

## Life-Threatening Blockages

**CatChannel veterinary expert Arnold Plotnick, DVM, explains the dangers of urinary obstructions.**

*By Arnold Plotnick, DVM*

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**Q:** A couple of weeks ago our 3-year-old male cat passed away suddenly. We came home and found him in the bathtub. The area where he urinates was bleeding. Before we had the opportunity to take him to the veterinarian he was gone. I am still trying to figure it all out. As far as we know he was not crying or hurting when we left for work that morning. He seemed a little sluggish but was walking around and not doing anything out of the ordinary. We are heartbroken.

We are considering getting another cat. How do you feel about Siamese cats? Our other cat was not a Siamese. We now have the opportunity to obtain a 9-month-old fully neutered and microchipped Siamese. All of his vaccinations are up-to-date. We have never had a Siamese and do not know what to expect. I hear they are chatty.

**A:** My condolences on the loss of your cat. It sounds like he had a complete urinary obstruction, something that is fairly common in male cats. Some male cats, for reasons unknown, are prone to forming crystals in their urine. The crystals can come together and form sand, which can combine with some mucus in the urine and cause an obstruction. These obstructions can be life-threatening if they are not relieved promptly. Cats can be secretive about their illnesses, and he probably hid his clinical signs from you until it was too late.

Siamese cats are wonderful. They are indeed chatty, and are very loving and social. They also tend to live a long time. Siamese cats are a little more prone to dental problems, so if you do adopt this young cat, I'd get him used to having his teeth brushed, and I'd make dental treats a regular part of his life.