

Stop the Shedding!

Several underlying disorders can cause a cat to start shedding hair excessively.

J. Veronika Kiklevich, DVM

Q. My orange cat, Ashley, tends to shed a lot. I recently took her to the vet for an annual checkup, and apparently she is in great health. However, during the past couple of weeks I noticed she is shedding excessively. I try to keep Ashley well groomed and combed out as often as possible, but even with regular brushings she still tends to shed.

Is there something that I can put on her coat to stop this extreme shedding? My other cat, Burt, doesn't seem to shed near as much as Ashley.

Help! My furniture is becoming hair-haven.

A. Some cats (and people too) simply lose more hair than others. I am glad that you took her to your veterinarian for a well-health checkup, but if the excess shedding seems to be a recent change or something new, I highly encourage you to look for other underlying causes for increased hair loss.

Several endocrine disorders (diabetes, hyperthyroidism) and other metabolic disorders can cause a cat to start shedding more. Also, this could be the first sign of allergic skin disease. Most cats with allergies eventually begin itching as well, however, hair loss is most common in the early stages. If you've changed foods recently, beddings or anything else in your environment, you might want to revert back and see if that helps. If all else fails, brush, brush and brush.