, Crispy, didn't become the dignified and sophisticated (i.e. boring) cat that she now is until she hit 2½ years of age, and my youngster, Mittens, shares your cats penchant for playing with water, although not to your cats amusing degree. I'm not sure how to advise you on this. I've seen stainless steel water bowls set in a stand with rubber stoppers on feet. The elevation of the water bowls might make it more difficult for your cat to splash the water, and the sturdy stand would prevent the bowl from tipping over. I've also seen those heavy, pyramid-shaped water bowls that are supposedly untippable, which might cut down on some of the splashing. You also may want to consider one of those water fountains in which the water runs continuously. Many cats like running water, and perhaps Tangerine is sending you a message that she doesn't like water unless its moving, even if that means that she has to move it herself. I guess if all else fails, you can put the water bowls in the bathtub, and let her splash away. I do think, however, that in due time, Tangerine will grow out of this mischievous behavior as she matures.

Regards, Arnold Plotnick, DVM