

## Why Does My Cat Drink Lots of Water?

**Find out what a vet recommends for a cat who drinks excessive amounts of water.**

*Elaine Wexler-Mitchell, D.V.M.*

Q. What does it mean if my cat drinks excessive amounts of water?

Elaine Wexler-Mitchell, D.V.M., says: Drinking excessively (more than about a cup of water a day) is called polydipsia. It can be a sign of disease or a response to environmental conditions and diet. For example, the latter can mean cats who eat exclusively dry food drink more than those who eat canned because canned food contains mostly water. Some cats drink an excessive amount of water for attention or because they like the taste of fresh water flowing out of a spigot. Generally, though, cats are not big water drinkers.

If your cat increases her water consumption, she should be examined and undergo a urinalysis. A urinalysis will reveal if the cat's kidneys are properly functioning, if infection of the urinary tract is present, or whether or not the cat has diabetes mellitus. A blood test gives additional information on these conditions.

Increased water consumption, increased urination, and weight loss are all signs typically found in cats with kidney disease or diabetes mellitus. Cats who drink a lot and are dehydrated should have concentrated urine with a low water content because the animal's body naturally tries to conserve water and balance hydration. Dehydrated cats with dilute urine are in trouble. Kidney disease and diabetes are both manageable but not curable conditions, depending upon the stages they are diagnosed.

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